

Language strategies on digital platforms for promoting Hakka revitalization in Thailand

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Abstract

In the 21st century, it is undeniable that digital technology is very advanced and essential in daily life. Therefore, online platforms or virtual activities are necessary for learning, especially for those who have to work or study from home. The Hakka language inheritance group for one are not give up promoting Hakka language revitalization. They are continuing to learn and teach Hakka vocabularies, conversations, and story- telling bilingually (Hakka-Thai) via several digital platforms. The main goal of this group is to disseminate Hakka language and to increase the number of Hakka speakers in Thailand. The objective of this paper is to present a variety of Hakka language strategies that are available on social media platforms. The author has collected data from participatory and non-participatory observations, the content of which was sourced from numerous digital platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Line. It is very noteworthy that there is such a large group of Hakka descendants interested in reviving the Hakka language. They have started making video clips with Hakka words that are still remembered from their childhood but not used since. The results show that the most view of YouTube channel is the clip video about “Yok Hua restaurant’s food” (3,247 views). Like the Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’, there are a lot of comments and shares when posting about food. This may reflect the fact that food is more relevant to daily life than other issues.

Keywords: digital platforms, language revitalization, language strategy, cultural heritage, Hakka in Thailand

1. Background

In the past 10-20 years, ethnic groups in Thailand have gained an awareness of their language's decline. Therefore, they have been participating in research projects to do with language revitalization, preservation, and designing activities to transfer their knowledge of language and culture to the younger generation such as implementing ethnic languages in the curriculum of local schools (Premsrirat & Burarungrot, 2018), teaching the languages in local communities, and documenting their local knowledge in digital formats and uploading to the archive (Ungsitipoonporn et al., 2021). The research projects are mostly community-based as the groups of community members work collaboratively with scholars or linguists (Sungnoi et al., 2009; Thawongdee et al., 2015). In 2020 during the early spread of COVID-19, the research based on group activities was badly affected since they could not arrange group or face-to-face activities because of social distancing due to the infection control policies. However, advanced technologies encouraged not only scholars and office staff but also members of speech communities to adapt to the digital changes. To work from home or elsewhere, native speakers have to learn to use new digital platforms, access the internet, and take advantage of free digital platforms in order to communicate through social media instead of face-to-face meetings. Among the ethnic groups in Thailand that want to revitalize their languages and cultures, several groups with large populations have access to the education system and free digital platforms. Hence, the members try to think of ways to use the internet and social media for knowledge transfer, language learning, and holding social events to encourage the revitalization (Carmen, 2018). These activities also promote the use of their languages for speakers who live far away. The technologies thus help to create opportunities that are beneficial to those communities that want to revive their languages and cultures by themselves (Cazden, 2003). Jones (2014) also supported the notion that technologies had important roles in language preservation and revitalization.

There are a lot of examples of using social media to learn and revitalize language (Hermes, Bang, & Marin, 2012; Michael et al., 2018; Ali, Deanna, & Sharon, 2021). They mostly use social digital platforms for language learning such as YouTube, Video blogs, Twitter, and Mobile applications (Outakoski et al., 2018; Mpofu, 2021). Moreover, there are also Facebook, Line and Clubhouse to communicate informally. Each social digital platform has its advantages and disadvantages depending on the users' need and tastes. One of the problems with languages that do not have a writing system is that communication is limited since each language has dialects that differ a lot or a little. If the groups of language speakers live close to each other, their dialects are likely to be mutually intelligible. However, speakers

of other dialects living far away may not be able to understand. Consequently, written communication is not interesting to people who are not familiar with a particular dialect, making spoken communication more effective than written communication. For example, Hakka people in Thailand who want to use and conserve their language, try to engage those who are interested in learning Hakka by using interesting methods such as learning basic vocabularies, common phrases in daily life, and short and fun narratives. Daily learning encourages learners to follow and review lessons every day. Awareness of language attrition is a good starting point for language conservation and revitalization. Language revitalization is being undertaken in many countries of the world and is diverse and appropriate to the context of each community. There are numerous limitations for Hakka people in Thailand as they are scattered and do not live as a community like other ethnic groups. These included travel restrictions during the Covid-19 outbreak, but they were nevertheless able to unite on social media. There remains a valuable option to discover knowledge, learn language, culture and to bring back memories of the past, and that is the willingness of this group to volunteer to make change. They said that *“language is not inherited, it is lost”*. It is, therefore, interesting to collect information, track and analyze the progress in this case, where social media serves as a tool to coordinate and link activities in a way not used before. Furthermore, the challenges facing the Hakka community’s determination to pass on the language of their ancestors were also a consideration.

In this article, the author followed a group of Hakka people who seek to revitalize and learn their own language and collect information via free social media platforms from acquaintances. The objective of this paper is to present a variety of Hakka language strategies that take advantage of social media and describe how this Hakka group used them to promote and practice their mother tongue.

2. The role of technology in language revitalization

Nowadays, technology is an essential part of life and culture. Technology that we know and are familiar with comes in many forms, including television programs, radio, cassette tapes, audio books, CDs, DVDs, web-based products, on-line dictionaries, web radio stations, local news stations, language websites, movies, distance learning classes, search engine, electronic bulletin boards, electronic libraries, music sites and audio podcasts. All these communication platforms are language domains, and it is undeniable that online platforms are an important such domain in the 21st century. Therefore, minority languages need to find a way to enter communication domains of the 21st century. Technology can be used to document and preserve

