The Power of Language: Co–Creation of Mutual Values and Thai Language Abilities in Thai–Malay Muslim Farmers' Transmission of Local Organic Rice Farming Innovation in Ban La–han, Narathiwat Province

Research Article

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Abstract

This research aims 1) to shift the thinking paradigm of Thai–Malay Muslim farmers from believing that they could not communicate in the Thai language to believing otherwise, and 2) to transform their intangible knowledge into concrete practices. The conceptual framework used here includes the concept of transformative learning, the formation of relationships between Thai–Malay Muslim farmers adopting local organic rice farming practices and experts in Thai studies, and the application of learning accomplishments towards co–creating mutual values. Concerning the methodology of this study, a participatory research strategy was applied. The Thai–Malay Muslim farmers' Thai language communication skills were developed through co–design of knowledge, co–creation of knowledge, and co–dissemination of knowledge. The development involved 4 activities: 1) collecting data on abandoned rice fields and farming areas; 2) collecting data on the quantities of rice produced annually, as well as examining whether such production was sufficient to match household consumption; 3) mapping the quantities of wet–season rice and dry–season rice areas, and 4) the brainstorming of the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers' ideas about being professional farmers. It should be noted that Thai language knowledge and communication skills were integrated throughout these activities. Experts provided the farmers with guidance on such issues as word sequences in the Thai language, presentation sequences, clarification of information, explanation of tables and maps, and demonstration. These encounters allowed the farmers to constantly practice their Thai language communication skills. The activities not only encouraged the farmers to co–create knowledge and instilled in them the value of the Thai language, but they also satisfied the participants' language development needs. The farming participants changed their beliefs and overcame their fear of using the Thai language. Therefore, it can be said that, because of their improved Thai abilities, they would be able to use the language to transfer their knowledge about local organic rice farming practices to others, such as the young and those interested in farming. By way of such empowerment, these people, too, could then access the wisdom of the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers.

Keywords: Narathiwat province, Co–creation of mutual values, Thai language communication, Local organic rice farming, Thai–Malay Muslim farmers

Background: Statement of the problem

Ban La-han, geographically shown in Figure 1, is a community in Waeng sub-district municipality, Waeng district, Narathiwat province. Prior to 1963, all the low plain areas in the community were rice fields. Villagers in this community have farmed for over five generations. Consequently, the community has accumulated much rice farming wisdom. Their beliefs concerning rice farming have informed this wisdom: such beliefs have been demonstrated in rituals, plays, and activities. Some examples of rituals are those performed before rice planting, the Khwan-khao ritual (the performance of paying respect to the goddess of rice), ceremonies held after rice planting, the Manohra performance, the Ma-yong performance, and cockfighting. Nevertheless, the volume of rice farming has decreased from 1956 to 1963 because of an epidemic of rice insect pests. In 1981, Ban La-han villagers eventually stopped rice farming. Rice fields, rice wisdom, and cultural rice farming activities were, accordingly, abandoned. Nevertheless, the rice fields, although abandoned, were maintained, until 2006, when the restoration of the abandoned rice fields, as well as the establishment of a Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming, was initiated by a group of youths in the community.

The restoration of the abandoned rice fields was initiated by a small group of 9 juveniles, who restored 13 acres in 2006, and then 32 acres in 2017. At present, 48 acres of rice fields have been restored (out of 64 acres). Such restoration efforts have

