



# SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEY OF SO IN NORTHEASTERN THAILAND

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this survey was to determine the need for further language development among the So in Northeastern Thailand. The instruments include word lists and sociolinguistic questionnaires. The sociolinguistic questionnaires were analysed by comparing responses to determine dialect perceptions, language vitality, and bilingual proficiency among So speakers. The word lists were analysed using lexical comparison to determine potential groupings within So speech varieties. Key findings are that Isan seems to be generally well understood among the So. The So language appears to be high in vitality. There is broad comprehension of the Photi Phaisan dialect of So, but it does not appear to be as well understood in some So villages.

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To all the district, sub-district, and village leaders, the So people from Photi Phaisan, Noi Siwilai, Nong Nang Leung, Don Yang, Kham Toey, Na Tao, Pha Thai, and Khok Muang: We are grateful for your assistance, patience, and forbearance during our research. We hope this research will add value to the lives of the So in Northeastern Thailand, and elsewhere.

Last but not least, thanks to the Tebow family for generously allowing us use of their truck.

For the research team

Marcus Choo  
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# Executive Summary

## 1 Background

So is a member of the Katuic cluster of speech varieties in the Mon-Khmer branch of the Austroasiatic language family. It is spoken in Laos and Thailand. Of the reported 160,000 total So speakers, most are located in Laos (102,000). The So in Thailand are located generally in the northeastern region; most of them live in the northeastern provinces of Nakhon Phanom (Tha-uthen district), Sakon Nakhon (Kusuman district), and Mukdahan.

The So are not indigenous to Thailand, having migrated from Laos during different periods over 150 years to escape economic and political hardship in their homeland. Thakek, Mueang Wang (Savannakhet), and Kham Muon (possibly Khammuan) are mentioned as the original homeland of the So.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to assess the need for further vernacular literature development among So speakers in Northeastern Thailand. To this end, the team hoped to evaluate the language vitality of So and the potential to use materials in a related variety (from Photi Phaisan village) or a language of wider communication (Central Thai or Isan). This led to the following research questions for this survey.

1. Do So speakers master Central Thai or Isan adequately?
2. What are the attitudes of So speakers toward Central Thai or Isan?
3. Do So speakers adequately comprehend the Photi Phaisan dialect?
4. What are the attitudes of So speakers toward the Photi Phaisan dialect?
5. Does it appear likely that the So variety will continue to be spoken by future generations?

## 3 Methodology

Five villages were surveyed: Noi Siwilai, Nong Nang Leung, Don Yang, Kham Toey, and Na Tao.

The team collected word lists and administered sociolinguistic questionnaires in each of the villages. The word lists were used to determine lexical similarity between village varieties. Two kinds of questionnaires were used in this survey: a knowledgeable insider sociolinguistic questionnaire and individual sociolinguistic questionnaires. Both kinds were used to gather information on language vitality, attitudes, and opinions relating to language use and proficiency.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Mastery of Central Thai or Isan

Isan appears more widely used than Central Thai in So communities. However, not all the community appears to be sufficiently proficient in Isan to use materials developed in this

language. The older generation reportedly do not speak Isan well. For the future, it seems that significant numbers of children are learning Isan early in their childhood years. The self-reported bilingual proficiency questions do suggest adequate proficiency, but they are not objective enough to determine if the So are able to use materials developed in Isan.

Respondents from Nong Nang Leung seem to indicate a higher degree of adequate mastery in Central Thai or Isan than other villages.

## **4.2 Attitudes toward Central Thai or Isan**

The percentage of positive attitudes toward Central Thai or Isan was unclear. Intermarriage questions revealed a higher percentage of positive attitudes compared to the questions on children's use of a language of wider communication at home.

Comparing between Central Thai and Isan, it is possible that the So favor Central Thai more; some negative attitudes were inferred regarding Isan use, but none for Central Thai.

## **4.3 Comprehension of Photi Phaisan dialect**

The So in this region seem to have adequate comprehension of the Photi Phaisan variety. Most are reported to be able to understand everything (or most things) when listening to this particular village variety. So speakers also appear to be able to use their own village varieties to communicate with other So from Photi Phaisan without problems.

Nong Nang Leung may have fewer people who can comprehend the Photi Phaisan variety of So without difficulty.

## **4.4 Attitudes toward Photi Phaisan dialect**

There do not seem any negative attitudes toward the Photi Phaisan variety of So. Most So in this region appear to have a favorable, or at least neutral, attitude toward the Photi Phaisan variety. In terms of prestige dialect, many So view their own village variety as the best i.e. spoken most clearly and beautifully. However, a significant number (a quarter to a third) of the So community do consider the Photi Phaisan variety as the most prestigious dialect.

## **4.5 Language vitality**

Four of five villages (Nong Nang Leung as the exception) seem to indicate strong language vitality. The majority of children are reported to be speaking So well (except Nong Nang Leung). Children who may not speak So well are usually from mixed marriages with non-So.

Bilingual proficiency in Central Thai or Isan appears to be improving in the younger generation, but the So language is reported to still be the language spoken best by ethnic So. The majority of ethnic So use their mother tongue in most domains of daily life. So is reported to be the children's first language and language of play (except Nong Nang

Leung). The So are usually the majority in the villages. Intermarriages are reported as infrequent. Most So who leave the village for work eventually return to settle in the village (except those from Nong Nang Leung). The So villages in this region are relatively close to each other with adequate road networks to provide good access from one place to another. Attitudes toward continued So language use generally range from medium to high. Most So appear to express disappointment at the idea of an ethnic So not speaking the language anymore. Most So are also proud of their ethnic identity. Many of them desire their children to preserve the cultural values, and view So literacy as beneficial.

## **5 Conclusions and recommendation**

Four villages (Noi Siwilai, Don Yang, Kham Toey, and Na Tao) have sufficient self-reported comprehension of the So variety from Photi Phaisan. All four also have positive attitudes toward Photi Phaisan So and language vitality seems to be high in these villages. It appears likely that materials developed in the Photi Phaisan variety can be used in these four villages and their neighbouring communities. Further comprehension testing using Recorded Text Testing (RTT) could be used to confirm this conclusion.

There is indication that fewer So in Nong Nang Leung have sufficient comprehension of the Photi Phaisan variety. Nong Nang Leung also has indications of relatively lower So language vitality than the other villages, but seems to have adequate proficiency in Isan or Central Thai. The only negative indication of proficiency is the older generation seem to not speak Isan well. Nong Nang Leung may be able to use materials developed in either Central Thai or Isan. Isan appears to be the LWC more widely used, but Central Thai appears to be more favored. Additional research would need to be conducted to confirm this finding, such as bilingualism testing in Central Thai or Isan.

The sociolinguistic data appear to suggest the Photi Phaisan variety as potentially useable and acceptable among other So communities in the region. Further testing using Recorded Text Testing (RTT) may be helpful to evaluate comprehension between other villages and the Photi Phaisan variety of So. RTT results would help to determine the extensibility of the current development project using Photi Phaisan So.

It may be worth investigating why Nong Nang Leung may potentially not be able to use materials developed in Photi Phaisan So; that is if this village is an exception to the norm, or if there may be factors that suggest other villages with sociolinguistic situations like Nong Nang Leung would not be able to use materials developed using Photi Phaisan So.

## บทสรุป

### 1 ความเป็นมา

ภาษาโล้เป็นสมาชิกในกลุ่มภาษากะตือค ในสาขามอญ-เขมรซึ่งอยู่ในตระกูลออสโตรเอเชียติก เป็นภาษาที่พูดกันในประเทศลาวและไทย จากรายงานผู้ใช้ภาษาโล้ทั้งหมด 160,000 คน ส่วนใหญ่อาศัยอยู่ในประเทศลาว (102,000 คน) ชาวโล้ในประเทศไทยอาศัยอยู่ทางภาคตะวันออกเฉียงเหนือโดยทั่วไป ส่วนใหญ่ในจังหวัดนครพนม(อำเภอท่าอุเทน), สกลนคร(อำเภอกุสุมาลย์) และมุกดาหาร

ชาวโล้ไม่ได้มีถิ่นกำเนิดอยู่ในประเทศไทย แต่อพยพมาจากประเทศลาวเมื่อ 150 ปีที่ผ่านมา ในช่วงระยะเวลาต่างๆกัน เพื่อหลบหนีปัญหาความยากลำบากด้านเศรษฐกิจและการเมืองในประเทศของตน กล่าวกันว่า ท่าแขก เมืองวัง (สุวรรณเขต) และคำม่วนเป็นถิ่นฐานกำเนิดของชาวโล้

### 2 วัตถุประสงค์

วัตถุประสงค์ของการสำรวจนี้คือเพื่อประเมินความต้องการด้านการพัฒนาวรรณกรรมภาษาโล้สำหรับชาวโล้ในภาคตะวันออกเฉียงเหนือของประเทศไทย โดยทีมงานหวังว่าจะประเมินความมีชีวิตของภาษาโล้และแนวโน้มที่จะใช้วรรณกรรมในวิธภาษาที่ใกล้เคียงกัน (จากบ้านโพธิ์ไพศาล) หรือจากภาษาอื่นที่ใช้ในวงกว้างขึ้น(ภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสาน) จากวัตถุประสงค์เหล่านี้จึงเกิดคำถามที่ใช้ในการสำรวจดังต่อไปนี้

