

Chinese as a Heritage Language in Thailand: Theoretical Framework, Core Themes, and Future Prospects

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Abstract

Thailand, as a Southeast Asian country with a significant ethnic Chinese population, has a profound historical background characterized by large-scale immigration from Teochew, Hakka, Hainanese, and other dialect groups, forming a unique ethnic Chinese social ecology. In the context of globalization and localization process, the transmission of Chinese as a heritage language faces both opportunities and challenges. This paper systematically reviews research on Chinese as a heritage language in Thailand, synthesizing peer-reviewed sources published between 1990 and 2025, identified through Scopus, TCI, and Google Scholar using keywords “heritage language in Thailand” and “Chinese as a heritage language in Thailand”. Through literature review, it finds that current research primarily focuses on factors influencing Chinese as a heritage language transmission among the new generation of ethnic Chinese, family language planning, language maintenance and shift among dialect groups (Teochew, Hakka), and Chinese language variation. The review indicates that significant progress has been achieved in fieldwork and empirical research. Research on Chinese as a heritage language in Thailand has developed a unique path in theory construction, topic expansion, and methodological innovation. However, there remain issues on insufficient cross-ethnic comparative research and inadequate alignment with educational policies. Future research should focus on emerging groups including children of new Chinese immigrants and children from interethnic marriage, strengthen the digital preservation and development of heritage language resources, and provide more explanatory country-specific cases for Southeast Asian heritage language research.

Keywords: Chinese in Thailand, Heritage Language, Language Identity, Family Language Planning, Research Review

Introduction

1. Problem Statement: Gaps and Debates in Existing Literature

Against the backdrop of globalization and increased population mobility, heritage language transmission holds significant importance for individual identity construction, family emotional connections, and the maintenance of social linguistic and cultural diversity. Thailand, as one of the Southeast Asian countries with the largest ethnic Chinese population and the deepest level of integration, presents unique research value regarding the linguistic ecological evolution of its ethnic Chinese community. According to Draper, J. & Selway, J.S. (2019), the ethnic Chinese population in Thailand accounts for approximately 11%-14% of the total population, predominantly consisting of Teochew speakers, followed by Hakka, Hainanese, Cantonese, and other dialect groups. While maintaining their own cultural traditions, these ethnic Chinese communities have also deeply integrated with Thai society, forming complex patterns of language contact and intergenerational transmission.

Despite growing academic interest since the 2000s driven by the China-Thailand Community with a Shared Future, the Belt and Road Initiative, and the “Chinese language fever”. Significant gaps and unresolved debates persist in the literature. First, existing studies overwhelmingly focus on Teochew and Hakka, with limited attention to other dialect groups (e.g., Hainanese, Cantonese, Min Nan). This dialect-centric bias leaves the broader heritage language ecology incomplete. Second, while family language planning has been identified as a key transmission domain, there is conflicting evidence regarding the role of interethnic marriage. Liu, H. et.al. (2025) found no statistically significant difference in heritage language proficiency between pure ethnic Chinese and interethnic families, challenging long-held assumptions. Such debates remain underexplored. Third, cross-ethnic comparative research is largely absent. Most studies examine a single dialect group in isolation, limiting generalizability across different ethnic Chinese sub-communities. Fourth, a persistent gap exists between heritage language research and educational policy formulation. Although the Thai government has expanded Chinese language education, these policies rarely address the specific needs of heritage learners (e.g., the “listening-speaking ahead, reading-writing behind” profile) or the endangered status of Chinese dialects.

2. Definition of Terms

To ensure analytical clarity, this study adopts the following operational definitions.

Heritage Language: refers to a language that an individual acquires from childhood in a family or specific community setting but is not necessarily the dominant language of the mainstream society in which

they live. In the Thai context, this concept has particular complexity. The linguistic ecology of ethnic Chinese in Thailand presents a “two-layer heritage language” structure: the first layer comprises Chinese dialects (Teochew, Hakka, Hainanese, etc.) passed down from ancestors, while the second layer is Mandarin/Putonghua (普通话) as the ethnic common language. Different generations of ethnic Chinese show significant differences in their mastery of these two language varieties, constituting a unique object of heritage language research.