the at-risk languages of groups as an essential gift for future generations, with invaluable knowledge and wisdom (Galla, 2009). Browne (1996) studied discover seven reasons and ways by which indigenous media can promote minority languages to be are used more broadly, namely: (1) to rescue the language; (2) to increase self-esteem; (3) to combat negative images; (4) to work for greater cohesiveness and political influence; (5) to provide a visible and audible symbol of indigenous society; (6) to provide an outlet for creative production; and (7) to provide a source of employment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many activities were cancelled, and people were unable to travel or meet normally. For minority languages, the emergence of virtual communities helped overcome the decreasing opportunities to practice the language where physical distance could be a barrier to communication. Communication between speakers of the same languages rarely takes place outside of the family. In some cases, the problem of the number of speakers in the community is at the stage where the speakers of the language are dispersed or very few. Many are elderly, so communication does not occur even in the family. Therefore, opportunities to use the language in the physical world are often few (Belmar & Glass, 2019). But thanks to technology and social media, language learners and others who are interested in studying languages are encouraged to continue their language revitalization activities. Various platforms are used to exchange ideas and knowledge in lieu of face-to-face meetings. Older speakers and those able to speak the languages are invited to use the platforms and encourage new or younger speakers to get involved. In many cases, the coronavirus pandemic forced minority language speakers to create new language resources that corresponded to the needs of social situations. McIvor, Chew, & Stacey (2020) revealed that online methods were used more and more during the coronavirus outbreak. That included news, novel ideas and various types of information related to culture being sent together with knowledge of language. Television, radio and newspapers provided most communication, but Twitter, Face book and YouTube are increasingly popular and used by many today (Sergiusz & Craig, 2021). These growing modern platforms create a positive opportunity that encourages younger audiences to access more information. The increase in social media use contributes to the creation of new content that represents sustainable knowledge. These activities have resulted in the language's domain widening considerably. Modern methods of communication are essential for language revitalization and maintenance in this century (Jia, Amareen & Novera, 2021), and it has been found that indigenous people now have positive attitudes and perceived effectiveness because they realize the value of using digital technology to support Indigenous people's language and literacy development. However, despite positive outcomes of digital

technology-based language and literacy interventions, indigenous communities may not have enough resources and infrastructure to take full advantage. Many of their activities are not supported independently by programs and projects, so to ensure long-term success, a synergistic research partnership between language and literacy stakeholders composed of researchers, schools, indigenous speakers, and community members is necessary to provide sustainability. In addition, diverse age groups are an important consideration for the current activities. Sarah McMonagle (2022) revealed that students, the latest generation of speakers use modern technologies to use the minority languages collectly in the formal domain of education together with the majority language and English. In 2016, a survey conducted by Genevieve Marie Johnson on (1) television, (2) video game, (3) computer, (4) the Internet, and (5) mobile phone usage found that Indigenous adolescents prefer the use of mobile phones to communicate and to access the internet. Mobile phones were used to communicate with family and friends in ways consistent with their collective culture. The study also found that the language choice online corresponded to offline language behaviors. At the same time, new available software for minority languages has also been created and developed.

From this, it can be said that the availability of technology in the 20th century, including throughout the pandemic has been crucial. Ethnic communities' online activities are evidence of the importance of their distinct languages to them. This can be seen in the dissemination of cultural content and maintenance of groups identity by means of today's technology (Mpofu, P. & Salawu, A. 2018). These behaviors show that Facebook and other online platforms are alternative social spaces and important public domains, where information, history, languages, and culture are transmitted and exchanged between speakers. Activities that take place through the use of language on Facebook and other platforms are means by which to revive and maintain language. Therefore, it is interesting to study the language strategies used on social media to promote Hakka language revitalization in Thailand, especially during the COVID-19 outbreak. Key questions asked are: What negative consequences are there related to social media use that affect language preservation and revitalization for sustainability in the future? What kinds of knowledge are transmitted? Who are the current user groups?

3. Research methodology

For this research, the author selected three digital platforms that are related to Hakka language conversation, communication, and documentation: 1) YouTube channel¹ named 'Pa

¹ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Q1yBSxrRbIO1_6yLFQm7g/featured

Yip Pha Taluy’ produced by a Thai-Hakka woman who wants to learn Hakka language and pass it on to those interested in learning; 2) Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin² (暹羅客家人)’ –initiated by the same woman who made the YouTube clip in Hakka language, her intention being to set up this group to highlight speaking in Hakka. The researcher informed the woman of the purpose for using content from her YouTube and Facebook pages and requested permission before collecting data; 3) Line group named ‘The dictionary revision’ composed of a limited number of members who participated in editing in the Hakka dictionary (known as Bansankak³). The aforementioned dictionary contains a large amount of terminology collected over a period of time but is not yet completed. The author observed the activities and interactions of the Line group members for the process of improving the dictionary make it more complete.

3.1 Data collection

Data was collected from three social media platforms: YouTube, Facebook, and Line as follows:

(1) YouTube: ‘Pa Yip Pha Taluy’ channel has content related with Hakka vocabularies, sentences, conversations, narratives and songs. In each clip, presenters talk in both Hakka and Thai, but they mostly speak Thai because most followers, who are Thai - Hakka, speak mostly Thai, but some can understand it –through most not. The period of data collection was January 2020- August 2021, a period during which clips were posted continuously.

(2) Facebook: ‘Siamlo kakka ngin (暹羅客家人)’ is a public Facebook group created on February 17th, 2021. It had around 5400 members as of November 2023. The members of Siamlo kakka ngin (暹羅客家人) are mostly Fengshun sub-dialect but not limit to other sub-dialects. Selected contents were topics of the discussion related to Hakka knowledge and language learning.

(3) Line: There were several revitalization activities to revise the Hakka dictionary by the group ‘The dictionary revision’. Data collection covered the process of setting up methods to improve the dictionary content to the point of resolution of each issue.

3.2 Data analysis

The contents provided by these sources (YouTube, Facebook, and Line) was analyzed. Data analysis was conducted on contents from videos, and the results were grouped according to different issues. The diverse content included vocabularies, sentences, translated songs,

² <https://www.facebook.com/groups/891984904900603/about>

³ <https://bansankak.qandq.co.th/documentation.html>

narratives, conversations, singing in Hakka, idioms as well as narratives in Thai, and reading rhyming words. Every clip analyzed had to use the Hakka language, and the results were presented as a percentage. The number of views was analyzed as a guideline for making video clips about which issues or styles of clips are popular and suitable for language learning. The duration of the videos was categorized into shortest, longest, and average length of video. Data from Facebook was analyzed according to topics of the discussion such as the questions and answers about Hakka vocabularies and sentences, sharing old videos, and sharing information about history, places, and cooking procedures. Interesting issues from the Facebook page included comments that expressed an interest in learning Hakka language, and these were also summarized. Finally, the dictionary revision process from the Line group was analyzed.