1. ผู้ที่พูดภาษาโล้สามารถใช้ภาษาไทยกลางหรือภาษาอีสานได้ดีพอหรือไม่
2. ผู้ที่พูดภาษาโล้มีทัศนคติต่อภาษาไทยกลางหรือภาษาอีสานอย่างไร
3. ผู้ที่พูดภาษาโล้เข้าใจวิธภาษาจากบ้านโพธิ์ไพศาลได้ดีพอหรือไม่
4. ผู้ที่พูดภาษาโล้มีทัศนคติต่อวิธภาษาจากบ้านโพธิ์ไพศาลอย่างไร
5. มีความเป็นไปได้หรือไม่ที่คนรุ่นหลังจะใช้ภาษาโล้ต่อไปในอนาคต

### 3 ระเบียบวิธีวิจัย

การสำรวจได้กระทำการในหมู่บ้าน 5 หมู่บ้านคือ น้อยศรีวิสัย, หนองนางเลิง, ดอนยาง, คำเตย และนาเต่า

ทีมงานได้รวบรวมรายการคำศัพท์และแบบสอบถามด้านภาษาศาสตร์เชิงสังคมจากแต่ละหมู่บ้าน รายการคำศัพท์ที่ได้จะใช้พิจารณาความคล้ายคลึงกันของคำศัพท์ในแต่ละหมู่บ้าน ส่วนแบบสอบถามในการสำรวจครั้งนี้มีอยู่สองชนิดคือแบบสอบถามภาษาศาสตร์เชิงสังคมสำหรับผู้นำชาวบ้าน และแบบสอบถามสำหรับชาวบ้านทั่วไป ทั้งสองชนิดนี้ใช้เก็บข้อมูลด้านความมีชีวิตของภาษา, ทัศนคติ และความคิดเห็นที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการใช้ภาษาและความสามารถในการใช้ภาษา

### 4 ผลที่ได้

#### 4.1 ความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาไทยกลางหรือภาษาอีสาน

ในชุมชนชาวโล้ที่มีการใช้ภาษาอีสานกันอย่างกว้างขวางมากกว่าภาษาไทยกลาง แต่อย่างไรก็ตามไม่ใช่ทุกคนในชุมชนมีความรู้ในภาษาอีสานเพียงพอที่จะใช้วรรณกรรมใน

ภาษานี้ จากรายงานเห็นว่าผู้สูงอายุพูดภาษาอีสานได้ไม่ดีเท่าไร ในอนาคตดูเหมือนว่าจะมีจำนวนเด็กมากขึ้นที่จะเรียนรู้ภาษาอีสานเร็วขึ้น จากคำถามที่ทดสอบความสามารถในการพูดทั้งสองภาษานั้นพบว่าดีและพอเพียง แต่ก็ไม่เป็นสิ่งที่ยืนยันพอที่จะพิจารณาว่าชาวโล้จะสามารถใช้วรรณกรรมที่เป็นภาษาอีสาน

ส่วนผลที่ได้จากตำบลหนองนางเล็งดูเหมือนจะชี้ว่าความสามารถในการใช้ภาษาไทยหรืออีสานอยู่ในเกณฑ์ที่สูงกว่าที่อื่น

## 4.2 ทักษะติดต่อภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสาน

จำนวนร้อยละของทักษะติดต่อภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสานไม่ชัดเจน คำถามที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการแต่งงานข้ามวัฒนธรรมแสดงถึงทักษะติดต่อในเชิงบวกที่สูงกว่าเมื่อเปรียบเทียบกับคำถามที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการใช้ภาษาของเด็กๆในการสื่อสารทั่วไปที่บ้าน

จากการเปรียบเทียบระหว่างภาษาไทยกลางและภาษาอีสาน เป็นไปได้ว่าคนโล้นิยมภาษาไทยกลางมากกว่า นอกจากนั้นยังมีทัศนคติเชิงลบบางอย่างที่พูดถึงในการใช้ภาษาอีสาน แต่ไม่มีทัศนคติเชิงลบเช่นนั้นในภาษาไทยกลาง

## 4.3 ความเข้าใจวิธภาษาจากบ้านโพธิ์ไพศาล

ชาวโล้ในเขตนี้ดูเหมือนจะมีความเข้าใจวิธภาษาจากโพธิ์ไพศาลได้ดีพอสมควร ส่วนใหญ่จะพบว่าสามารถเข้าใจทุกอย่าง (หรือเกือบทุกอย่าง)ขณะที่ฟังวิธภาษานี้ นอกจากนี้ชาวโล้ยังดูเหมือนจะสามารถใช้วิธภาษาจากหมู่บ้านของตนสื่อสารกับชาวโล้จากโพธิ์ไพศาลได้โดยไม่มีปัญหา

ส่วนหนองนางเล็งอาจมีคนน้อยกว่าที่สามารถเข้าใจวิธภาษาของโล้จากโพธิ์ไพศาลได้โดยไม่มีปัญหา

## 4.4 ทักษะติดต่อวิธภาษาจากโพธิ์ไพศาล

ดูเหมือนจะไม่มีทัศนคติในเชิงลบต่อวิธภาษาของโล้จากโพธิ์ไพศาล ชาวโล้ส่วนใหญ่ในเขตนี้ดูจะชอบหรืออย่างน้อยก็มีทัศนคติเป็นกลางต่อวิธภาษาจากโพธิ์ไพศาล ถ้าจะกล่าวถึงวิธภาษาที่นิยมกัน ชาวโล้หลายคนมองวิธภาษาจากหมู่บ้านของตนว่าดีที่สุดในแง่ของรสชาติและไพเราะที่สุด อย่างไรก็ตาม มีชาวโล้ในชุมชนหลายคน(จำนวนหนึ่งในสี่ถึงสามในสี่) เห็นว่าวิธภาษาจากโพธิ์ไพศาลดีที่สุด

## 4.5 ความมีชีวิตของภาษา

มี 4 หมู่บ้านจากจำนวน 5 หมู่บ้าน (ยกเว้นหนองนางเล็ง) ที่ดูเหมือนว่าความมีชีวิตของภาษาอยู่ในเกณฑ์ที่สูง จากรายงานเห็นว่าเด็กส่วนใหญ่พูดภาษาโล้ได้เก่ง (ยกเว้นที่หนองนางเล็ง) เด็กที่อาจพูดภาษาโล้ไม่เก่งมักมาจากครอบครัวที่มีการแต่งงานข้ามวัฒนธรรมกับคนที่ไม่ใช่ชาวโล้

ความสามารถทางทวิภาษาระหว่างภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสานดูเหมือนว่าจะดีขึ้นในคนรุ่นที่อายุน้อยขึ้น แต่ภาษาโล้ยังถือเป็นภาษาที่ใช้พูดได้ดีที่สุดโดยกลุ่มชาติพันธุ์โล้ ชาวโล้ส่วนใหญ่ใช้ภาษาของตนในเกือบทุกเรื่องในชีวิตประจำวัน ภาษาโล้ได้รับรายงานว่าเป็นภาษาแรกของเด็กและเป็นภาษาที่เด็กใช้เล่นกัน (ยกเว้นหนองนางเล็ง) ชาวโล้มักจะเป็นชนส่วน



ใหญ่ของหมู่บ้าน มีการแต่งงานข้ามวัฒนธรรมไม่บ่อยนัก ส่วนใหญ่ชาวโล้มักจะจากหมู่บ้านของตนไปทำงานและในที่สุดก็กลับมาตั้งรกรากที่หมู่บ้านของตน (ยกเว้นจากหนองนางเล็ง) หมู่บ้านชาวโล้ในเขตนี้ใกล้เคียงกันพอสมควรและมีถนนเชื่อมต่อทำให้ติดต่อกันได้สะดวกจากหมู่บ้านหนึ่งไปหมู่บ้านหนึ่ง ผลสำรวจด้านทัศนคติที่มีต่อภาษาโล้ว่าจะมีการใช้ต่อไปในอนาคตหรือไม่นั้นมีตั้งแต่ปานกลางถึงสูง ชาวโล้ส่วนใหญ่จะแสดงความผิดหวังกับความคิดว่าชาวโล้ไม่ใช้ภาษาโล้อีกต่อไปแล้ว ชาวโล้ส่วนใหญ่ยังภูมิใจในความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ด้านชาติพันธุ์ของตน หลายคนมีความปรารถนาที่จะให้ลูกหลานรักษาค่านิยมด้านวัฒนธรรมและมองวรรณกรรมภาษาโล้ว่าเป็นสิ่งที่มีประโยชน์