Heritage Speakers: in Thailand are mainly represented by third and fourth-generation ethnic Chinese. They may simultaneously master multiple language varieties including Thai, Chinese dialects, and Mandarin, with complex proficiency structures: listening comprehension typically exceeds oral expression ability, everyday family conversation topics are better expressed than abstract topics, and dialect acquisition often precedes Mandarin acquisition. It is worth noting that the heritage language proficiency of ethnic Chinese exhibits significant individual differences, influenced by various factors as generation, family background, ethnic identity (pure Chinese families vs. interethnic families), and residential area (urban vs. rural).

3. Research Objectives and Contribution

This paper aims to: Systematically map the academic trajectory of research on Chinese as a heritage language in Thailand from 1990 to 2025, identifying key theoretical frameworks, core themes, and future prospects.

Critically evaluate existing literature by uncovering empirical gaps, methodological weaknesses, and unresolved debates (e.g., the impact of interethnic marriage, the role of state policies, the underrepresentation of certain dialect groups).

This review makes two primary contributions: It moves beyond descriptive synthesis to offer an analytical critique of how Western-origin heritage language theories have been localized in the Thai context.

By systematically cross-referencing findings across multiple dialect groups and community types, the review highlights understudied populations (e.g., Hainanese, new Chinese immigrants’ children, interethnic Chinese families) and provides a direction for future fieldwork.

Theoretical Foundations and Academic Development of Heritage Language Research in Thailand

1. Overview of Ethnic Chinese Society and Linguistic Ecology

The history of Chinese immigration to Thailand can be traced back hundreds of years, but the most significant immigration wave occurred during the reign of King Rama V (1853-1910). In 1882, the Bangkok Passenger Shipping Company was established, operating 12 ships weekly from Shantou Port to Bangkok, with the journey taking only seven days. Low ticket prices and relaxed immigration policies caused the

annual number of ethnic immigrants to surge from hundreds to tens of thousands. This immigration wave continued until 1949 when the People's Republic of China was established (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025).

After immigrated to Thailand, the ethnic Chinese community has formed hometown-based association networks. Taking Hakka people as an example, they established associations based on their places of origin, including the Fongshun Association, Dapu Association, and Xingning Association. In 1870, the first Hakka group, the “Jixian Guild Hall”, was established; in 1909, the “Siam Hakka Association” replaced the Jixian Guild Hall; in 1927, it was registered as the “Thai Chinese Hakka General Association”, and in 1972, it was renamed the “Thai Hakka General Association”. Currently, there are 37 Hakka associations distributed across various regions in Thailand (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025).

As for linguistic ecology, Thailand's linguistic landscape is extremely rich. According to Premsrirak, S. (2004), the country has over 70 languages across five major language families. Thai, as the sole official language of the nation, dominates government, education, and media. According to National Language Policy Action Plan (2021–2022) (Office of the Royal Society of Thailand, 2021), Thailand aims to enhance awareness of Standard Thai as the national language, recognize local languages as important components of ethnic identity and cultural heritage, and emphasize the economic importance of English and Mandarin Chinese as international languages.

2. Introduction and Localization of International Heritage Language Theories in Thailand

The theoretical foundation of heritage language research in Thailand mainly draws from international theories of language maintenance and shift. Fishman, J. A. (1991) emphasized the importance of intergenerational transmission and multidomain language use. Holmes, J. (2013) further explored how sociolinguistic factors lead to language shift, describing the process by which minority languages are gradually replaced by dominant languages. These theories have been widely applied and tested in research on ethnic Chinese communities in Thailand.

Spolsky, B. (2009) also provided an important analytical framework for heritage language research in Thailand. Researchers focus on how intrafamily communication patterns, parental language ideologies, and practices influence the intergenerational transmission of heritage languages. Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E. (2025) found that in northern Thai Chinese villages, a traditional model of language governance has emerged, with families and communities playing core roles horizontally.

3. Academic Development of Heritage Language Research in Thailand

Heritage language research in Thailand can be divided into three stages.

Early Stage (1980s-1990s) : Research focused on Chinese-Thai language contrast and documentation of Chinese dialects. Scholars including Saengtummachai, W. (2003), Shiwaruangrote, N.