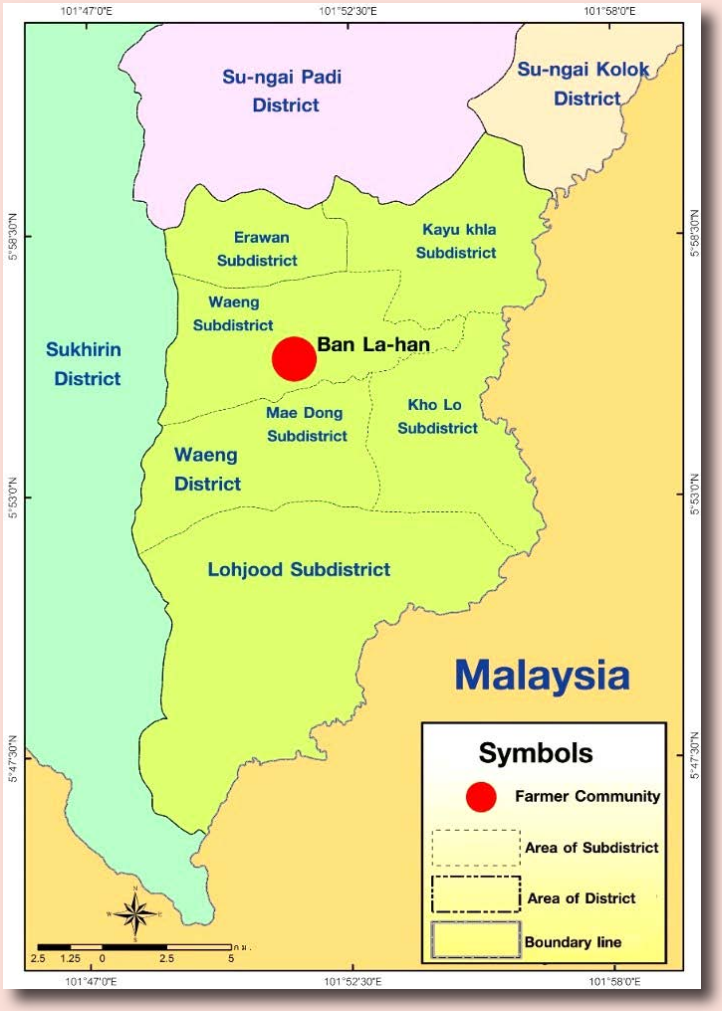

Figure 1 Map of Ban La-han, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province
(Created by Mr. Chalong Kaewprasert, Geography Programme, Thaksin University)

been continuously undertaken from 2006 until the present day (2018). The youth have learned farming techniques from senior farmers in their communities. With the knowledge acquired, the experiences accumulated throughout a decade, and beliefs that rice field learning sources promote sustainable development, the juveniles thus decided to establish a Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming in 2016. Nevertheless, they were still faced with some problems when arranging school activities, due to their limited knowledge of the Thai language. This problem arose because most Thai–Malay Muslim farmers in this community had merely completed a program of compulsory education. Their mother tongue is Bahasa Melayu, which is used for learning and transforming their culture. Moreover, they rarely use the Thai language in their daily life. As their experience in using Thai is rather restricted, they were not confident about using the language with others, even with other farmers in their own community.

Because of this situation, the researchers and the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers concurred that there was indeed a need for the farmers themselves to cultivate their Thai language skills. This cultivation was expected to enable the farmers to lecture and transmit their knowledge and experiences concerning local organic rice farming to others. The researchers argued that language had its own power. As an important tool for communication, language can be used in human activities (Antoni, 2012). As claimed by Farquhar & Fitzsimons (2011), language can create truth through forms, comparisons, and interpretations. When language users and language receivers understand the messages conveyed, the function of language is considered to be successful.

In terms of changing the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers' thinking paradigm from believing that they could not communicate in the Thai language to believing otherwise, the researchers applied the concept of transformative learning, as this was perceived to be suitable for adult learning (Hodge, 2014). The process of transformative learning in adults should be promoted through actual practices and interactions which result in changed conceptions, perceptions, beliefs, values, and worldviews, all of which give rise to participants' self–transformation (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009).

Regarding the process of the farmers' Thai language development, this study used the concepts of the co–creation of mutual values. Through this framework, the farmers would be able to co–create and connect values of learning, as well as sharing their experiences with one another (Chem & Krogh, 2017). Such value co–creation is a key to the creation of new values and relationships (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The integration of knowledge for creating new knowledge comprises co–design of knowledge, co–creation of knowledge, and co–dissemination of knowledge (Mauser et al., 2013).

The aforementioned concepts were used as the conceptual framework of this study. A participatory research strategy was applied, with 23 Thai–Malay Muslim farmers as the research participants. Thai language development in the participants was undertaken for 18 months. Table 1 reports information about the

Table 1 Information about Thai–Malay Muslim farmers partaking in the Thai language development project, categorized according to their age, educational background, and farming experience

Thai–Malay Muslim farmers partaking in the Thai language development project											
Number/ Percentage	Age			Educational background				Farming experience			
	Greater than 60 years	40–59 years	20–39 years	Less than or equal to Prathom–suksa 6	Less than or equal to Mattha–yomsuksa 3	Less than or equal to Mattha–yomsuksa 6	High Vocational Certificate and/or Bachelor Degree	Greater than 50 years	20–30 years	10–19 years	1–9 years
Persons	5	5	13	12	5	4	2	5	4	8	6
Percentage	21.75	21.75	56.50	52.17	21.75	17.39	8.69	21.75	17.39	34.78	26.08

participants. The participants' ages varied. Most participants were aged 20 to 39, their educational background was less than or equal to Prathomsuksa 6, and their farming experience ranged from 10 years to 19 years.

The process of Thai language development in Thai–Malay Muslim farmers

The process of Thai language development in Thai–Malay Muslim farmers, who were the participants in this study, applied the 'co–creation of values' concept, which consisted of the following 3 stages: 1) the co–design of knowledge, 2) the co–creation of knowledge, and 3) the co–dissemination of knowledge. Regarding the co–design of knowledge, this component started with arranging a framework that would be used, and ensuring that everyone involved in this study understood it. The activities designed for the participants needed to empower them to use the Thai language for communication, and the topics of the activities needed to be concerned with rice farming, so that their background knowledge would facilitate their learning. Eventually, 4 activities arose: 1) collecting data on abandoned rice fields and farming areas; 2) collecting data on the quantities of the rice produced annually, as well as examining whether such production was sufficient to match household consumption; 3) mapping the quantities of wet–season rice and dry–season rice areas, and 4) brainstorming of the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers' ideas towards being professional farmers. These activities were related to the participants' daily life and their particular contexts (Levinson, 1983). To reiterate, the participants were encouraged to use the Thai language in the activities. They could also use non–verbal communication to help them attain successful communication (Mey, 2001). Concerning the co–creation of knowledge, this component involved the integration of knowledge about local organic rice farming practices and the Thai language. The participants and the researchers (including experts in Thai studies) had constant interactions throughout these activities. The participants were provided with knowledge about several aspects of the Thai language, such as word sequence, presentation sequence, contextual clarification of the information, explanations of tables and maps, and demonstrations. The activities used in the stage of the co–creation of knowledge is described as follows:

Activity 1: The farmers were asked to collect data on abandoned rice fields and farming areas during 4 periods of time: namely, in 2006, 2013, 2015, and 2017. They recorded the data in newsprints using a tabular format.

As part of this activity, the farmers were encouraged to use the Thai language to discuss topics concerning abandoned rice fields and farming areas, such as the increasing numbers of rice field areas and households that planted the rice, as well as factors affecting such increases (Table 2). Based on the findings, the participants finally concluded that the increases could be attributed to the fact that the rice farming itself helped lessen families' expenses. This conclusion led to the second activity, which encouraged the farmers to research whether the quantities of rice produced annually were enough to sustain household consumption needs.

Activity 2: The farmers were asked to gather data on the quantities of the rice produced annually and to examine whether such production was sufficient to match household consumption. The gleaned data was then analyzed using the average. In the data analysis process, the farmers were assisted by experts in descriptive statistics.

Through this activity, the farmers learned to gather, categorize, and compare data. They found that Thai–Malay Muslim farmers at Ban La–han could produce rice in 9.54 months, which was considered to be insufficient for average annual consumption (Table 3). However, they also found that rice farming reduced their families' expenses. In addition, the farmers collaboratively discussed and sought ways to increase rice production in order to supply their one–year consumption. One of their proposed methods was planning wet–season rice, as opposed to dry–season rice. The participants claimed that some farmers in their communities had done some experiments, planting both types of rice, and finding that wet–season rice farming produced more rice.

Table 2 Information on abandoned rice fields and farming areas in 2006, 2013, 2015, and 2017

Information on abandoned rice fields and farming areas								
Household engaged in restoration					Abandoned field areas (acre)			
Year	2006	2013	2015	2017	2006	2013	2015	2017
Number	9	12	23	32	32	64	80	120

Table 3 Quantities of rice produced annually by households that restored their abandoned rice fields and sufficiency to match household consumption in 2015

Household restoring abandoned fields	Numbers of family members (per person)	Average rice produced annually (kilograms)	Average annual household demand for rice consumption (kilograms)	Quantities of rice produced annually and sufficiency to match household consumption (month)
23	5.00	190.83	240	9.54

Activity 3: The farmers were asked to gather data on the quantities of wet-season rice and dry-season rice areas in 2015 and 2017, map it, and compare the data derived from each year.

In this activity, they were encouraged to explain the data from the maps and the reasons why the farming areas increased. They also discussed an obvious consequence of planting wet-season rice: enabling the fields to be abundant with fish, grasshoppers, and local vegetables, as shown in Figure 2.

Figures 3 and 4 indicate the quantities of wet-season rice and dry-season rice fields in 2015 and 2017. The participants found that 11 households planted wet-season rice in 2015, and 27 households did so in 2017.

Activity 4: Brainstorming how the participants could be professional farmers.

As they represented a variety of ages, educational backgrounds, and levels of farming experience, the participants' exchanges of ideas were interesting, resulting in an increase in their knowledge. The participants concluded in this activity that theory and practice were equally important in enabling the participants to become professional farmers. They suggested that the youth needed to learn about 1) how to determine an auspicious time for rice

Figure 2 Making maps showing the quantities of wet-season rice and dry-season rice fields at House no. 203 at the multipurpose building at the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming, Ban La-han, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, on October 9-10, 2017