## 5 ข้อสรุปและข้อเสนอแนะ

มี 4 หมู่บ้าน (น้อย ศิวาลัย, ดอนยาง, คำเตยและนาเต่า) มีความเข้าใจวิชาภาษาจากโพธิไพศาลไพศาลอย่างดีพอสมควร ทั้ง 4 หมู่บ้านยังมีทัศนคติในเชิงบวกต่อภาษาโล้จากโพธิไพศาลและความมีชีวิตของภาษาโล้ใน 4 หมู่บ้านนี้ดูว่ายังอยู่ในเกณฑ์สูง ดูเหมือนว่าวรรณกรรมที่ผลิตขึ้นในวิชาภาษาจากโพธิไพศาลสามารถใช้ได้กับทั้ง 4 หมู่บ้านนี้รวมทั้งชุมชนใกล้เคียงในอนาคตอาจมีการทดสอบความเข้าใจโดยการใช้การทดสอบด้วยข้อความที่อัดเสียงไว้(Recorded Text Testing หรือ RTT) เพื่อยืนยันข้อสรุปนี้

มีข้อบ่งชี้ว่ามีชาวโล้น้อยกว่าในบ้านหนองนางเล็งที่เข้าใจวิชาภาษาจากโพธิไพศาล ที่หนองนางเล็งยังเห็นว่าความมีชีวิตของภาษาโล้อยู่ในระดับต่ำกว่าหมู่บ้านอื่น แต่ดูเหมือนว่ามีความสามารถด้านภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสานที่ดีพอ ข้อบ่งชี้เชิงลบต่อความสามารถด้านภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสานเพียงอย่างเดียวคือคนที่อายุมากดูเหมือนจะพูดภาษาอีสานได้ไม่ดี หนองนางเล็งอาจสามารถใช้วรรณกรรมที่เป็นภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสานได้ ภาษาอีสานดูจะเป็นภาษาที่ใช้กันอย่างกว้างขวาง แต่ภาษาไทยกลางดูจะเป็นภาษาที่คนชอบกว่า อาจมีการวิจัยเพิ่มเติมเพื่อยืนยันข้อมูลนี้ เช่น การทดสอบทวิภาษาระหว่างภาษาไทยกลางหรืออีสาน

ข้อมูลภาษาศาสตร์เชิงสังคม จะเห็นว่าวิชาภาษาจากโพธิไพศาลอาจถูกใช้และเป็นที่ยอมรับในชุมชนชาวโล้ในเขตนี้ การใช้การทดสอบ RTT เพิ่มเติมอาจช่วยในประเมินความเข้าใจระหว่างหมู่บ้านต่างๆและภาษาโล้จากโพธิไพศาลได้ ผลจากการทดสอบ RTT อาจยังช่วยพิจารณาการขยายโครงการพัฒนาที่มีอยู่ในปัจจุบันโดยการใช้ภาษาโล้จากโพธิไพศาลได้

อาจจะเป็นประโยชน์ด้วยถ้ามีการวิจัยว่าเพราะอะไรที่หนองนางเล็งอาจจะเป็นที่ที่ไม่สามารถใช้วรรณกรรมที่ผลิตในภาษาโล้จากโพธิไพศาลได้ อาจเป็นเพราะหมู่บ้านนี้เป็นช้อยกเว้นไม่เหมือนที่อื่น หรืออาจมีปัจจัยที่บอกว่าหมู่บ้านอื่นที่มีสถานการณ์ทางภาษาศาสตร์เชิงสังคมเช่นเดียวกับที่หนองนางเล็งอาจจะไม่สามารถใช้วรรณกรรมที่เป็นภาษาโล้จากโพธิไพศาลได้ด้วยเช่นกัน

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## Abbreviations

CT	central Thai
ISLQ	individual sociolinguistic questionnaire
KSLQ	knowledgeable insider sociolinguistic questionnaire
LWC	language of wider communication
Q#	question number
SLQ	sociolinguistic questionnaire
WL	word list
RTS	Royal Thai Survey Department Maps
KKU	Khon Kaen University

# 1 Introduction

So is a member of the Katuic cluster of speech varieties under the Mon-Khmer language branch of the Austroasiatic family. It is spoken in Laos and Thailand. The Ethnologue (Gordon 2005) reports 160,000 So speakers total. Most So speakers are located in Laos (102,000). The So in Thailand are located generally in the northeastern region. Historically, there has been a lot of research done on So. This research includes comparative analyses, grammatical studies, and sociolinguistic surveys. Most of the available literature on So is based on research conducted in Thailand. Despite the work already available, there are remaining sociolinguistic questions about certain So varieties in Thailand. Some of these questions are about intelligibility between reported communities in as yet unsurveyed locations. This survey is being designed to determine the need for further development projects among the So in Northeastern Thailand.

Section 1 gives a brief introduction to So. This includes their locations, number of speakers, previous research, and other background information. Section 2 contains the purposes, goals, and research questions. In section 3, we discuss the instruments, methodologies, site selection rationale, analysis methods, and schedule for this survey. Section 4 presents the survey data in relation to the research questions. Section 5 summarizes and concludes the analysis while section 6 lists some recommendations based on the summary and conclusions.

## 1.1 Geography

Most of the So in Thailand live in the northeastern provinces such as Nakhon Phanom (Tha-uthen district), Sakon Nakhon (Kusuman district), and Mukdahan. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show the general area of So populations in Nakhon Phanom and Sakon Nakhon.

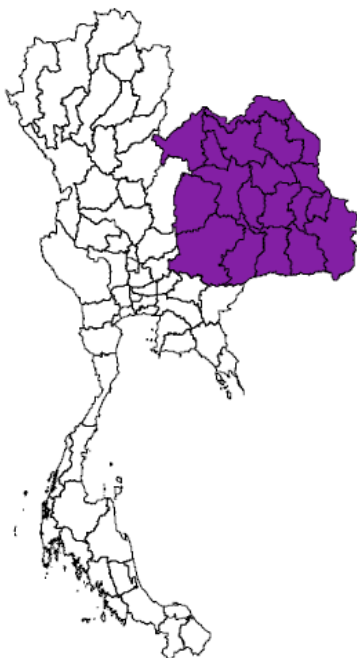


Figure 1: Northeastern region in Thailand (shaded). Adapted from National Statistical Office Thailand 2000

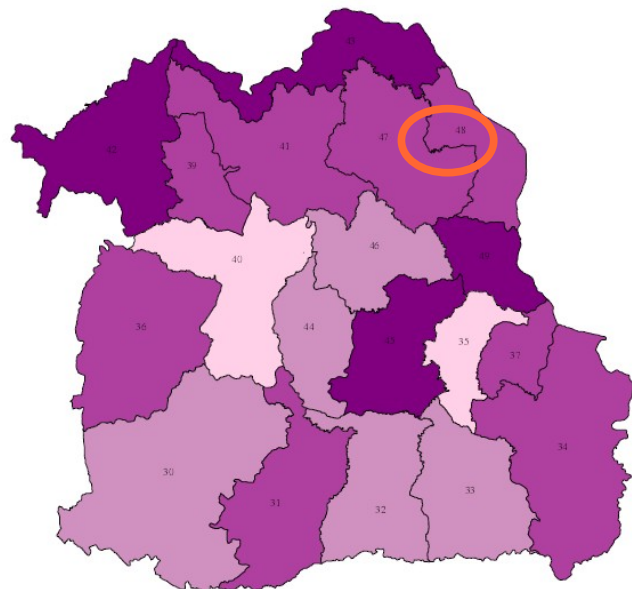


Figure 2: Northeastern provinces in Thailand (So locations circled). Adapted from National Statistical Office Thailand 2000

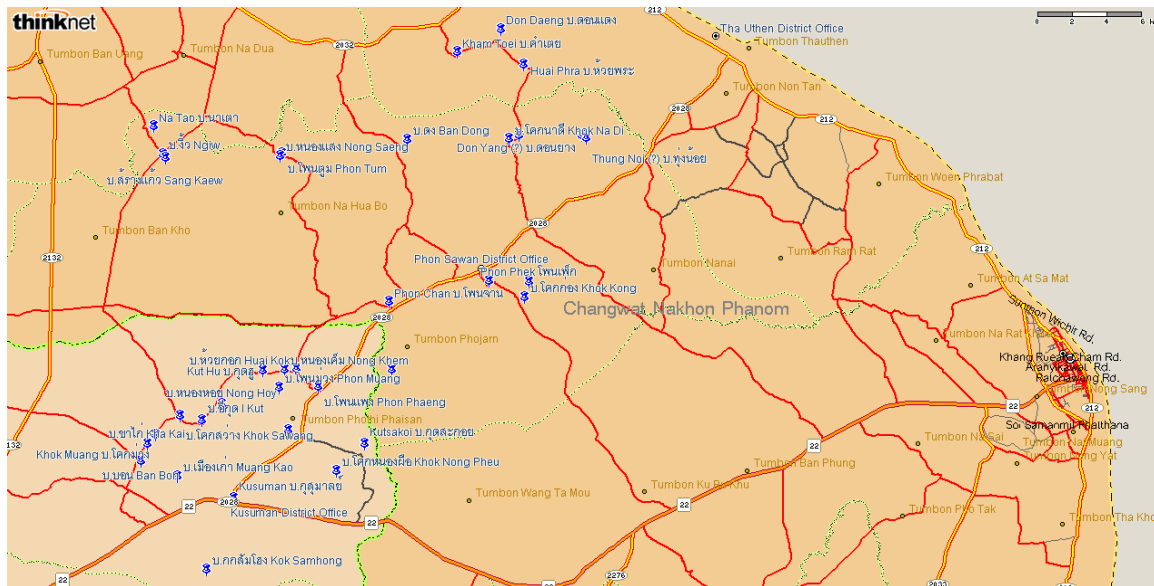


Figure 3: So villages in Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom provinces. Adapted from Thinknet 2008 by Linda Markowski

The climate in this region is generally dry and relatively low (below 500m), dominated by the flat landscape of the Korat plateau. The Mekong river and Laos borders this region to the north and the east. To the south and the west a mountain range separates this northeastern region from the rest of Thailand. The area is generally well-connected with good roads. The survey team had relatively few problems in reaching the village locations selected for survey. Section 3.1 gives more detail on site selection.