4. Results

4.1 Data from YouTube ‘Pa Yip Pha Taluy’ channel

YouTube is a free digital platform that is suitable for publishing short videos the producers and youtubers create themselves. They can upload whenever a video is ready, so this platform is popular for anyone who likes to do short videos.

In the case of this Hakka group, it was originated by a Hakka woman who sought to passion, preserve and revitalize the Hakka language and culture. She was inspired to make this channel after visiting relatives in China and struggling there because she was unable to speak Hakka fluently. Consequently, she decided to find a way to learn the language of her ancestors and be able to speak her dialect well when she got a chance to visit her relatives in China again after the COVID-19 pandemic situation got better.

She began by creating short videos about the Hakka language and learning 5-10 easy vocabularies in each lesson. Simple sentences for functions such as greetings were sometimes put in the videos and then harder sentences, or narratives were introduced. For Thai-Hakka people to learn the language easier, the Hakka vocabularies were written in Thai script and translated into Thai. The creator tried to regularly create and upload new videos to her channel in the hopes of gaining more followers and becoming widely recognized. As she got to know more Hakka people in Thailand, she invited those who could speak Hakka to do narrative videos. She has done recordings and edited video clips by herself anywhere she has the opportunity to meet Hakka speakers and talk in the Hakka language. Moreover, she has even travelled to find other Hakka speakers to tell stories and then edited them as short video clips. She was able to improve her Hakka language skills while editing videos by recalling large numbers of words she heard or used to speak to her parents as a child.

Hakka language has no written language and most of Hakka -Thai people do not know Chinese characters. Therefore, they try to use the Thai alphabet to transcribe Hakka pronunciation so that they can better understand. However, using Thai-based script to write Hakka pronunciation has both advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages: As all Hakka-Thai people are literate in Thai, the beginning learners who had not known any vocabularies were able to pronounce the words and sounded similar to a native since the spelling followed Thai spelling rules. However, there are some sounds that were not available in Thai; therefore, the spelling of some words was sometimes different from Thai rules. If the learners did not know this fact, they would not be able to read those particular words. For example, the word 𠵼-𠵼𠵼 /ŋiuk/ ‘meat’; 𠵼-𠵼𠵼 /kiok/ ‘legs’ had diphthong /iu/, /iə/ are not available in Thai. These words are one syllable not two syllables, so they used the symbol “dash (-)” to combine diphthongs. Therefore, the second vowel needed to be pronounced promptly after the first one to sound natively. Writing using Thai characters like this would be difficult for people who don't know Hakka vocabulary. However, it is useful for Hakka-Thai people who know some words and speak a similar sub-dialect.

Disadvantages: The Hakka writing system using Thai-based script does not have a standard. Different people have different ways of writing. Besides, they also have different sub-dialects. When the writing system is not concurrent, there will be problems for Hakka language learners, including those who speak different dialects. As a consequence, they cannot expand members to participate in the revitalization process beyond the speakers of mutually intelligible dialects. Hence, it is hard to increase the number of Hakka speakers.

4.1.1 The content of videos

The content of videos was diverse and was switched around so that the audiences were not bored. The presenters and location were changed as the content was presented in monologue, dialogue, or group presentation.

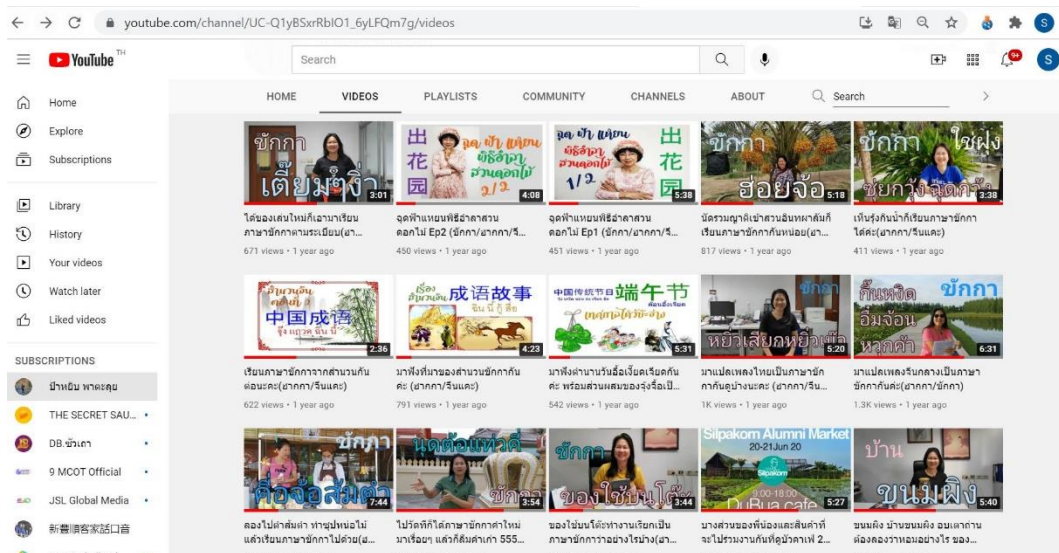


Figure 1 YouTube channel (Pa Yip Pha taluy) and some examples of video clips

The content presentation styles could be broadly categorized. These contents were analyzed by grouping into 11 categories as follows.

1) Vocabularies: 103 videos of vocabularies were presented in glosses with meanings in Thai, as well as with examples for better understanding, such as fruit names: ใต้กิด [thài kít] (ส้มสีทอง) ‘golden orange’, ฝรั่ง [tsún̄ tsiéw] (กล้วย) ‘banana’, ฝรั่งคิ้ว [fún̄ p^hín kuó] (แอปเปิลแดง) ‘red apple’, ฝรั่ง [fún̄ p^hín t^hó] (องุ่นแดง) ‘red grape’, หวงหลี [wǎng lí] (สับปะรด) ‘pineapple’.

2) Vocabularies + sentences: 20 videos

The videos introduced the vocabulary and examples of how to use them in sentences. There were four types of vocabulary presentation as follows:

(1) only speaking, no written words

(2) speaking and written words in Thai-based script.