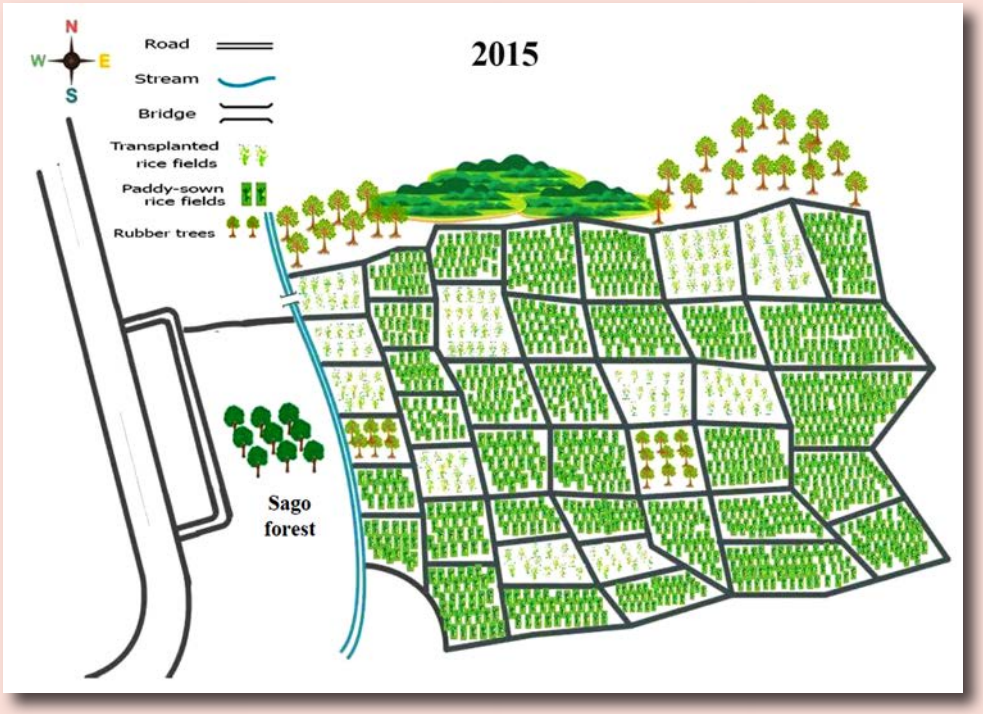

Figure 3 Quantities of wet-season rice and dry-season rice areas in 2015 (11 households owning wet-season rice areas)

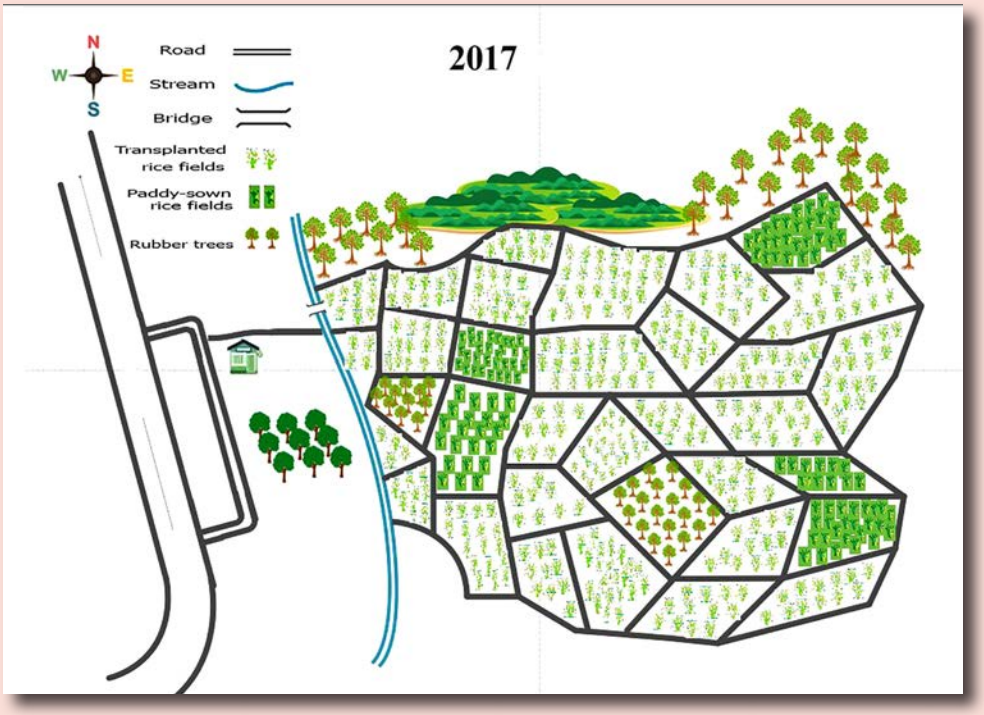

Figure 4 Quantities of wet-season rice and dry-season rice areas in 2017 (27 households owning wet-season rice areas)

Figure 5 Farmers brainstorming their ideas about professional farming and practicing their lectures on various situations at House no. 203, Ban La-han, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, on November 11, 2017

farming; 2) the process of ploughing; 3) preparation of rice seeds; 4) rice farming methods; 4) nourishing rice after planting, and 6) rice harvest. Figure 5 shows examples of this activity.

Throughout the 18-month project, the farmers received constant practice in using the Thai language. Nevertheless, from 2016 to 2017, their background knowledge of the language varied, resulting in various levels of increasing Thai language proficiency. With respect to the lecturers who provided knowledge to the other farmers and youths, the 23 farmers themselves collaboratively selected the 13 lecturers they deemed to be appropriate. They applied the gains from their brainstorming in the fourth activity to create learning-based stations. Each selected lecturer was responsible for a station, according to his expertise, as shown in Table 4.