## 1.2 People

According to the Ethnologue (Gordon 2005), the majority of So speakers are in Laos. So populations in Thailand, according to different sources, are shown in table 1:

Ethnic group	Population in Thailand by various sources			
	Gordon (2005)	Suwilai et al. (2004)	Joshua Project (2008)	Schliesinger (2000)
So	58,000	70,000	60,000	30,000

Table 1: Thailand So populations from different sources

The population differences require some explanation. Schliesinger warns that his population numbers are rough estimates. Migliazza's (2003:69) report mentions that, in Thailand, the term So is used as a generic name for other Mon-Khmer speaking groups, which might result in the So population being more than actually is. Suwilai's (1996) investigation of the Thavung in Sakon Nakhon reflects this: Thavung is actually Vietic but the people refer to themselves as So. What arises is that certain people groups may not be linguistically So even though they claim to be. Migliazza (2002:87) also reports that the So are sometimes referred to as the Bru because the Bru and So live in close proximity.



According to Lerthirunwong (1980:15), the name So has its origins in a Lao word /so:re:/, which meant “talking together”. A popular story says that So people were fond of sitting around a fire and talking with each other hence the origin of the ethnonym So.

Diffloth (in Migliazza 2002) offers another explanation to the origin of the name. He suggests that the So might have got their name from the word “rice” which phonemically is written as /thro/. This would not be surprising considering rice cultivation is an integral part of the So lifestyle.

Over 94% of the Thai population adheres to Buddhist beliefs (National Statistical Office Thailand n.d.). This majority Buddhist faith is also reflected among the So. Each So village surveyed had a Buddhist temple as the only religious architecture within the community.

However Schliesinger (2000:54) also writes that the So in Thailand practice spirit and ancestor worship; much of their deeper, underlying world views still being animistic. Belief in spirits and other animistic taboos continue to influence the So lifestyle (Migliazza 2002 and 2003). Ancestral houses or shrines, where offerings are given to the spirits of ancestors, are not uncommon. Festivals with animal sacrifices are held regularly to honor various spirits.

Agriculture is the main livelihood among the So, with rice as the main crop. The So practice wet rice cultivation, a method favored by Thai and Lao communities. Other kinds of crops are also planted to supplement their diet and income. Livestock, usually for food or draft animals, is common in So villages.

Individual sociolinguistic questionnaire (ISLQ) responses show that agriculture continues to be the primary occupation. See table 2.

Occupation	Don Yang	Kham Toey	Na Tao	Noi Siwilai	Nong Nang Leung	TOTAL
Agriculture	5	11	6	8	9	39
Student	—	—	1	2	—	3
Hired labour	2	—	—	—	—	2
Assistant village leader	1	—	—	1	—	2
Soldier	—	—	1	—	—	1
Garage	1	—	—	—	—	1
Factory worker	—	—	—	—	1	1
Unemployed	3	1	4	1	2	11

Table 2: Occupations by village

So societies revolve around the village. Traditionally, villages were built on hill-ridges in the forest and houses were built on stilts. Within the village, the social structure is simple; the village headman is responsible for decisions regarding the village welfare. So society is patrilineal and mostly monogamous.

The team's visits to the So confirm that the social structure remains much the same with the village headman having authority in most decisions. However So house designs today run the gamut from traditional stilt structures to two-storey, brick buildings.

The So are described (Migliazza 2002) as dark-skinned with curly hair. Both men and women traditionally wore black (dark blue), long-sleeved coats. Women would wear long skirts while men wore loin-cloths or trousers. Folklore has it that the So language was once written down on buffalo skin, but lost during a period of drought and famine.

Observations of the So during the survey indicate that they are beginning to assimilate to a more Thai lifestyle especially in dress, housing, and occupation. More and more So are also shifting from the traditional economy of agriculture to urban occupations in larger towns or cities. More than a quarter of the interviewees (27%) mentioned having worked outside the village before. Questionnaires conducted with village leaders also indicate a pattern showing many So youth are seeking work opportunities or experiences outside the village (table 3).

Village	Q#28	Q#52	Q#52 (a)	Q#52 (b)
	Village population	Younger generation live elsewhere?	Reasons for living elsewhere	Many who go?
Noi Siwilai	464	Yes	Work – at all times, doing all things	Yes, many
Nong Nang Leung	1473	Yes	Work	Many; usually grandchildren. About 50-70%
Don Yang	419	Yes	Work	A lot; about 40 people
Kham Toey	1004	Yes, many	Work	~50% will go
Na Tao	963	Many	Work	~100-200 people

Table 3: KSLQ responses to younger generation work patterns outside village

### 1.3 Languages

So is one of the few varieties that is recognized by all researchers as being decidedly Katuic. As can be seen in table 4, there is little agreement among different researchers on what constitutes a Katuic speech variety. Only six varieties are listed commonly as Katuic. So is one of them (shown in bold type).

Source (year)	Katuic varieties		
	Common across all sources	Common across some sources	Specific to local source
Thomas & Headley (1970)	Bru (Leu, Qangtri Vân Kiêu, Galler, Makong, Tri), Ir, Kataang, <b>So</b> , Nkriang, Ngeq	Kasseng, High Katu, Katu, Kantu, Kuy, Klor, Lor, Tong, Pacoh (Bo River, Vân Kiêu), Souei, Ta'oih	Phu'ang (Hu'u River Vân Kiêu), Leun, Alak, Talieng
Sidwell (2004) <sup>1</sup>	Bru, Talan/Ong/Ir/Inh, Katang, <b>So</b> , Kriang/Ngeq	Dakkang, Phuong (High Katu), Katu, Kantu, Kui, Pacoh, Souei, Ta'Oi, Triw	Chatong
Gordon (2005)	Bru, Ir, Kataang, <b>So</b> , Ngeq	Kasseng, Khlor, Ong, Upper Ta'oih, Tareng	Lower Ta'oih, Western Katu
Sidwell (2007)	Bru, Ir, Katang, <b>So</b> , Ngeq	Dakkang, High Katu, Katu, Kantu, Khlor, Kuy, Ong, Pacoh, Bo River Van Kiêu, Ta'oih, Tareng, Triw	Ha'ang, Kalum, Pahi, Mankong, Truy, Tri, Van Kieu, Leu, Khua, Chang, Nheu, Yeu, Ntaw, Mhai, Nanhang

Table 4: Katuic speech varieties from different sources

The similarities end when it comes to groupings. Different researchers group So differently. Most groupings are based on linguistic similarities between varieties and follow geographic conventions (i.e. North Katuic, West Katuic, Central Katuic) which appear to be an expansion to the original classification by Ferlus (1974) and Diffloth (1982). Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7 show some of these dissimilarities such as So being classified as West, East, or North Katuic.

West Katuic:	Kui, Souei, Bru, <b>So</b>
East Katuic:	Katu, Kantu, Phũông, Ta-Oi, Kriang etc..

Figure 4: Katuic grouping by Ferlus (1974) and Diffloth (1982); adapted from Sidwell (2004)

North Katuic:	<b>So</b> , Bru, Tri, Makong, Siliq, Katang
West Katuic:	Sui/Suoi/Suai, Nheu, Kui, Kuay
Pacoh:	Pacoh
Central Katuic:	Ong, Ir
Ngeq:	Ngeq
Katu (Laos):	Katu (Laos)
Katu (Vietnam):	Katu (Vietnam)

Figure 5: Katuic grouping by Millers (1996)

<sup>1</sup> Kasseng, Talieng, and Alak have been found to be Bahnaric speech varieties (Sidwell 2004).