Examples:

หมุกฝุง [mùk fún̄] (อิจฉา) ‘jealous’ หมอแฉวมอหื้อ [mǎ théw mǎ múi] (ไม่รู้จักเทศะ) ‘untimely’ ซั่มเจียนป๋ัน [sām ts^hién pân] (ไม่เต็มบาท (บ้าๆบอๆ)) ‘dotty’ กินหิจดแห่ห้อหิจดจื้อ [kín ñit hè hò ñit tsí] (วันนี้เป็นวันดี) ‘Today is a good day’ อี้มจิ้นแห่ห้อม [ʔím tsín hè mǎ] (ไม่จริงใจ) ‘It’s not true, is it?’ These words and phrases could be writing in sentences as follows:

ก้อไก่อ้อยหจินค้อว้อเพดสาเกียดฟุ่น [kǎ kái ʔóì ñín k^hí wó pét sǎ kièet fún] (แฟนเขาไปแต่งงานกับคนอื่น) ‘His girlfriend got married to someone else.’

ก้อแพ้นหลีซิบฟุ่นซี-อ้องซั่ม [kǎ t^hén lí síp fún síóng sím] (เขาฟังแล้วรู้สึกเสียใจมาก) ‘He was so sorry to hear that.’

อิมจิ้นแท้หมอ [ʔim tsín hè mǎ] (ไม่จริงใช่ไหม) ‘It’s not true, is it?’

Note: The translation is only included in this article, but not in the original videos.

(3) Speaking, writing Hakka vocabularies in Thai script, with meanings in Thai

Pronunciation in Thai script	Meanings in Thai	Meanings in English
เนี่ยมกว้า [nièm kwá]	บวบ	sponge gourd
เฉียด [ts ^h ièt]	หั่น	cut, slice
เฉียดต้อ [t ^h ièt tó]	มากเกินไป	too much
ปุ้นเถียว [pân t ^h iěw]	ก๋วยเตี๋ยว	noodle
ฝูซ๋อนแถว [fú sôn t ^h ěw]	หัวกระเทียม	garlic
จู้หยิว [tsú jǐw]	น้ำมันหมู	lard
แก๊ จี-หยุก [ké ɲiùk]	เนื้อไก่	chicken meat

(4) Speaking, written Hakka vocabularies in Thai script and Chinese, with meanings in Thai.

The creator wanted to add more value for the learners, so she added Chinese script on the video too.

Chinese script	Pronunciation in Thai-based script	Meanings in Thai	Meanings in English
自家	จิก้า [tsì ká]	ตนเอง	myself
自家人	จิก้าหจิน [tsì ká ɲǐn]	คนกันเอง	comrade
別人	แพ็ดหจิน [p ^h ét ɲǐn]	คนอื่น	others
各人	ก๋อกหจิน [kòk ɲǐn]	แต่ละคน	each person
大家	ไถก้า [t ^h ài ká]	ทุกคน	everyone
每隻人	ม้วยจักหจิน [múi tsàk ɲǐn]	ทุกคน	everyone
有人	ฮิวหจิน [jíw ɲǐn]	มีคน	There is a person.

3) Vocabularies + narratives in Thai and Hakka: 18 videos

This type of presentation focused on speaking in Thai along with displaying Hakka vocabularies. There were not many of them due to the emphasis on storytelling.

4) Sentences: 12 videos

The videos contained sentences with easy structures that could be used in daily life. There were also some new vocabularies for learners to learn.

Examples:

หึงฮ้อ [ŋĩ hõ](สวัสดี) ‘Hello’

ซิดฮ้อหม้ง [sít hõ mǎŋ] (กินอิ่มแล้วยัง) ‘Are you full?’

หึงไ้เหมียงฮ้อมหมักไ้ [ŋĩ kái miěŋ hām màk kái] (ชื่อของคุณเรียกว่าอะไร) ‘What is your name?’

หึงฮ้อหลิวฮ้องหลอย [ŋĩ tshõ lí wóng lǎi] (คุณมาจากไหน) ‘Where are you from?’

หลิวฮ่าหมั่นจ-ฮ้อง [lí hà mǎn jǒŋ] (สบายดีไหม) ‘How are you?’

หึงจื่อหมักไ้ซั้งแฮ [ŋĩ tsǒ màk kái sǎŋ sǎ] (คุณทำงานอะไร) ‘What do you do (for a living)?’

5) Song translation: 5 videos

Five songs were translated with the purpose of practicing translating. Some Thai and Mandarin Chinese songs were translated into Hakka.

หิวฮ้อเสียดหิวฮ้อ [jìw sièk jìw nǎw] (ทั้งรักทั้งเกลียด) ‘Love-hate’

ฮิวฮ้อฮ้อ [sá wó hó] (ทรายกับทะเล) ‘The sand and the sea’

หมอไ้หงหลิวฮ้อง [mǎ hǎi lí hǎi tsǎŋ tí] (ขาดฉันแล้วเธอจะรู้สึก) ‘You will be sorry when I am gone’

เกียงฮ้อฮ้อ [kiéŋ súi kái sīn hǎi] (เจ้าสาวที่กลัวฝน) ‘Bride who fears the rain’

จิวฮ้อฮ้อ [tsíw tsúi kái fú t’hiéŋ] (ผีเสื้อที่เมามาย) ‘drunken butterfly’

6) Translating horror movies’ names: 1 video

The creator wanted the content to be diverse, new, and different. It had never heard in Hakka language before.

Examples:

ฮ้อฮ้อฮ้อฮ้อ [ts’ú tú k’ǎŋ tó kú] (ผู้ซ่อนผี) ‘The hidden ghosts in cabinets’

ฮ้อฮ้อฮ้อฮ้อ [já p’ú hǎi ?ân ?ǎk] (คืนทอนคนโหด) ‘The haunting night, the cruel men’

เหนียมฮ้อฮ้อ [niěm tó lǎi kái fún p’òk] (วิญญาณตามติด) ‘The following ghost’

หึงฮ้อมฮ้อ [hǎi hām kú] (คนเรียกผี) ‘The conjuring’

7) Narratives: 42 videos

The narratives derived from the experiences of the narrators such as growing sugar cane in the old days, tales, funny stories, cooking procedures, etc. The narratives were told in different ways as follows:

(1) Narrating in Hakka with captions displaying the Thai translation, so the audience simultaneously know the meaning, such as the story of ซัมจักพิคผอ [sâm tsàk p^hít p^hǒ] (ค้างคาสามตัว) ‘the three bats’.