Pertaining to the last stage, the co-dissemination of knowledge, the farmers were empowered to disseminate their local wisdom to children, juveniles, and others interested in it, by using the Thai language. In so doing, the farmers' knowledge and experiences were integrated, resulting in the creation of the following 4 learning-based stations, as follows:

Table 4 Information on 13 farmers selected to be professional lecturers at the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming at Ban La-han, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province

Name	Educational background	Age	Lecture topic
1. Mr. Due-lo Sa-a	Prathomsuksa 2	67	How to sew Chak leaves (Nipa palm leaves) for roofing a house
2. Mr. Po-te Pa	Prathomsuksa 4	60	How to produce compost
3. Mr. Waema Sama-ae	Prathomsuksa 6	39	How to produce herbal insect repellents
4. Mr. A-hama Nu	Prathomsuksa 6	37	How to produce Trichoderma
5. Mr. Nawi Hama	Prathomsuksa 6	38	How to plough rice fields and transplant rice seedlings
6. Mr. Hasbulo Ali	Prathomsuksa 6	47	How to prepare rice lines for planting
7. Mr. Ma-atsami Chetae	Prathomsuksa 6	30	Agriculture in Islamic ways
8. Mr. Rusalan Kariya	Prathomsuksa 6	38	How to culture rice plants and harvest them
9. Mr. Satopa Hama	Mathayomsuksa 3	56	How to conduct soil analysis
10. Mr. Munit Chemi	Mathayomsuksa 6	40	Sufficiency economy
11. Mr. A-hama Sa-u	Mathayomsuksa 6	40	How to produce biological fertilizers and compost used in rice fields
12. Mr. Arif Ha-nirae	High Vocational Certificate	25	Facilitator
13. Mr. Muhammat Bing	Bachelor Degree	36	Good and bad insects

Station 1: Ploughing rice fields and transplanting rice seedlings

Station 2: Producing herbal insect repellents, biological fertilizers, and compost used in rice fields

Station 3: Sewing Chak leaves (Nipa palm leaves) for roofing a house

Station 4: Sufficiency economy

Impacts and changes: The farmers' enhanced Thai language proficiency and changed situations

The cultivation of the Thai language in the famers has proven beneficial. It has helped them gain more confidence in their knowledge and experiences. With increasing confidence about their Thai language abilities, the 13 farming lecturers were able to give lectures on what they knew to others: both children and adult audiences. As one of the pioneering farmers claimed:

"Previously, I thought that schools were the places where we could acquire knowledge. But now, I realize that knowledge is not that far. It is around us. It is actually in our daily work. We do not have to run for it."

(Mr. A-hama Nu, interviewed by Pariyagorn Chukaew at the multipurpose building at the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming, Ban La-han, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, on January 20, 2017).

These 13 farming lecturers transmitted knowledge of organic rice farming by way of explanations, demonstrations, and practices in the 4 learning-based stations. In addition, the farmers at the school also publicized contents on such farming and updates on the Youth School on the school's Facebook page, as shown in Figure 6.

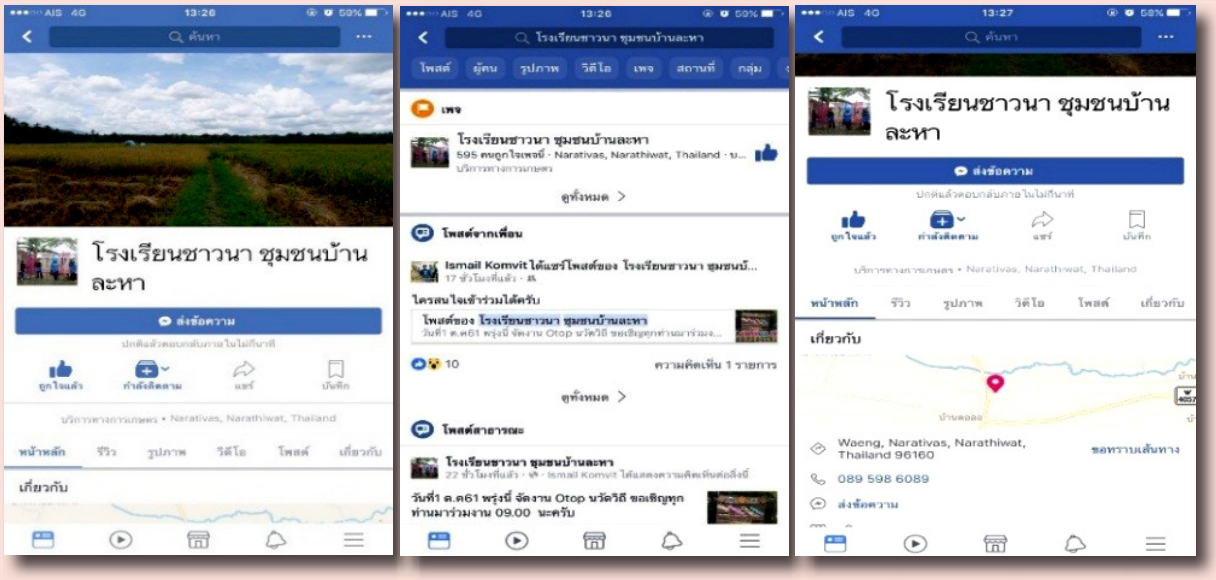

Figure 6 Facebook page of Ban La-han Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming, created by lecturers from Narathiwat Community College and farming lecturers at the multipurpose building at the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming, Ban La-han, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, on December 2, 2017

Ban La-han Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming arranged several activities to benefit various groups of people. The researchers surveyed the school's Facebook page and found that, from 2017-2018, there had been 18 groups of people visiting the school (1,231 visitors). Their information is as follows.