(2008), and Ungsitipoonporn, S. (2007, 2011) conducted descriptive studies on Hakka phonology, tones, aspect systems, and vocabulary. These works laid the linguistic foundation for subsequent research.

Development Stage (2000s-2010s) : Research began to focus language use patterns and language attitudes of ethnic Chinese. Cultural topics gradually entered the research field, including Hakka funeral rituals, identity, history, and inheritance (Sae Khoo, C., 2018; Tong, M., 2011; Ungsitipoonporn, S., 2013; Wang, L., 2018). At the same time, research on minority language maintenance in Thailand gradually expanded, covering ethnic groups including Black Tai, Mon, Urak Lawoi, and Sgaw Karen (Chakshuraksha, N., 2003).

Current Hotspot Stage (2020s-present) : Research delves deeply into factors influencing Chinese heritage transmission, intergenerational transmission mechanisms, and identity construction. Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E. (2025) systematically examined sociolinguistic factors influencing Hakka language maintenance and shift through large-scale fieldwork across 38 communities with 190 participants.

Core Themes in Chinese as a heritage language Research in Thailand

1. Research on Heritage Speakers: Language Attitude, Identity, and Psychology of the New Generation of Ethnic Chinese

Language attitude and ethnic identity constitute one of the core themes in heritage language research in Thailand. Research indicates that the attitude of ethnic Chinese (especially the new generation) toward Chinese dialects and Mandarin are complex. On one hand, with the deepening of China-Thailand economic and cultural exchanges, the new generation's perceived value of Mandarin has significantly increased. Some studies found that “children's attitudes toward Chinese are more positive than those of their parents, and they have formed a Chinese identity” (Liu, H. et.al., 2025). On the other hand, with Thai national identity being dominant, Chinese is often viewed more as an instrumental language than an identity marker (Jiang, H. & Yuan, M., 2023).

Individual difference factors influencing heritage language maintenance levels have received extensive attention. Research has found that factors as generation, family background, ethnic identity (pure Chinese families vs. interethnic families), and residential area (urban vs. rural) significantly correlate with heritage language proficiency. Some studies have shown no significant difference in heritage language proficiency between pure Chinese and interethnic family members (Liu, H. et.al., 2025). This finding challenged traditional assumptions and suggests the need to reexamine the relationship between family structure and heritage language transmission.

Learning Motivation Research has become a hotspot in recent years. The learning motivations of high-level Chinese learners in Thailand exhibit a “generative pattern” of interaction between external stimuli and individual cognition. Chinese cultural symbols (films, television programs, and culinary culture), influence from “significant others” (parental expectations and teacher encouragement), ethnic identity and expectations of heritage language transmission collectively constitute the external foundation for motivation generation (Zhang, Q., 2025).

2. Research on Transmission Environments: Family, Community, and State

Family Language Planning is paramount in Thai heritage language research. The language policies, intergenerational communication patterns, parental language ideologies and practices in ethnic Chinese families play crucial roles in heritage language transmission. Research indicates that in northern ethnic Chinese villages, “a traditional model of language governance has emerged, with families and communities playing core roles horizontally” (Liu, H. et.al., 2025). In relatively closed communities, the ethnic Chinese village in Chiang Mai, for instance, intrafamily heritage language use is well maintained (Xie, Z., 2021). However, in metropolitan areas like Bangkok, intergenerational language shift is more common.

Community and Heritage Language Schools play supporting roles in heritage language maintenance. Ethnic Chinese associations (the Hakka Association and Teochew Association etc.) provide important resources for heritage language transmission through cultural activities and funding for Chinese language schools. Religious institutions play special roles in language maintenance for certain dialect groups. Similar to the case of the Basel Church in Sabah preserving Hakka culture and language, the function of Hakka churches in Thailand in language maintenance deserves further investigation (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025).

Social Language Policies and Mainstream Ideology have macroscopic impacts on heritage language transmission ecology. Research indicates that “the Thai government has no clear plans or policies to support the use of ethnic languages” (Saikham, S., 2025). The dominant position of Thai as the sole official language, combined with assimilation pressures from mainstream society, means that Chinese and other minority languages face severe survival challenges.