(2) Narrating in Hakka before translating into Thai

During the narration, the vocabulary would be shown so that the audience could understand better. All vocabulary would be shown in the comments section.

(3) Narrating in Thai and introducing vocabularies, which were also shown in the description section.

8) Conversation: 4 videos

The conversation might be in the form of roleplay or the interview with Hakka speakers. An example of the conversation is provided below.

Question: อันกั๋วอิมเกี้ยนหงี กีนหงิดหมาซังหย่อง หงีหลอยต้อง้าหุกค้ำ [ʔàn kíw ʔim kién ɲí, kí n ɲit mà sân jòŋ, ɲí lǎ tǒ ɲá wùk ká] (ไม่ได้เจอกันตั้งนาน วันนี้เป็นอย่างไรรถึงมาบ้านฉันได้) ‘Long time no see. How are you doing today? Why do you come to my house?’

Answer: โหงเห็นหว่า หงีกั๋วค้ำอันเจียง โหงอ้อยซี้ค่อน [ɲái t^hén wà ɲí kái wùk ká ʔân tsiéŋ, ɲái ʔói ts^hí k^hón] (ฉันได้ยินว่าบ้านคุณสวยงาม จึงอยากมาดู) ‘I heard that your house is very beautiful, so I come to visit.’

Question: หงีสื่ออองซิดหมักไก้ก้า [ɲí siòŋ sít màk kái ts^há] (คุณอยากดื่มชาอะไร) ‘What kind of tea do you want?’

Answer: โหงฮับ อุ่หลงฉา หงีฮั่วหมอ [ɲái háp ʔùlǒŋ ts^há, ɲí jíw mǎ] (ฉันชอบชาอุ่หลง คุณมีไหม) ‘I like oolong tea. Do you have it?’

9) Singing Hakka songs: 8 videos

Most of the songs were Mandarin Chinese sung in Hakka. The experts translated the lyrics into Hakka and gave them to singers to practice. They recorded all songs once they were fluent. The translators provided the lyrics in both Chinese script and Hakka written in Thai script so that the learners could learn new vocabularies.

Example: 我有一段情呀 โหง ฮั่ว หอิด ท่อน ฉิน หย่า [ɲái jíw jít t^hón ts^hín jà]

月亮代表我的心 เงี้ยด ลี-ออง ใต้ เปี้ยว โหง ดิด ซีม [ɲiét liòŋ tái pièw ɲái tít sím]

10) Idioms + narratives in Thai: 2 videos

The narrators told the stories in Thai as idioms displayed in Chinese and Hakka written in Thai script. After the presenters explained the meaning of the idioms, they would provide details of the stories in Thai.

愚公移山 หิงกุงหือซัน [nì kún jǐ sán] (ปู่โง่งย้ายภูเขา) ‘Stupid grandpa moves a mountain’ means ‘Where there's a will, there's a way.’

塞翁失马 เส็ดโวิ่งสิคม่า [sèt wóng sít má] (ผู้เฒ่าเสียม้า) ‘An old man loses a horse’ means ‘Every problem can be seen in both positive and negative light depending on your perspectives. Good luck may bring bad luck while bad luck may also bring good luck.’

11) Rhyming words: 2 videos

Reading rhyming words was for practicing pronunciation. Take a look at “หงอวอหลอ” [งั้ว wǒ lǎo] in the example below.

Hakka: ล่อ หอ ฉ่อ ท่าย หลอ ของ หงอ [lǎo hǎ ts^hò t^hái lǎo jǎŋ ɲǎ]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหอลีงห่านอยู่ที่บ้านท่ายหลอ’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหออ is raising a goose at ท่ายหลอ village.’

Hakka: ล่อ หลอ ฉ่อ ชุง หอ จิบ หลอ [lǎo lǎo ts^hò sūŋ hǎ tsìp lǎo]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหลอสานเข่งอยู่ที่บ้านชุงหอ’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหลออ is raising a goose at ชุงหอ village.’

Hakka: ล่อ หอ ซอง แก่ ซื่อ หม่าย หงอ [lǎo hǎ sōŋ kē k^hí mài ɲǎ]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหอไปตลาดเพื่อขายห่าน’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหอ is going to the market to sell a goose.’

Hakka: ล่อ หลอ ซอง แก่ ซื่อ หม่าย หลอ [lǎo lǎo sōŋ kē k^hí mài lǎo]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหลอไปตลาดเพื่อขายเข่ง’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหลออ goes to the market to sell a basket.’

Hakka: ล่อ หอ ม่าย หงอ หม่าย หลอ [lǎo hǎ mǎi ɲǎ mài lǎo]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหอขายห่านซื้อเข่ง’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหอ sold a goose to buy a basket.’

Hakka: ล่อ หลอ ม่าย หลอ หม่าย หงอ [lǎo lǎo mǎi lǎo mài ɲǎ]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหลอขายเข่งซื้อห่าน’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหลออ sold a basket to buy a goose.’

Hakka: ล่อ หอ ซา หลอ จ็อน ท่าย หลอ [lǎo hǎ ts^hā lǎo tsôn tái lǎo]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเฒ่าเลี้ยงหอหิ้วเข่งกลับบ้านท่ายหลอ’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหอ is carrying a basket back to ท่ายหลอ village.’

Hakka: ล่อ หลอ นำ หงอ ซ้อน ชุง หอ [lǎu lǎo nǎm hŏŋ tsón sūŋ hǎ]

Thai meaning: ‘พ่อเต่าเลี้ยงหลออุ้มห่านกลับบ้านชุงหอ’

English meaning: ‘The old man เลี้ยงหลอ is carrying a goose back to ชุงหอ village.’

12. Recitation: 2 videos

4.1.2 Number of views

The views were analyzed to see which types of content the audience were interested in the most and why.