- 17 Ban La-han villagers' children
- 65 students from Narathiwat Community College
- 60 students from Romania School in Waeng district
- 70 students from Darunsalam School in Ra-nge district
- 120 students from Thetsaban 3 School in Su-ngai Kolok district
- 50 students from Ban Buketa School in Waeng district
- 120 teachers and students from Wiangsuwan Witthayakhom School in Waeng district
- 35 students from Tadika School, Watoniyah Muslims, in Waeng district
- 50 children and juveniles in Changphueak sub-district Administrative Organisation, Chane sub-district, Chane district, Narathiwat province
- 186 students from Islamic English Camp in Narathiwat province
- 114 students from Ban Chehem School in Waeng district
- 102 students from Atchakirin School in Waeng district
- 60 students from Princess of Naradhiwas University in Narathiwat province
- 32 students from Prince of Songkhla University, Pattani Campus
- 50 villagers from Ban Thai Yuenyong, Lo-chut sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province
- 25 students from an elderly school in Waeng district
- 30 staff members from Talingchan sub-district Administrative Organisation in Bannang Sata district, Yala province
- 45 agriculturists in Waeng district

Four learning-based stations

Station 1: Ploughing rice fields and transplanting rice seedlings

At this station, participants, who were children and juveniles, leaned about the process of ploughing rice fields and transplanting rice seedlings. Apart from learning by doing, they were also encouraged to see the importance of producing rice for household

consumption, and the value of rice itself. It was expected that they would be proud of being able to plant rice, a career of their ancestors. As shown in Figure 7, the students from Wiangsuwan Witthayakhom School in Waeng district learned about rice farming at the Youth School. These students could further apply what they had learned to develop rice fields at their own school.

Another example can be found in Figure 8. One of the Ban La-han rice farming heirs, Master Fandi Mueli, started planting rice himself at the age of 14. He was considered to be the youngest farmer at Ban La-han.

Figure 7 Students from Wiangsuwan Witthayakhom School in Waeng district learning about ploughing rice fields and transplanting rice seedlings (pictures published on the Youth School's Facebook page, on December 20, 2018, and March 9, 2019)

Figure 8 Master Fandi Mueli ploughing rice at a rice field in M.3, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province (pictures published on the Youth School's Facebook page, on October 25, 2017)

Station 2: Producing herbal insect repellents, biological fertilizers, and compost used in rice fields

This station aimed at promoting environmentally-friendly rice farming. Participants were provided with the information about organic rice farming that prevents soil degradation and erosion improves the environment, and provides good health for people in the community from consuming organic rice. The participants were also given a demonstration of the production of biological fertilizers and compost. Moreover, they were enabled to identify bad and good insects in rice fields, and decrease the use of chemicals by applying local herbs to produce biological fertilizers and compost. Learning achievements at this station were shown under the post "Do Your Best...Exploring the Nature and Inculcating the Conservation of Natural Resources" on the Youth School's Facebook page, published on February 19, 2019. In addition, as a result of this station, two rice farming networks were established: the Ban Krue-saw Rice Organic Farming Community and the Ba-ngo Haleng Rice Organic Farming Community in Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province. Figure 9 shows the activities mentioned.

Figure 9 Farming youth students from Ban Mai-fad School in Kayukla sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwatprovince, and students from Thetsaban 3 School in Su-ngai Kolok district, Narathiwat province, learning to produce herbal insect repellents, biological fertilizers, and compost at Ban La-han rice fields, M.3, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province (pictures published on the Youth School's Facebook page, on December 15, 2017, and January 8, 2019)

Station 3: Sewing Chak leaves (Nipa palm leaves) for roofing a house

This station was considered to be associated with the fourth station (Sufficiency Economy). Participants were encouraged to see the value of applying their local natural resources to benefit their daily lives. The farming lecturer demonstrated how Chak leaves were sewn for roofing a house. Figure 10 shows the participants' activities at this station.

Station 4: Sufficiency economy

In this station, participants were given information about the philosophy of Sufficiency economy. They also had the opportunity to translate the philosophy into practice, by doing such activities as mushroom cultivation, planting vegetables in old car tires, and exploring edible vegetables in the Youth School area, as shown in Figure 11.