3. Research on Chinese Dialects as Heritage Languages: Maintenance and Shift of Multiple Varieties

Teochew Research is an important branch of Chinese as a heritage language studies. As the main dialect of the ethnic Chinese community, the current usage of Teochew in Thailand, its interaction and integration with Thai, and its intergenerational transmission status have received ongoing attention. Early research found that Teochew has significantly influenced Thai, particularly in terms of address terms.

Simultaneously, Teochew itself has undergone phonological and lexical changes through prolonged interaction with Thai (Lin, L., 2006).

In recent years, Hakka research has achieved important advancements. Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E. (2025), through large-scale fieldwork across 38 communities with 190 participants, systematically examined sociolinguistic factors influencing Hakka language maintenance. The research found that factors contributing to the preservation of the Hakka language include intracommunity marriage, residence in rural areas, and limited contact with other ethnic Chinese and Thai people; factors leading to language shift include university education, intermarriage with Thai people, and urbanization. These findings reveal the interplay between microsocial networks and macrosocial change in language preservation.

Research on Other Dialects is relatively limited. There are only scattered records of the current usage of dialects such as Hainanese, Cantonese, and Min Nan in Thailand, systematic fieldwork and theoretical analysis are still lacking. Considering the differences in immigration history, community organization, and economic status among different dialect groups, this area has broad research potential.

4. Research on Linguistic Features and Variation in Thailand

Research on Linguistic Features has revealed unique patterns of variation in ethnic Chinese. Qi, X. & Gao, L. (2025), based on cognitive linguistics spatial metaphor theory, extracted core words related to spatial quantity, spatial orientation, and spatial displacement from the dimensions of Chinese-Thai commonality, Chinese specificity, and Thai specificity, examining their projection and metaphorical mechanisms in the temporal domain. The study specifically discussed time expression in ethnic Chinese, finding that “Thai Chinese retains traditional Chinese and southern Chinese dialect time expressions, especially Teochew time expressions, while also integrating Thai local time and festival terminology”. This finding fully demonstrates the integrate phenomenon of language and culture between the two countries.

Linguistic Landscape Research provides a unique perspective for understanding Chinese usage in Thailand. Zhu’s (2024) work, *Linguistic landscapes of Southeast Asia Chinese communities*, examined the status of Chinese social linguistic landscapes in five countries: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The section on Chinese linguistic landscapes in Bangkok systematically analyzed types of language variation and their social functions, revealing distribution patterns and usage characteristics of Chinese in public spaces.

5. Research on Heritage Language Education

Heritage Language Pedagogy and Curriculum Design are hotspot in educational research. Responding to the characteristics of ethnic Chinese heritage learners--“listening and speaking ahead, reading and writing behind”, researchers have explored specialized heritage language teaching methods. For example, utilizing the “similar sound” between Thai and Teochew to help learners build language

“scaffolding” to improve learning efficiency (Hung, E., 2018).

Cultural Integration in Teaching has received extensive attention. Researchers recognize that the phenomenon of “linguistic and cultural integration” between China and Thailand should be actively applied in teaching practice. Traditional Chinese festival terms have been integrated into Thai, while elements of Thai culture have also found their way into Chinese expressions. This two-way cultural integration provides rich teaching resources for heritage language education (Qi, X. & Gao, L. 2025).

Table below is the summary of the key finds and Gaps or debates of different research themes mentioned above.

Table 1 Summary of the key finds and Gaps or debates of different research themes