Total videos: 239 videos

The least number of views: 181 views (หาเรื่องปลูกไม้ต่างบ้าง) ‘Planting spotted plants’ posted on August 2021

The second least number of views: 206 views, (กินลูกตาลลอยแก้วมีภาษาซำกกาอะไรบ้าง) ‘Eating toddy palm in syrup, is there any Hakka language?’ posted on May 2020

The most views: 21,770 views, (อาหาร ร้านยอฮั่ว มีภาษาซำกกาอะไรบ้าง)

‘Yok Hua restaurant’s food, is there any Hakka language?’ posted on February 2020

The second most number of views: 13,247 views, (มาลำดับญาติเป็นภาษาซำกกา) ‘Kinship terms in Hakka language’ posted on February 2020

The average number of views: 1,431 views

Less than 1,000 views: 154 videos

Between 1,000- 9,999 views: 82 videos

More than 10,000 views: 3 videos

4.1.3 Duration of the videos

The average duration of videos was 5.08 minutes. The shortest video was 0.34 minutes, posted on January 2020. It was about five Hakka words used in the bedroom, namely: ล่อย ฟอง [lǎu fŏŋ] (ห้องนอน) ‘bedroom,’ จอก [tsɔk] (โต๊ะ) ‘table’, แต้ [tén] (เก้าอี้) ‘chair’, จิมแถว [tsim t^hǎw] (หมอน) ‘pillow’, and หมินสอง [mín sŏŋ] (เตียง) ‘bed’. This was the first video, so the creators began with only easy words.

The longest video was 17.34 minutes, posted on September 2020. The title was ‘Come and listen to the history of Mid-Autumn Festival’. The narrator told the story in Thai, but mentioned Hakka vocabularies relating to festivals, which are important days for Chinese people, such as เจียด เป็ยง [ŋièt piéŋ] (ขนมไหว้พระจันทร์) ‘mooncake’, ชุ่นเจียด [ts^hún tsièt] (วันตรุษจีน) ‘Chinese new year’, ชุ่นหมินเจียด [ts^hín mìn tsièt] (วันเซ็งเม้ง) ‘Qingming day’, ต้อนอ้อเจียด [tón ʔi tsièt]

(เทศกาลบั้งไฟงิ้ว) ‘Dragon Boat Festival’, and จั้งซิวเจียด [tsúnj ts^hɿw tsièt] (เทศกาลไหว้พระจันทร์) ‘Mid-Autumn Festival’.

In summary, the number of video clips about vocabulary (103 clips) was the highest, followed by narratives (42 clips). The most viewed video was ‘Yok Hua restaurant’s food, is there any Hakka language?’ (3,247 views). This may reflect the fact that food is a matter of great concern and importance in daily life.

4.2 Data from Facebook page Siamlo kakka ngin (暹羅客家人)

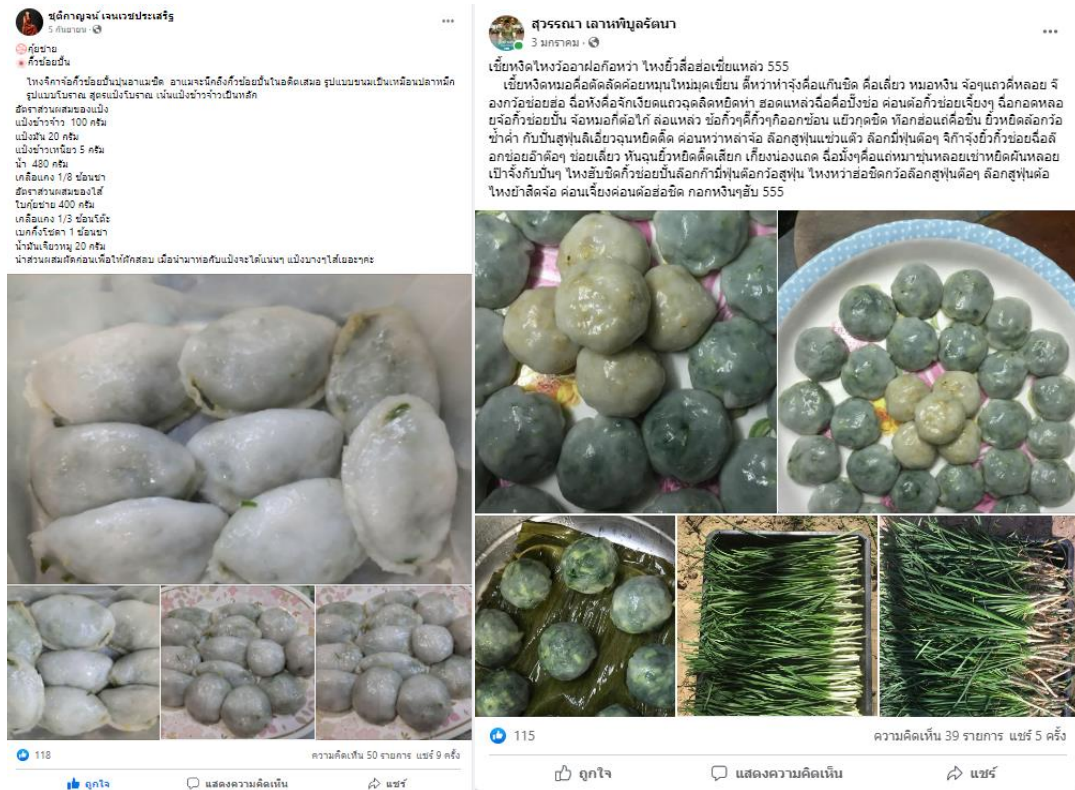
The main purpose of the Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’ is to revive, conserve, and promote the use of Hakka language. Therefore, content on this page should contain information related to the exchange of knowledge related to the Hakka language, or introduce Hakka for members to learn.



Figure 2 Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’

The posted content can be categorized as follows:

- 1) Sharing links or video clips with Hakka related content.
- 2) Posting video clips from the YouTube channel “Pa Yip Pha Taluy”. Reposting a YouTube video clip in order to expand the audience group when there are no new topics posted on the Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’.
- 3) Posting food pictures by referring to the name of the food in Hakka. Some posts describe how to cook, and some posts simply mention ingredients and seasonings.