West Katuic:	Kui, Souei
East Katuic (North):	Bru, <b>So</b> , Pacoh
East Katic (Central):	Ta'Oi, Chatong, Kriang
East Katuic (South):	Dakkang, Triw, Kantu, Katu

Figure 6: Katuic grouping according to L-Thongkum (2000)

West Katuic:	Kui, Souei, Bru, <b>So</b> , Katang
Ta'Oi-Kriang:	Ta'Oi, Talan/Onh/Ir/Inh, Chatong, Dakkang, Triw, Kriang/Ngeq
Katu:	Kantu, Katu, Phuong (High Katu)
Pacoh:	Pacoh

Figure 7: Katuic grouping proposed by Sidwell (2004)

The groupings also show that So and Bru are closely affiliated Katuic varieties, and regularly appear in the same groupings. Kui and Souei varieties also appear to be closely related to So.

Alternate names for the So are Kha So and Thro. The Ethnologue (2005) lists four dialects: So Trong, So Slouy, So Phong, and So Makon.

## 1.4 History

The So are not indigenous to Thailand, having migrated from Laos during different periods. Migliazza (2003:68) says that the So migrated from Laos over 150 years ago to escape economic and political hardship in their homeland.

Thakek in Laos is mentioned (Migliazza 2002 and 2003) as the original homeland of the So who migrated to Thailand during the Annam-Thailand war in the 1840s. Other locations mentioned as the original homeland of the So are Mueang Wang (Savannakhet) and Kham Muon<sup>2</sup> (Migliazza 2002).

Similar locations of origin are cited by Gainey (1985:16). He mentions Mueang Wang and Mueang Mahasay in Thakek, Savannakhet, and Khammuan as places where the So came from during forced migrations from Laos to Northeastern Thailand.

## 1.5 Previous research

Research about the So in Thailand include comparative studies (Gainey 1985, Chinowat 1983), grammar analyses (Migliazza 1998, Lerthirunwong 1980), discourse studies (Migliazza 2003 and 2005), orthography projects (Millers 1994, Migliazza 2002), and sociolinguistic surveys (Migliazza 1992, Miller 1994).

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<sup>2</sup> Possibly Khammuan.

### 1.5.1 Phonology, grammar, discourse, and orthography

So is an analytical language. Morphemes carry specific lexical meanings. So words occur mostly as monosyllables. Disyllabic words include a pre-syllable (usually unstressed), with a main syllable. It appears to be a speech variety with post-modifying tendencies. Migliazza (2003) observes that grammatical categories such as adverbs, adjectives, and numerals usually appear after the head they modify. See figure 8 for an example of So noun phrase structure.

NH (MOD) (NUM/QTF) (CLF) (DEM)

Figure 8: Example So noun phrase structure

Abbreviations: NUM is number; QTF is quantifier; CLF is classifier; NH is noun head; MOD is modifier (or adjective); DEM is demonstrative.

Word order is SVO and the syllable pattern for the main syllable is C1(C2)V(C3)(C4).

There are 21 basic consonants and 11 basic vowels in So (Migliazza 2003). Vowel features include length (short vs. long) and register (breathy vs. clear). An additional five diphthongs also appear in the So vowel inventory. Tables 5 and 6 show the So consonant and vowel inventory respectively.

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosives	p/p <sup>h</sup> /b	t/t <sup>h</sup> /d	c/c <sup>h</sup>	k/k <sup>h</sup>	ʔ
Nasals	m	n	ɲ	ŋ	
Flaps		r			
Approximants	w	l	j		
Fricatives		s			h

Table 5: So 21-item consonant inventory

There are 21 consonants in So. All plosives (excluding the glottal) distinguish between aspirated and unaspirated forms. Only the bilabial and dental plosives exhibit voicing. The distribution of plosives and nasals show symmetry; each phone (excluding the glottal) having a corresponding equivalent in points of articulation. Approximants lack a velar point of articulation. Otherwise they would be in symmetry with plosives and nasals as well.

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i/ii	u/uuu	u/uu
Close-mid	e/ee	ɤ/ɤɤ	o/oo
Open-mid	ɛ/ɛɛ	ʌ/ʌʌ	ɔ/ɔɔ
Open		a/aa	ɑ/ɑɑ
Diphthongs	*iɤ *ia *ua *uɤ *ua		

Table 6: So 27-item vowel inventory

So vowels display short and long features. Non-basic vowels are diphthongs. There are five diphthongs; all appear to move from high (close) to low (open) positions.

Based on his data, Gainey (1985:33) also mentions that nasal and non-nasal vowels are minimal pairs. However this phenomenon occurs only after glottalized initials.

So has also been studied at a discourse level. Migliazza (2003) has written up an analysis of So texts to outline discourse features. His work includes identifying So texts into discourse categories: narratives, procedural texts, and hortatory types. Migliazza (2005) also explores the usage of reduplication in So.

There have also been efforts to develop an orthography for So based on the Thai script. Migliazza (2002:92) reports that, for the most part, So phones match Thai graphemes, which allow for So to be written with a Thai script with slight modifications (e.g. diacritics used to represent vowel register). Efforts to develop So continue today with a language development project based on the dialect in Kusuman.

### 1.5.2 Previous surveys

Data from language surveys have helped researchers understand the position of So in relation to other Katuic languages and provided insights into sociolinguistic factors affecting the So.

Migliazza (1992) reported that the So and Bru of Northeastern Thailand (Mukdahan, Sakon Nakhon, and Nakon Phanom provinces) form a group with 69-90% lexical similarity, but still clearly distinguish each other as separate Katuic varieties. Of added interest is that Bru of Kok Sa'at has a higher percentage lexical similarity with So of Kusuman than with other Bru varieties. This suggests that ethnonyms may not correlate with linguistic affiliation.

The Millers (1996) surveyed five Katuic varieties in Northeastern Thailand and found that these varieties (So, Bru, Makong, Tri, and Katang) have lexical similarity percentages of 80-93%<sup>3</sup>. The Millers condensed their findings into proposed sub-

3 Lexical similarity numbers are significantly higher than those from Migliazza's (1992) study. The Millers (1996) and Migliazza (1992) used different methodology and word lists (The Millers used a Katuic modified 207-item word list vs. Migliazza's standard 281-item Southeast Asian word list).

groupings of Katuic varieties (figure 5 on page 5). Their findings are relevant in showing the level of linguistic relatedness between So and other Katuic varieties.

The Millers also conducted a sociolinguistic survey on Bru and So varieties in Mukdahan, Sakon Nakhon, and Ubon Ratchathani provinces in 1993 and report (Miller 1994) that:

1. most villages surveyed were populated by majority So/Bru ethnicities (p.85),
2. there are no longer any monolingual So/Bru speakers in Northeastern Thailand (p.86),
3. most So/Bru continue to use their mother tongue strongly in the home domain (p.90),
4. many So/Bru are sufficiently bilingual in Isan to ably function in the community (p.86),
5. the younger So/Bru generation are more proficient in Central Thai (CT) than the older ones (p.86),
6. all So/Bru express positive attitudes toward CT or Isan (p.91),
7. most So/Bru view their mother tongue positively, by expressing a desire for language maintenance in the younger generation and also for vernacular literacy development (p.92),
8. but at the same time many So/Bru are embarrassed when using the vernacular in the vicinity of Thai or Isan speakers (p.92).

### **1.5.3 Comparative analyses**

Gainey's (1985) comparative analysis of three Katuic varieties (So, Bru, and Kuy) shows that So is genetically more closely related to Bru than to Kuy. His study is based on phonological analysis and supported by lexicostatistic data.

An earlier comparative analysis (Chinowat 1983) also shows Bru and So as genetically closer to each other than Kuy. His study is based on comparing the morphological processes between Bru, So, and Kuy.

## **1.6 Other background information**

### **1.6.1 Regional relationships**

Understanding the complex social and cultural relationship between ethnic minorities and dominant people groups in Thailand requires an understanding of the unwritten social hierarchy. LePoer (1987) mentions that, although non-Thai ethnic minorities are accorded equal rights as Thai citizens, any desire to rise higher in the socioeconomic ladder would require assimilation to a Central Thai culture and mindset – Central Thai being the perceived linguistic and ethnic aristocracy of the nation.

Despite gradual assimilation to many aspects of the Thai lifestyle, the So are still aware of social, cultural, and linguistic differences that give rise to an inferiority complex when comparing themselves with Thai people. For example Miller's (1994:91) survey shows that many So and Bru perceive that they can only improve their economic and social status by acquiring a higher proficiency in CT. Many Bru and So also report feelings of embarrassment when having to speak their mother tongue in the presence of Thai or Isan people.

Regarding Isan, LePoer notes that most residents in the northeastern provinces share a closer sense of kinship with the Lao rather than the Thai. Many who live in this area speak the Isan dialect (very similar to Lao) more fluently than CT. This is also reflected in Migliazza's (2003:68) and Miller's (1994:47) reports, which show So communities being more proficient or comfortable in Lao or Isan than Thai.

The survey supports this finding. Of those interviewed, 55% of the interviewees claim Isan as their second best language compared to 28% who make the same claim with CT. See table 7.

2nd best language	Percentage of responses
Isan	55%
CT	28%
Yaw	15%
Yaw & Isan	2%
TOTAL	100%

Table 7: ISLQ responses to 2nd best language

The So perception of differences between themselves and Thai people groups contrasts with their perceived identity among other ethnic minorities. During an orthography workshop for five Katuic groups, the Millers (1994:47) observed that all the participants (So, Makong, Tri, Bru, and Katang) shared a strong sense of “being the same” with each other despite communication differences.