These examples of mutual learning by people of different age groups indicate that local learning sources, local wisdom, and local organic rice farming were recognized, and that Thai-Malay Muslim farmers attempted to develop themselves and generate their knowledge and wisdom for society. According to the Facebook page of Ban La-han Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming, from the end of 2017 to the beginning of 2019, there had been 7,411 people visiting the page and clicking "like" on it. Several comments reflect the success of such learning, with examples as follows:

Figure 10 Students from Islambamroong in Su-ngai Padi district, Narathiwat province, students from Thetsaban 3 School in Su-ngai Kolok district, Narathiwat province, and students from Jamiah Islam Sheikh Daud Al-Fathani (JISDA) in Yala province learning to sew Chak leaves (Nipa palm leaves) for roofing a house (pictures published on the Youth School's Facebook page, on December 28, 2018, January 8, 2019, and February 12, 2019)

Figure 11 Children and juveniles in Changphueak sub-district Administrative Organisation, Chane sub-district, Chane district, Narathiwat province, students from an elderly school in Waeng district, Narathiwat province, and students from Wiangsuwan Witthayakhom School in Waeng district, Narathiwat province learning at the station of Sufficiency economy (pictures published on the Youth School's Facebook page, on February 3, 2018, September 11, 2018, and February 18, 2019)

"Thank you all the lecturers at the school and everyone involved. We, Thetsaban 3 School students, could learn local peoples' way of life and realize the actual value of rice. See you again in the harvest season."

"Well done... Superb."

"We will be your support."

"What a good atmosphere! It is beautiful and serene. You guys have done so well."

"The rice is ready to be harvested. What a gorgeous view!"

"I would also like to arrange such activities. I will ask for some advice from you guys soon."

"As students, we will apply what we have learned from the school to help others needy farmers."

"We love to give you a round of applause."

"It is great that you did this for others' benefits. I believe you will surely be rewarded with good things as well."

"Excellent! The school director has a degree in agriculture. He has applied his knowledge to develop our community, Cheme. He is the real man of this 4G."

"We, the villagers at M.3, Ban Cheme, visited the school to seek inspiration, and acquired constructive information on increasing incomes and reducing expenses."

Apart from these comments, there were also lessons learned as a consequence of learning from the school. For example, the youths of the club 'Yang Yim', in Waeng district, Narathiwat province, found that they had positive viewpoints towards environmentally friendly agriculture, and realized the values of natural resources. Examples of their comments are below:

"Nowadays, we rarely know about the lives of those of previous generations. But, by participating in the activities arranged by the school, we learned and had a better understanding of the hardship faced by them. Thank you so much. We feel lucky to see the rice fields and, hence, freshen up our lives. These days, it is hard to find and experience the lives of people of earlier generations. We have learned that we should restore our own farms, as they would help us sustain our life. Many thanks to all of you who gave us knowledge and experiences."

"I am grateful for all the farmers who gave me knowledge on organic rice farming. In my place, insecticides are still being used in rice fields. However, after learning from this school, I planned to substitute them with herbal insect repellents and biological fertilizers and compost. Actually, I felt bad when seeing someone using the insecticides. I knew such a use was dangerous, but had no idea how to stop it. I discussed what I have learned from the school with my friends, and decided to apply it to our farms. We would like to start this integrated farming, so that we ourselves can consume farming products and also sell our surplus, helping us to start a small business in the future."

(Lessons learned from the youths of Yang Yim Club in Waeng district, Narathiwat province, interviewed at a rice field, M.3, Ban La-han, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, on May 14, 2018)

Discussion

The progress and development of the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming underlines the power of language, which created changes to Thai-Malay Muslim farmers, particularly in terms of their ability in using the Thai language, despite their mother tongue of Bahasa Melayu. Therefore, learning the Thai language among Thai-Malay Muslim farmers is important. The power of language is in the meanings expressed through it, both explicitly and implicitly. Its power also lies in discourses which could explain, influence, persuade, or convince others through the use of language. Language is, thus, considered to be a tool, leading to various opportunities in life. It also enhances sharing, as well as better understanding, among people (Johnston, 2012). Apart from its influences on people's life, language is capable of reflecting social identities in certain contexts. Additionally, it provides people with opportunities to express their own stances in their society (Gallagher-Brett, 2005). The project of Thai language development in Thai-Malay Muslim farmers in Ban La-han, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, is an obvious example of the power of language and the co-creation of values.

The project resulted in changed values and behaviors among the Thai-Malay Muslim farmers who participated. They could apply what they learned to their lives. The project also increases their awareness towards their mutually social mission, towards possessing mutual aims, and towards translating the aims into practice. These reflect their new perspectives and self-development (Kucukaydin, I. & Cranton, P., 2012; Chen, 2012; Mezirow, 1997). These consequences have been generated by the integration of the 3 stages: co-design of knowledge, co-production of knowledge, and co-dissemination of knowledge (Mauser et al., 2013). The co-creation of values was found not only between farmers and young people, but also among different groups of people. The school was then considered to be a stage for knowledge provision and exchange, as well as for social interactions. The co-creation of values which benefitted themselves and others is a good example of a creation that affects changes in society (Agrawala et al., 2015). The Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming demonstrates how a small group of farmers developed itself to be a farming network and, finally, a learning source for society. This is in accordance with what one of the elder famers there said:

"Cultivating the rice to gain rice and other benefits"

(Mr. Muhammat Bing, interviewed by Pariyagorn Chookaew at Ban La-han rice field, M.3, Waeng sub-district, Waeng district, Narathiwat province, on July 5, 2018).