Figures 3-4 Example of posts related to food and ingredients for cooking on Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’

In figure 3, a member of this page has posted pictures of food and ingredients. It is a dish that Hakka-Thai are familiar with and commonly sold. In figure 4, another member of this page has posted pictures of food and Chinese chives (a kind of vegetable). She wrote in Hakka language using the Thai alphabet, explaining about why she cooked this food. Even though these two members posted pictures of the same food, the details are not quite the same because each person’s cooking style is different.

4) Asking, together with pictures, for words or knowledge about Hakka, however, sometimes just asking with no picture.



Figures 5-6 Examples of posts related to old utensils on Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’

In figure 5, a member of this page has posted a picture of an old weighing machine, and he called it “kî lǎ” using his personal idiolect. He also asks what the formal Hakka word is?

In figure 6, the same member has posted a picture of a traditional dustpan using his idiolect calling it “pûn tēw” to revive old words that were used in their childhood.

It was also a communication space for group members such as meeting for a meal or offering condolences for respected members of the community who have passed away.

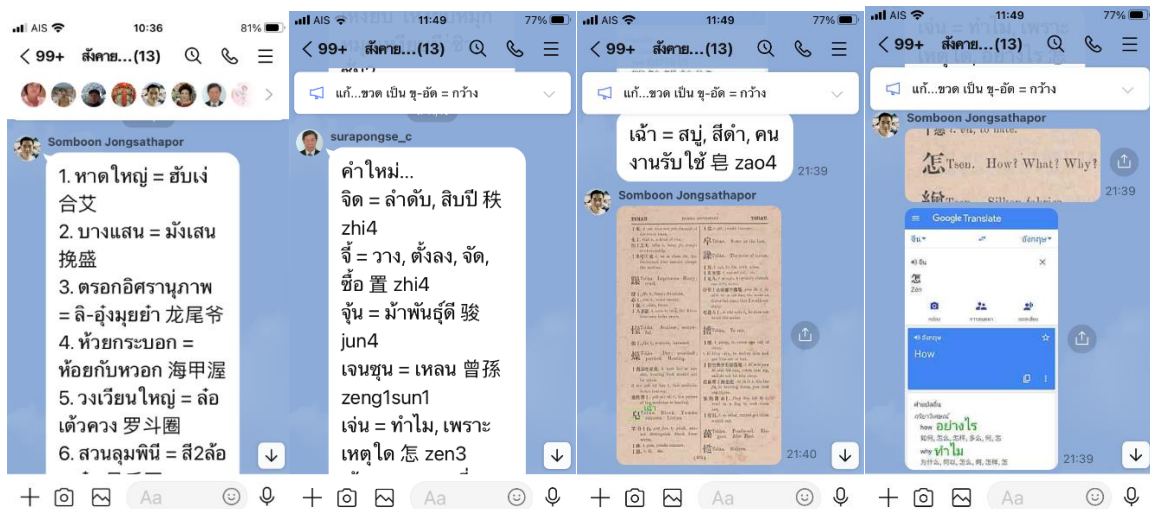
In summary, the contents posted on Facebook page ‘Siamlo kakka ngin’ provide knowledge about the Hakka language on various issues such as vocabularies, stories, and conversations, using a mix of Thai and Hakka. Members who are knowledgeable and understand Hakka often post comments and their posts get attention as can be seen by the large number of comments. Therefore, Facebook is a convenient platform and can be a source of learning for Hakka-Thai people.

4.3 Data from a line group ‘The dictionary revision’

The Hakka dictionary (ปิ่นซันจ๊ก [pîn sǎn k^hè] 半山客) was compiled by an elder who not only has knowledge of Hakka but also Mandarin Chinese. He started compiling Hakka

vocabularies in 1967 by remembering as many words as he could and writing their pronunciations in Thai script based on his idiolect. But because Hakka is only a spoken language, some words were not able to be written in Chinese characters. Besides, the compiler was not a scholar, but a native who wanted to preserve the regional words for the younger generation. He stated that the dictionary should not be used as a reference in academic works as it was solely for Hakka-Thai people to learn. Due to the differences among Hakka dialects in different countries, it took him several decades to compile the vocabulary as he wrote them by hand. The dictionary contains a large number of words and has been digitized into an Excel file for wider usage.

The main purpose of the line group ‘the dictionary revision’ was to revise, improve and expand vocabulary domains, including adding as many new words as possible gained interviews and Chinese words that have similar sounds or meanings in Chinese characters. To thoroughly improve the dictionary, the elder, who was the first person to compile the dictionary, suggested creating a group for those who were literate in Hakka. The members invited to join the line group ‘the dictionary revision’ are acquaintances who are knowledgeable in Hakka language and Chinese script. They either speak only Hakka or Hakka and Mandarin Chinese.



Figures 7-10 Line group communication about vocabulary improvements and corrections.

The beginning of the revision was to sort the vocabularies by hierarchy. Each time, 10 words will be posted to the line group so that the members can help adding information or revising them before editing the digital manuscript (Figure 7 and 8). Some of them have access to sources of Hakka and Chinese characters such as a dictionary of different dialects or the online Hakka dictionary of Taiwan, etc. (Figure 9 and 10). Since all members are working voluntarily on the revision, the process is gradual as each member has their own work. Therefore, exactly when it will be completed cannot be determined.

However, they are mindful of the fact that they are sacrificing their time valuably to improve this dictionary, which is currently and continually being revised (Figure 11).