Other communities known to live in the same area as the So include other Katuic speaking groups (Bru, Tri) as well as non-Katuic peoples (Phu Thai, Saek, and Nyoh).

### 1.6.2 Sociolinguistic situation

In general, Katuic speech varieties in Thailand are undergoing language shift due to historical and also on-going language contact situations (Huffman 1976, Gainey 1985, and Mann & Markowski 2005). Gainey (1985) and Migliazza (2005:6) report that borrowing is a particularly common feature in So.

Another effect of language contact is increased bilingualism. Most So speakers in the northeastern region are bilingual in Isan, the language of wider communication (LWC).



Miller (1994:86-87) reports that proficiency levels in CT are higher among younger So people because of exposure and education in schools.

Despite indications of increased bilingualism and language shift, some Katuic people groups, including the So, have reported an interest in reviving or preserving their speech varieties. The Millers (1994:93) discovered that the Bru, Makong, So, Tri, and Katang speakers in Thailand have expressed a desire to preserve their language as part of their cultural identity. This indicates positive attitudes toward their mother tongue and would be a positive factor for language development.

One reason for the continuing vitality of So is that there is a large enough population of speakers to ensure constant usage and maintenance. Migliazza (2003:69) noted this especially in Kusuman district. This supports the idea that a critical mass of speakers (e.g. growing population) is necessary toward language vitality.

Annual So festivals are held in Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom provinces. There is also a Thai So museum in Kusuman. The annual festivals and museum suggest a sense of identity, pride, and social cohesion. There is also interest in seeing the So language continue as there is an orthography committee that is helping guide language development.

According to Gainey (1985) and Migliazza (2003), the dialect considered by most So to be the prestige dialect is the Kusuman dialect. For this survey, the team realised that using “Kusuman” to describe the prestige dialect was too generic as it could be interpreted as Kusuman town or province. The team decided to refer to a specific village, Photi Phaisan, to represent the prestige dialect for So. The Photi Phaisan dialect is currently used in language development activities.

## **2 Purpose and goals**

The purpose of this survey was to assess the need for further vernacular literature development among So speakers in Northeastern Thailand. To this end, the team hoped to evaluate the language vitality of So and the potential to use materials in a related variety (Photi Phaisan) or a language of wider communication (CT or Isan<sup>4</sup>).

The survey goals and associated research questions are:

Goal 1: Evaluate the potential for So speakers in Northeastern Thailand to use materials in CT or Isan.

Research Question 1: Do So speakers master CT or Isan adequately?

Research Question 2: What are the attitudes of So speakers toward CT or Isan (positive, neutral, negative)?

Goal 2: Evaluate the potential for So speakers in Northeastern Thailand to use materials currently being developed in Kusuman.

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<sup>4</sup> Many of the interviewees used the term “Lao”, but we will use the term Isan throughout this report.

Research Question 1: Do So speakers adequately comprehend the Photi Phaisan dialect?  
Research Question 2: What are the attitudes of So speakers toward the Photi Phaisan dialect (positive, neutral, negative)?

For goals 1 and 2, adequate mastery and positive attitudes toward CT, Isan, or the Kusuman variety would indicate the potential for So speakers to use materials which have already been developed. Therefore, further language development would not be needed. Conversely, lack of mastery or negative attitudes could mean obstacles (ability or attitudes) to So speakers using materials in other languages. Further consideration would be needed to decide on appropriate language development for these So speakers (e.g. separate projects or bridging materials).

Goal 3: Evaluate the vitality of So varieties in Northeastern Thailand.

Research Question 1: Does it appear likely that the So variety will continue to be spoken by future generations?

For goal 3, a So variety that will continue to be spoken by future generations would suggest strong vitality. This would be a factor in determining if a separate language development project is needed for that particular variety. A variety with low vitality (i.e. few speakers in the future) would mean that developing materials in this variety may not be practical since the materials may not be as widely used.

### **3 Methodology**

#### **3.1 Site selection**

Survey sites were selected based on a list of So villages provided by Markowski (see Appendix A on page 61). Villages were grouped based on geography and individual sites selected from each of these groups. It is assumed that speech varieties or dialects will not be much different between villages in a group. Grouping the villages geographically helped evaluate if distances between So villages influenced dialect perceptions. Villages were selected as survey sites based on:

1. distance from Kusuman – to evaluate comprehension or attitudes with the Kusuman variety,
2. proximity to a main road – to evaluate language vitality and bilingualism<sup>5</sup>, and
3. population size – to evaluate language vitality.

Table 8 shows the list of villages surveyed.

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<sup>5</sup> Nearness to a main road will be taken as indicative of the village's level of isolation which in turn will be used to measure bilingual proficiency in CT or Isan.

Village group	Village (Province)	Description
A	Photi Phaisan (Sakon Nakhon)	Close to Kusuman town and considered the prestige dialect
A1	Noi Siwilai (Nakhon Phanom)	Close to Kusuman town but not near a main road
B	Nong Nang Leung (Nakhon Phanom)	Mid-distance from Kusuman town with a big population
C	Na Tao (Nakhon Phanom)	Far from Kusuman town with a small population
D	Don Yang (Nakhon Phanom)	Far from Kusuman town with a small population and also not near a main road
E	Kham Toey (Nakhon Phanom)	Far from Kusuman town but with a big population

Table 8: List of villages surveyed including pilot test site

A map of the area is available in Appendix E on page 72.

## 3.2 Instruments

The team collected word lists (WL) and conducted sociolinguistic questionnaires (SLQ) in each of the villages.

### 3.2.1 Sociolinguistic questionnaire

Two kinds of questionnaires were used in this survey: a knowledgeable insider SLQ (KSLQ) and individual SLQs (ISLQ).

In each village, the KSLQ was used with the village leader. The kinds of information gathered related to the general sociolinguistic situation in the village (e.g. population, demographics, history, ethnonyms, languages spoken, etc.). After completing the KSLQ, the team proceeded to administer the ISLQs to selected individuals in each village.

For the SLQs and WLs, the team used the following screening criteria to ensure that the information obtained was relevant. The subjects:

1. were born in and grew up in the village,
2. had not lived away from the village for a significant amount of time<sup>6</sup>,
3. spoke the village variety as their first and best language,
4. had at least one parent come from the same village that is being surveyed, and
5. had at least one parent speaking the same variety as the subject.

### 3.2.2 Subject selection

<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to define a specific time period as being “a significant amount of time”. The team eventually decided on “not having lived more than 20% of their life away from the village” to reflect “a significant amount of time”.

The survey team used quota sampling to conduct the ISLQ's. We did not anticipate being able to use random sampling because of difficulty in obtaining sampling frames. The sample in table 9 was used.

Sample size by strata		Age		TOTAL
		15-30	30+	
Gender	Female	3	3	6
	Male	3	3	6
TOTAL		6	6	12

Table 9: Stratification for the Quota sampling used to select subjects

The sampling stratification results in four strata showing distinctions between gender and age. The team's goal was to find 3 people for each strata, resulting in a total of 12 people we aimed to interview in each village. In reality, the team interviewed more than 12 people in each village to fulfill the sampling frame as there were cases where interviewees were disqualified because of not meeting the screening criteria.

### 3.2.3 Word lists

The survey team originally planned to use the standard MSEAG 434-item WL and a weighted<sup>7</sup> 118-item WL. The 118-item WL was to be used in villages mentioned as speaking the same So variety (this information was to be obtained from the dialect perceptions portion of the ISLQs). The elicited 118 WL items would then be compared roughly with those from earlier villages. A threshold of 95% words having phonetic nearness (differ by one or less phonological feature) was to be applied to decide if the longer 434-item WL would be collected (i.e. if less than 95% of the words in the 118-item WL were similar, the team would then proceed to collect the full 434-item WL). The 434-item WL was to be used directly in places which were mentioned as speaking a So variety very different from the rest of the villages.

In practice, the team used a modified<sup>8</sup> 117-item WL in each of the five villages. The team decided on the shorter WL because we expected the length to be sufficient to answer the relevant research question. The team decided that collecting a longer WL would have added significant time without significant value toward answering the research question.

The longer 434-item WL was only used once, during the pilot test in Photi Phaisan. Since there were few significant changes necessitated by the pilot testing, the Photi Phaisan data was also included in the analysis of lexical comparisons with the other five villages.

The survey team transcribed the So variety into International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

7 Word list items here are chosen based on having an assigned weight of 3 or more. Weights are assigned based on the frequency of appearance as found in the MSEAG word list, Swadesh 210-item word list, and Matisoff 209-item word list. Higher-weighted words provide a better range for comparative analysis.

8 The 117-item word list removed one item (#17 stick) from the original 118-item list after the pilot test because it was felt that there was no Thai word that could accurately and easily elicit the So word.