Research Theme	Key Findings / Hot Topics	Gaps / Debates
Heritage Speakers: Language, Identity, and Psychology of the New Generation of Ethnic Chinese	– New generation views Mandarin as instrumental rather than identity marker. – Children’s attitudes toward Chinese more positive than parents’ (Liu, H. et. al., 2025). – No significant proficiency difference between pure Chinese and interethnic families (Liu, H. et. al., 2025), challenging traditional assumptions. – Learning motivation follows a “generative pattern” driven by cultural symbols, significant others, and ethnic identity (Zhang, Q., 2025).	– How does Thai Buddhist culture and nationalism interact with Chinese identity? – Are there generational differences in identity labeling (“Chinese” vs. “Thai Chinese”)?
Transmission Environments: Family, Community, and State	– Family language planning is crucial; closed rural communities (e.g., Chiang Mai Chinese village) maintain heritage language better (Xie, Z., 2021). – Bangkok shows significant intergenerational shift. – Ethnic associations and heritage schools provide support, but Thai government lacks explicit policies for ethnic languages (Saikham, S., 2025). – Hakka churches may play a role similar to Basel Church in Sabah (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025).	– Lack of large-scale policy analysis on how national language policy affects heritage transmission. – Role of religious institutions under-researched in Thailand.
Chinese Dialects as Heritage Languages	– Teochew: Influenced Thai vocabulary (e.g., address terms) while undergoing phonological/lexical changes (Lin, L., 2006). – Hakka: Maintenance factors: intracommunity marriage, rural residence, limited contact with Thai people. Shift factors: university education, intermarriage with Thai, urbanization (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025). – Other dialects (Hainanese, Cantonese, Min Nan): severely under-documented.	– Almost no systematic fieldwork on Hainanese, Cantonese, or Min Nan in Thailand. – Comparative studies across dialect groups are missing.
Linguistic Features and Variation	– Thai Chinese retain traditional Teochew time expressions while integrating Thai local terms and festivals (Qi, X. & Gao, L., 2025). – Linguistic landscape analysis reveals distribution patterns and social functions of Chinese in Bangkok public spaces (Zhu, X., 2024).	– How does code-switching between Thai, Teochew, and Mandarin function in daily conversation? – Need more corpus-based variation studies.
Heritage Language Education	– Teaching methods tailored to “listening-speaking ahead, reading-writing behind” profile. – Use of phonetic similarities between Thai and Teochew as scaffolding (Hung, E., 2018). – Two-way cultural integration (Chinese-Thai festivals, expressions) provides rich pedagogical resources (Qi, X. & Gao, L., 2025).	– No standardized curriculum for heritage learners in Thai schools. – Teacher training for heritage-specific pedagogy is lacking. – Alignment between research and classroom practice remains weak.

6. Comparative Analysis Across Studies and Contexts

A comparative reading of the literature reveals that the effect of family structure on heritage language transmission is context-dependent. Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E. (2025) found that intermarriage with Thai spouses accelerates Hakka shift nationwide, yet Liu, H. et.al. (2025) reported no significant proficiency difference between pure ethnic Chinese and interethnic families in northern Thai Chinese villages. This apparent contradiction is reconciled by geographic setting: in isolated, community-dense rural areas, strong local networks buffer the impact of intermarriage, whereas in urban or assimilated contexts, intermarriage directly leads to home language shift toward Thai. Similarly, urban-rural comparisons consistently show that rural residence supports maintenance (Xie, Z., 2021), while Bangkok exhibits rapid intergenerational shift (Zhu, X., 2024; Saikham, S., 2025). Urbanization removes the “protective shell” of daily heritage language use, as schools, workplaces, and media operate overwhelmingly in Thai.

Across dialect groups, research coverage is uneven. Teochew has been studied mainly for its historical influence on Thai (Lin, L., 2006), while Hakka is the most intensively researched group (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025). Hainanese, Cantonese, and Min Nan remain virtually undocumented. Despite differences in immigration history and association strength, all dialects face similar downward pressures. A striking generational divergence has emerged: attitudes toward dialects uniformly decline across generations, as for attitudes toward Mandarin, children are more positive than their parents (Liu, H. et.al., 2025). This creates a “two-layer” system where Mandarin is revalorized as an economic asset (driven by China’s rise and Thai “Chinese fever”), while dialects continue to erode from below due to failed family transmission.

Methodologically, large-scale surveys (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025) provide generalizable correlations (e.g., intermarriage, education, rural residence as predictors), but cannot explain micro-level family negotiation. Ethnographic case studies (Xie, Z., 2021; Liu, H. et.al., 2025) uncover mechanisms but lack generalizability. Narrative interviews (Zhang, Q., 2025) capture individual motivation, and linguistic landscape analysis (Zhu, X., 2024) reveals public visibility. Each method alone is incomplete; mixed-methods designs remain rare but urgently needed to bridge breadth and depth.