ลำดับ	ฟ่งฮุ้น	คำแปล	繁體	简体	Pinyin	พ้องเสียง
1	ก๊วน	เครื่องเป่า, ด่าน, ควบคุม, ต่าจ, ค้านิ่งฉิ่ง, เกี้ยวซ้อง, ท่อกระบอก	管	管	guan3	
2	กั๊ว เป่า	กระเป่า (เสียงเพี้ยนจากภาษาไทย), (荷包 หอ เป่า)			jia3 bao1	甲包
3	กั๊ว บี้ด, กั๊ว บี้ด	หีบเสื้อผ้า, กระเป๋าเดินทางใหญ่ (行李包 หัง ตี้ เป่า)			jia3 bi4	甲必
4	ชอย	(ลม)พัด, พัดกระพือ, เป่า	吹	吹	chui1	
5	ชอย เท็ด	เป่าขลุ่ย	吹笛	吹笛	chui1 di2	
6	ชอย เซียว	เป่าขลุ่ย	吹簫	吹簫	chui1 xiao1	
7	ชอย เซน	เป่าแคน	吹笙	吹笙	chui1 sheng1	
8	ชอย เซ้า จื่อ	เป่าอากวี๊ด	吹哨子	吹哨子	chui1 shao4 zi3	
9	ชอย ต้า ป่า	เป่าแตร (หุน ตี้ ต้า)	吹喇叭	吹喇叭	chui1 la3 ba5	
10	ทิว่ จิน	แบบจิว่, แบบเล็ก ๆ, แบบกระเป่า	袖珍	袖珍	xiu4 zhen1	
11	ฉี-ออง ปี้	ยิงค้ายด้วยปืน, ยิงเป่า	鎗毙	鎗毙	qiang1 bi4	

Figure 11 Example of Bansankhak's Dictionary

From figure 11, the Bansankhak's Dictionary is run in Excel which is composed of numerous columns namely:

Column 1 from the left is the number of wordlists.

Column 2 from the left is Fengshun dialect (丰顺) (a Hakka dialect) written in Thai characters.

Column 3 from the left is the Thai meaning, with some vocabularies having more than one meaning.

Column 4 from the left contains traditional Chinese characters. This is useful for someone who is not familiar with the simple Chinese characters.

Column 5 from the left contains the simple Chinese characters.

Column 6 from the left is pinyin for pronouncing Chinese characters so it is useful for people who know pinyin but do not know Chinese script.

Column 7 from the left is the homonym (if any) of the Hakka word. There is no Chinese character so a Chinese character should be selected that can be pronounced the same way. For example, the word number 2 (from Figure 11) Hakka word “kàp pǎo”, which is a borrowed word from Thai language, they selected the Chinese character “甲包”, which is homonym with “kàp pǎo” in Hakka dialect. and the column traditional and simplify Chinese characters has no Chinese character.

One member of the group who is technology literate has put the file online⁴ so that Hakka members can use it as a guide for searching Hakka words. Since it became known that there is a Bansankhak online Dictionary, more members have been using it. It is convenient to use because there is a word search box which can find either Thai words, Hakka reading or Chinese characters.

In summary, the process of revising the vocabulary continues indefinitely as it is done on a volunteer basis. New vocabulary is being continually added if members cannot find the vocabulary they want. Improving the dictionary to suit users does not require an academic to do it. But it depends on the person who needs to use it and knows the vocabulary. It can be constantly improved to suit all users' needs.

5. Discussion

In the past, technology such as radio and television was partly responsible for the loss of languages and cultures (Krauss, 1992; Cazden, 2003). Today the role of new technology and social media has drastically changed for the better efforts at language maintenance and revitalization (Jones ,2014; Carmen, 2018). Facebook is a free digital platform which most ethnic groups in many countries use as a source of information and intra-ethnic communication among their groups (The-Thitsar, 2021). Facebook is also a popular tool used by communities across the globe to connect with each other online (Scannell, 2012). During the coronavirus outbreak, study results confirm that Facebook served as a very good option for online instruction and language learning (Juli Anggoro, K. and Passakorn R., 2021). Moreover, ethnic groups usually use it as an instrument to preserve and promote ethnic languages and identity (The-Thitsar, 2021). Hakka people also use Facebook as a social media platform for language and culture revitalization and maintenance. Although the Hakka dialect has no writing system, some Hakka speakers have adapted the Thai alphabet to be used to write Hakka words. YouTube is another important digital platform used to enhance non-dominant language literacy development. Many short video clips containing dialogues, conversations, and storytelling are posted on YouTube. Those who are interested in learning a language can follow Youtube and study when they have free time. As Mposu (2021) demonstrated in his article on social media, Twitter, SoundCloud, and YouTube are breathing spaces for indigenous media. This article also shows that social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Line can help develop Hakka language skills for the Hakka group in Thailand.

⁴ <http://bansankak.qandq.co.th/credits.html>

6. Summary

Language and culture revitalization and preservation can be achieved in multiple ways, not least by encouraging the use of mother tongue in the family domain. If there are no fluent speakers in the family, those who wish to learn can find friends on social media. The most important thing is awareness of language revitalization and recognition that at least one pioneer has taken the initiative to promote language revitalization through speaking practice. One example is that of the Hakka woman who was determined to learn more Hakka language. She started making video clips to introduce simple Hakka vocabulary and uploaded them to YouTube. Her most popular YouTube video clip is ‘Yok Hua restaurant’s food, is there any Hakka language?’ (3,247 views), which emphasizes the importance of food culture. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she did not cease learning more Hakka and regularly posted on YouTube or even her Facebook page. The advantages of Facebook are that group members can communicate easily or ask questions about what want to know. If the topic is interesting or someone knows the answer, they will reply with comments. Such online conversations stimulate an exchange of knowledge and ideas and revive memories of traditional practices and past experiences. This encourages participants to think of words that have been used, and they will exchange and have productive interactions. In addition, some prefer to post food images that are unique to ethnic groups, which was also found to be a popular topic in this study. In the past, technology may have been one factor in language regression, but now it is a positive influence. Many ethnic groups around the globe use social media and new digital platforms as a tool for language and culture revitalization and preservation. It is also a good way to quickly expand the number of groups who want to learn their mother tongue. This article is one example of using free digital platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Line for promoting language revitalization and language learning. Furthermore, other new social media platforms like Zoom and Clubhouse are also used to connect Hakka speakers.

However, there are limitations, namely the difficulty in promoting a spoken language that does not have a standardized written system. This has long been an impediment to wider communication, particularly for the Hakka language and its many sub-dialects and tonality. When the tones change, the meaning changes. If people who want to communicate in this group do not have basic vocabulary, they will not be able to understand or express themselves accurately.

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