2005. The language of elicitation was CT. After transcribing the speech variety, the words were recorded using a mini-disc recorder. Each word was spoken in English once, followed by a CT translation once, and finally the So variety three times. The entire process took 2-3 hours on average.

### 3.3 Fieldwork timeline

Originally, the team estimated each village would require 5 days of fieldwork. Taking into account five village locations, the team expected fieldwork would take 4-5 weeks in total.

In reality, the fieldwork lasted 11 days, with each village requiring 2 days to collect the WL and conduct SLQs. Table 10 shows a general timeline of the actual fieldwork.

Day	Day of week	Date	Activity	Village
1-2	Tuesday-Wednesday	23-24 Sept	Met district leader to explain survey purpose and obtain permission. Travel to village. Conducted KSLQ. Collected WL. Conducted ISLQs.	Noi Siwilai
2-4	Wednesday-Friday	24-26 Sept	Travel to village. Conducted KSLQ. Collected WL. Conducted ISLQs.	Nong Nang Leung
4-5	Friday-Saturday	26-27 Sept	Travel to village. Conducted KSLQ. Collected WL. Conducted ISLQs.	Don Yang
6	Sunday	28 Sept	Rest.	N/A
7	Monday	29 Sept	Conducted ISLQs.	Don Yang
7-9	Monday-Wednesday	29 Sept-1 Oct	Travel to village. Conducted KSLQ. Collected WL. Conducted ISLQs.	Kham Toey
9-11	Wednesday-Friday	1-3 Oct	Travel to village. Conducted KSLQ. Collected WL. Conducted ISLQs.	Na Tao

Table 10: Fieldwork timeline

### 3.4 Analysis

The WL data was analysed using a modified Blair type method (Nahhas and Mann 2007). For some of the significant modifications, see Mann and Markowski (2005:30-32). Using this method, word-items from each village are compared on a phone by phone basis. These phones are then assigned to one of three specific categories (1, 2, or 3) which represent a scale of phonetic similarity. A pre-determined set of criteria is used to decide if segment pairs are phonetically similar or not. Once all phone pairs have been categorized, they are measured against Blair's rule which states that:

“Two word-items are judged phonetically similar if:  
At least 50% of the segments compared are in category 1  
AND  
At least 75% of the segments compared are in category 1 and category 2

See Appendix B (page 66) for a fuller explanation with examples.

The team assumed a threshold score of 70% lexical similarity to deduce intelligibility. Speech varieties with lexical scores below 70% are assumed as lacking appreciable intelligibility. Scores above 70% will require intelligibility testing using Recorded Text Testing (RTT). The lexical percentages are used to indicate lexical relationships between speech varieties and provide a rough metric for grouping.

The SLQ data has been assessed qualitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative analysis involves data coding in the spreadsheet. Responses have been examined and categorized to enable clearer comparisons. For example, attitude questions such as “How do you feel about your children speaking So” may yield responses such as “proud”, “good”, or “they should since they are So”. As a whole, these responses would then be categorized as “positive”, since each of them imply similar semantic content of positive attitudes toward So.

The quantitative aspect of analysis takes the codified data and tabulates them. The tables are then used to illustrate and explain patterns in language use (comprehension and mastery of other speech varieties), attitudes, and language vitality.

Each of the SLQ questions relates to a certain concept (e.g. bilingual proficiency, linguistic relatedness, children's proficiency etc.) that answers the survey research questions. Each research question may have more than one concept. A list of the concepts, and the corresponding tools that help answer the research questions, is found in table 11.

Goal	Research question	Concepts	Tool
#1 Potential to use CT or Isan	Adequate mastery of CT or Isan?	Bilingual proficiency	KSLQ Q#34; Q#35-Q#38 ISLQ Q#23; Q#28-Q#33
		Domains of language use	ISLQ Q#26; Q#37-Q#38; Q#39
		Subject demographics	ISLQ Q#22
		Languages and ethnic groups	KLSQ Q#35-Q#38; Q#39; Q#40; Q#41
	Attitudes to CT or Isan?	Ethnolinguistic identity	ISLQ Q#27
		Language attitudes	ISLQ Q#43; Q#44
#2 Potential to use materials developed using Photi Phaisan variety	Adequate comprehension of Photi Phaisan variety?	Linguistic relatedness	WL
		Comprehension	ISLQ Q#34 & Q#36; Q#63 & Q#65 & Q#68 & Q#70 Observation
	Attitudes to Photi Phaisan variety?	Language attitudes	ISLQ Q#45; Q#71
#3 Evaluate language vitality	Will So be used in future generations?	Children's proficiency	KSLQ Q#42 & Q#43 ISLQ Q#40; Q#41; Q#42
		Bilingual proficiency	KSLQ Q#36 ISLQ Q#21 & Q#23; Q#24 (d), (e), (f); Q#28- Q#33
		Domains of language use	KSLQ Q#44-Q#51 ISLQ Q#26; Q#37-Q#38; Q#39
		Ethnolinguistic makeup of village	KSLQ Q#28 & Q#29
		Contact	KSLQ Q#42 & Q#43; Q#52; Q#53
		Geographical distribution	Map
		Population	KSLQ Q#30
		Educational policy	KSLQ Q#32 & Q#33
		Language attitudes	ISLQ Q#38; Q#40; Q#46; Q#47; Q#48; Q#53; Q#54; Q#55
		Ethnolinguistic identity	ISLQ Q#27; Q#48

Table 11: Goals and research questions related back to the concepts and tools that help answer them

## 4 Results

In each of the five villages, the team collected a 117-item WL and conducted one KLSQ with the village leader. The team approached a total of 74 individuals for ISLQs. 14 interviewees were screened out leaving 60 interviewees, which fulfilled the required sampling frame.

Two-thirds of our interviewees were married. All except for two interviewees were educated up to primary 4 level. All were born, grew up and are currently living in the same village. Only seven interviewees came from mixed marriage backgrounds. Of these, five had an Isan parent; one each had a Kaleung and a Central Thai parent respectively.

The following results relate directly to the survey goals and research questions.

### 4.1 Mastery of CT or Isan

#### 4.1.1 Concept: bilingual proficiency

##### Education level (KSLQ)

Table 12 shows that So children obtain at least 9 years of formal education, where the language of instruction is always CT.

Village	Q#32 (b)	Q#33 (d)	Q#34
	Language of instruction (school in village)	Language of instruction in schools outside the village	Number of education years usually completed
Noi Siwilai	CT	CT	M3
Nong Nang Leung	CT	CT	M3
Don Yang	CT	CT	M3
Kham Toey	CT	CT	M3
Na Tao	CT	CT	M6

Table 12: Levels of formal education that children usually attain

Inference from table 12: The younger generation appear to have fairly extensive exposure (minimum 9 years) to CT through the national education system. Proficiency in CT would likely be fairly high.

##### Languages of wider communication (KSLQ)

All the villages mentioned at least CT or Isan as one of the languages spoken in the village, while Kaleung and Yaw were also mentioned. Kaleung and Yaw are languages of other minority groups in the vicinity.



Only Nong Nang Leung listed both CT and Isan as languages spoken in their village. Nong Nang Leung was the only village with a LWC spoken well across all generations. The remaining four villages stated that the older people spoke the LWC in their respective villages poorly.

Noi Siwilai, Kham Toey, and Na Tao did not have a LWC as the second most used language after So. In fact, Noi Siwilai did not even have a LWC as the third most used language. Table 13 captures the data for LWCs used in the villages and the population's proficiency in them.

Village	Q#35	Q#36 (a)	Q#36 (b)	Q#37	Q#38
	Non-So langs spoken	People who speak non-So well	People who speak non-So poorly	Non-So lang most used	Non-So lang 2nd most used
Noi Siwilai	Kaleung, CT, Isan, Yaw	Kaleung & Yaw: Kaleung & Yaw who marry into the village CT: all So <sup>9</sup> Isan: not asked	Kaleung & Yaw: ethnic So CT: older people Isan: not asked	Yaw & Kaleung	Not asked
Nong Nang Leung	Isan, CT, Yaw	Isan: younger ones CT: everybody Yaw: Yaw who marry into the village	Isan: very old people CT: nobody Yaw: the So people	Isan	Yaw
Don Yang	Isan	younger generation	older people	Isan	none
Kham Toey	Yaw	younger generation	older people (only use So)	Yaw	CT <sup>10</sup>
Na Tao	Yaw, Isan	Yaw & Isan: younger generation	Yaw & Isan: older generation	Yaw	Isan

Table 13: KSLQ responses about LWCs and reported proficiency in them

Inference from table 13: CT is not commonly spoken in all villages, but where it is spoken it appears that CT can be used by all sections of the population. Isan appears to be more common, but the older generation seem to speak it poorly.

### Subject demographics (ISLQ)

Table 7 (page 10) shows 81% of the ISLQ respondents indicated either Isan or CT as their second best language. Table 14 shows a matrix of second best languages and third

9 Taking into consideration the subsequent question asking about “poor CT speakers”, this answer probably means “all So except older people”.