In synthesis, no single factor deterministically predicts Chinese as a heritage language outcomes in ethnic Chinese communities in Thailand. Instead, maintenance or shift emerges from interactions among family structure, geographic setting, dialect group, generation, and methodology. The two-layer divergence (Mandarin rising, dialects falling) is a distinctive Thai feature not fully captured by Western frameworks. Critical gaps remain: systematic cross-dialect comparisons, mixed-method studies, and research on understudied groups (Hainanese, new immigrant children, interethnic marriage families) should be prioritized to build a comprehensive, context-sensitive model.

Research Frontiers and Future Prospects

1. Methodological Advances

Chinese as heritage language research exhibits a methodological evolution from singularity to diversity. Early research primarily relied on language description and questionnaires, while current approaches have expanded to mixed methods, ethnographic research, and retrospective narrative studies. The importance of fieldwork has become increasingly prominent. Researchers emphasize “going to the field”, to immerse themselves in ethnic Chinese communities to conduct observations, interviews, and data collection in order to obtain firsthand information. This research orientation gives Chinese as a heritage language studies a strong empirical foundation and practical explanatory power.

2. Interdisciplinary Integration Trends

Chinese as heritage language research increasingly exhibits interdisciplinary integration characteristics. Research is no longer confined to the field of linguistics alone but intersects extensively with disciplines such as sociology (history of migration, community organization), anthropology (cultural identity, rituals), education (Chinese language education policies), and political science (ethnic policies). Zhang, S. (2022) studied on Southeast Asian Chinese identity from an institutional perspective, drawing on path dependence and institutional change theory, explored the path-locking mechanism of Chinese identity transformation from overseas Chinese to ethnic Chinese, providing a new theoretical perspective for understanding the evolution of ethnic Chinese identity.

3. Future Research Prospects

At the theoretical level, efforts should focus on constructing more explanatory localized theoretical models suitable for Southeast Asia's multilingual social characteristics. Existing research mostly draws on Western theoretical frameworks, with insufficient consideration of Thailand's unique sociocultural context. How to incorporate factors such as Thai Buddhist culture, monarchical traditions, and the history of Ethnic Chinese- Thai integration into theoretical frameworks is an important topic for future research.

At the practical Level, attention should be focused on aligning Thailand's Chinese language education policies with the needs of heritage language transmission, to the digital preservation and development of heritage language resources. Guo, X. (2021), at the First China-ASEAN Language and Culture Forum, pointed out that Southeast Asian Chinese represents a language resource shared by ASEAN countries, characterized by its non-renewable nature, regional specificity, historical significance, and diversity. Recognizing the cultural heritage attributes of Southeast Asian Chinese and deepening research on Chinese transmission theories and methods as heritage languages represent important tasks for future ethnic Chinese research.

At the community level, attention should be directed toward previously understudied specific heritage speaker groups, such as children of new Chinese immigrants, children from interethnic marriages,

and different dialect groups in the mountainous regions of northern Thailand. The heritage language transmission patterns of these emerging groups may differ from traditional ethnic Chinese communities and deserve systematic investigation.

Conclusion

After decades of development, research on Chinese as a heritage language in Thailand has achieved significant accomplishments in theoretical introduction, fieldwork accumulation, topic expansion, and methodological innovation. Research has revealed the complex picture of Chinese heritage transmission in Thailand-- Chinese dialects such as Teochew and Hakka face varying degrees of maintenance and shift pressure, Mandarin as an emerging heritage variety has gained more acceptance among the new generation of ethnic Chinese. Families, communities, and the state play different roles in Chinese as a heritage language transmission.

The unique value of Chinese as heritage language research lies not only in providing typical cases for understanding linguistic and cultural transmission in global contexts but also in offering academic support for promoting mutual understanding between the ethnic Chinese and Thai peoples and building a multilingual ecosystem. In an era when global linguistic diversity faces challenges, the maintenance and revitalization of Chinese as a heritage language require joint efforts from academia, communities, and governments. As researchers have noted, “to maintain the language, community members, researchers, and governments must implement several steps and strategies, including using the mother tongue in family environments and implementing supportive government policies” (Phiranawong, S., Ungsitipoonporn, S., & Sandman, E., 2025).

We encourage more researchers to explore Thailand’s rich resources for heritage language research, contributing new insights to Southeast Asian heritage language studies and international language transmission theory through solid fieldwork and in-depth theoretical analysis.

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