Conclusions

When language is no longer a barrier for Ban La-han villagers, the school becomes an academic community for various groups of people across different ages. They can participate in the 4 learning-based stations arranged by the school: Ploughing rice fields and transplanting rice seedlings, Producing herbal insect repellents, biological fertilizers, and compost used in rice fields, Sewing Chak leaves (Nipa palm leaves) for roofing a house, and Sufficiency economy. The school also receives attention from mass media. For example, representatives of the school were interviewed by reporters from Daily News, Thai Channel 2, NBT, and 2HD. The Royal Thai Army Radio and Television Station (Channel 5) interviewed people at the school and made a documentary presenting how new generations of youth associate themselves with the idea of a sufficiency economy. Another documentary on the school was made by Modernine TV. Moreover, the people in the school were invited to participate in several seminars, such as a seminar on world food security, held at Ban Kra-an, Thamuang sub-district, Thepa district, Songkhla province, and a seminar on pursuing His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's concept of Sufficiency economy, held in Waeng district, Narathiwat province. These examples clearly indicate the importance of language in influencing changes which could result in sustainable community developments.

The success of the school can be attributed to the interactions and the coordination of Thai-Malay Muslim farmers, with assistance and guidelines provided by the researchers. This results in the co-creation of mutual values which reflect the farmers' identities. Each farmer had his/her expertise which contributed to the success. The school also created several impacts, such as the restoration and expansion of organic rice farming, the expansion of organic rice farming networks, the implementation of the Sufficiency economy philosophy, and the creation of rice farming learning through research.

In this project, two concrete consequences include: 1) the expansion of integrated learning about organic rice farming and social acceptance, and 2) community-based research (CBR) participated in by the Thai-Malay Muslim farmers at Ban La-han.

1) The expansion of integrated learning about organic rice farming and social acceptance

This expansion of learning is concerned with the integration of what the locality already had as the basis of development, according to the philosophy of Sufficiency economy. This results in several constructive agricultural projects: the cultivation of various edible plants, quail farming, native goat farming, the conservation of native buffaloes for sustaining local rice farming, Sajor-caju mushroom farming, the production of biological fertilizers and compost used in rice fields, the plantation of herbs for producing insect repellents, the restoration of Metroxylon Sagu plants, community-based tourism, and homestays. In addition, the expansion of integrated learning has enhanced career opportunities for female farmers in response to the demand for the Youth School, as well as community-based tourism. Notably, these efforts bring back organic rice farming to the community, and arouse community spirit, for every member feels a sense of belonging and gains more from sharing with one another. That is to say, local people of different ages interact more in their every-day activities, local children enjoy playing in the fields, and the young help their parents plant the rice. Aside from these gains, Ban La-han Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming was awarded with prizes. An example of the prizes is a poster award for presenting the information of the school. Another example is a prize awarded to the school for being a good example of a civil society organization that helps to solve problems and develop the areas of Thailand's deep south. Examples of activity are shown in Figure 12.

2) Community-based research (CBR) participated in by the Thai-Malay Muslim farmers at Ban La-han

Through the process of CBR, the Thai-Malay Muslim farmers were able to develop themselves by taking part in the project "Approaches to the Development of the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming: Making Rice Fields Local Learning Sources and Creating Happy Community at Ban La-han, Waeng district, Narathiwat province", which was supported by the Department of Research for Local Development, the Thailand Research Fund in 2016-2018, under contract no. RDG60S0002. As a result, the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming could benefit in the following 3 ways.

Figure 12 Approaches to organic rice farming and activities arranged by the Youth School for Promoting Organic Rice Farming (pictures taken by the researchers in 2016–2018)

Firstly, the school had connections with 6 communities: Ban La–han, Ban Ba–ngo Ha–leng, and Ban Krue Saw in Waeng sub–district; Ban Ya–hor in Mae–dong sub–district; Ban Tue–mayu in Arawan sub–district; and Ban Hu–tae Ma–jae in Kayu–kla sub–district. All of these are in Waeng district, Narathiwat province. Moreover, a memorandum of understanding has been made between the Youth School and a technical college in Kelantan, Malaysia, and the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers were invited to disseminate their wisdom about organic rice farming at this college.

Secondly, the organic rice farming's women group association in the community has experimented with methods for organic rice vermicelli made from organic rice.

Thirdly, the Thai–Malay Muslim farmers have developed the Youth School and the rice fields to be Muslim farming tourist destinations, and have arranged such activities as hiking in Sagu forest, rubber tapping in Sagu forest, and using E–taen Thai tractors for transporting tourists to visit rice mills. These are still under testing with small groups of tourists.

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