10 Not mentioned when we asked for Q#35. We did not ask which groups spoke CT well or poorly because of the question ordering (CT was only mentioned later at Q#38).

best languages. The matrix tells us that all 60 ISLQ respondents mentioned either Isan or CT as a language spoken with a minimum proficiency of “third best language” i.e. 100% of the interviewees said they could speak either Isan or CT at the very least as their third best language. As a second best language, Isan appears to have more speakers than CT.

2nd best language	3rd best language					
	CT	English	Isan	Kaleung	none	Yaw
CT	—	1	9.5	1	2	3.5
Isan	24.5	1	—	—	5	3
Yaw	3.5	—	6	—	—	—

Table 14: ISLQ responses edited into a matrix showing second best spoken language versus third best spoken language<sup>11</sup>

Inference from table 14: At the very least, all the So can speak either Isan or CT as their third best language. More So people speak Isan more proficiently than CT.

#### Self reported bilingual proficiency evaluation (ISLQ)

One hundred percent (100%) of ISLQ respondents said they could use Isan or CT to buy things, which reflects an ability to use LWC in one of the most basic functions. Taking questions 29, 30, and 31 as a group showing higher levels of proficiency, we still find a high percentage of So who can use Isan or CT in these social and functional settings. However, more than half of the interviewees admitted they could not speak Isan or CT as quick as or as well as a native speaker. See table 15.

Village	Q#28	Q#29			Q#30		Q#31		Q#32		Q#33	
	Buy things in LWC	Talk about family in LWC			Repeat LWC conversation in So		Explain work in LWC to LWC person		Speak LWC as fast as native speaker		Speak LWC as well as native speaker	
		Yes	-don't know	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Don Yang	100%	0%	8%	92%	0%	100%	8%	92%	67%	33%	67%	33%
Kham Toey	100%	8%	0%	92%	8%	92%	0%	100%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Na Tao	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	75%	25%	67%	33%
Noi Siwilai	100%	0%	8%	92%	17%	83%	8%	92%	42%	58%	50%	50%
Nong Nang Leung	100%	0%	0%	100%	8%	92%	8%	92%	50%	50%	50%	50%
AVERAGE	100%	2%	3%	95%	7%	93%	5%	95%	57%	43%	57%	43%

Table 15: ISLQ responses to self-reported bilingual proficiency

<sup>11</sup> Decimal numbers of .5 indicate an interviewee who responded with two languages of equal proficiency. The count for those two languages was then split evenly between their individual parts (See Nahhas 2007:99).

Inference from table 15: Most So (>90%) appear to have sufficient proficiency in using Isan or CT at some level of practical daily life (e.g. market place conversation, occupational conversation). However, less than 50% of the So could say they speak Isan or CT as well as a native speaker.

Bilingual proficiency by gender and age group (ISLQ)

No significant differences to bilingual proficiency were noted between gender or age (tables 16 and 17).

Gender (M/F)	Q#28	Q#29			Q#30		Q#31		Q#32		Q#33	
	Buy things in LWC	Talk about family in LWC			Repeat LWC conversation in So		Explain work in LWC to LWC person		Speak LWC as fast as native speaker		Speak LWC as well as native speaker	
	Yes	- don't know	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
F	30	1	1	28	—	30	3	27	18	12	16	14
M	30	—	1	29	4	26	—	30	16	14	18	12
TOTAL	60	1	2	57	4	56	3	57	34	26	34	26

Table 16: ISLQ responses to self-reported bilingual proficiency by gender

Young/Old	Q#28	Q#29			Q#30		Q#31		Q#32		Q#33	
	Buy things in LWC	Talk about family in LWC			Repeat LWC conversation in So		Explain work in LWC to LWC person		Speak LWC as fast as native speaker		Speak LWC as well as native speaker	
	Yes	-don't know	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Old	30	1	1	28	1	29	3	27	17	13	15	15
Young	30	—	1	29	3	27	—	30	17	13	19	11
TOTAL	60	1	2	57	4	56	3	57	34	26	34	26

Table 17: ISLQ responses to self-reported bilingual proficiency by age

**4.1.2 Concept: languages and ethnic groups**

Communities where So is lost, poor So speakers, and monolingual So speakers (KSLQ)

All villages, except Na Tao, reported no ethnic So had stopped speaking the language. Further questioning in Na Tao indicated only one So person who did not speak So anymore. A few other ISLQ respondents supported this. Apparently, this one So person prefers to speak in Isan or Yaw. Counting this one person as an exception to the norm, it could then be said that no villages have ethnic So not speaking So anymore.

None of the villages reported any members of their So community who spoke So poorly.

Only one village reported certain sections of the community as being monolingual in So; Noi Siwilai interviewees claimed that some older So people in the village could speak only their mother tongue. Table 18 shows the use of So in each village.

Village	Q#39	Q#39 (a)	Q#39 (b)	Q#40	Q#41	Q#41 (a)
	Any So not speaking So anymore?	How many non-So-speaking So	Languages spoken by non-So-speaking So	Any So who speak So poorly?	Any people who speak only So?	People who speak only So
Noi Siwilai	No	- not asked -	- not asked -	No	Yes	Older people
Nong Nang Leung	No	- not asked -	- not asked -	No	No more	Everybody can speak another language other than So
Don Yang	No	- not asked -	- not asked -	No	No, all can speak a second language	- not asked -
Kham Toey	No	- not asked -	- not asked -	No	No, all can speak a second language	- not asked -
Na Tao	Yes	1 person in the village	Isan	No	No, all can speak more than 1 language besides So	- not asked -

Table 18: KSLQ responses on ethnic So who don't speak the So language, poor So speakers, and monolingual So speakers

Inference from table 18: Most So in this area (except older people in Noi Siwilai) can speak at least one other language besides their mother tongue to a certain extent.

### 4.1.3 Concept: domains of language use

#### Language choice in domains (ISLQ)

Appendix C (page 70) shows the reported domains of language use. Within the home domain, So is used the most. Whenever a non-So language is used in conversation in the home domain, it is either Isan or Yaw. Within the domains of socializing between friends or at the market place, So is almost always used with other ethnic So. When speaking with non-So people, the preferred language of communication seems to be Isan, followed by Yaw and CT. Isan and CT are reported to be used equally when conversations involve a government worker. CT is used the most when students speak with their teachers.

Inference from Appendix C: In domains closer to home or likely to involve other So people or kin (e.g. funerals, village meetings, and spirit ceremonies), the mother tongue is used for the most part. In this region, Isan appears to be the LWC of choice over CT when it involves a less formal social domain such as speaking with non-So friends or visiting the market. When the social setting is more formal (e.g. government business, education), Isan and CT are used equally.

Children's first language and language of play (ISLQ)

All of the interviewees, except those from Nong Nang Leung, said that the children speak only So as their first language. In Nong Nang Leung, 3/12 (25%) of the ISLQ respondents said Isan alone was the children's first language (table 19).

Respondents from Don Yang, Kham Toey, and Na Tao mentioned So as part of the children's language play, if not the only language used. In Noi Siwilai, there was one response indicating CT as the children's only language of play. In Nong Nang Leung, 25% of the ISLQ respondents indicated children used only Isan when playing together.

Village	Q#37					Q#38				
	Children's first language			Children's language of play						
	Isan	So	So & Isan	-didn't answer	CT	Isan	So	So & CT	So & Isan	So, Isan & CT
Don Yang	—	12	—	—	—	—	11	1	—	—
Kham Toey	—	12	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	—
Na Tao	—	12	—	—	—	—	8	2	1	1
Noi Siwilai	—	12	—	—	1	—	8	2	1	—
Nong Nang Leung	3	7	2	1		3	4	—	4	—

Table 19: ISLQ responses showing children's first language and their language of play

Inference from table 19: More children in Nong Nang Leung, than other villages, learn a LWC as their first language or speak it exclusively during play. This might suggest higher LWC proficiency among the younger generation in Nong Nang Leung than other villages. For the other four villages, it seems that children are mostly monolingual when beginning to speak, but as they interact more, they begin to pick up other languages. Isan, rather than CT, seems to be learned by more children; the ratio of Isan to CT as part of the children's language of play is 10:7.

Children learning non-So languages before school (ISLQ)

Table 20 shows the majority of children (75%) in Don Yang as monolingual in So before entering school. ISLQ respondents from Kham Toey, Na Tao, and Noi Siwilai indicated half of the children's population in these villages had learned a non-So language before

they went to school. Nong Nang Leung said only 25% of the children's population were monolingual in So before they entered school.

The non-So languages learned almost always included Isan or CT. Isan was reported more widely learned by the children i.e. a total of 25 respondents included Isan as a non-So language learned by the children as opposed to 9 respondents only for CT.

Village	Q#39						
	Children's non-So languages learned before entering school						
	None (only So)	CT	CT & Yaw	Isan	Isan & CT	Isan & Yaw	Yaw
Don Yang	9	1	—	1	1	—	—
Kham Toey	6	—	2	—	1	2	1
Na Tao	6	—	—	3	2	1	—
Noi Siwilai	6	—	—	5	1	—	—
Nong Nang Leung	3	1	—	8	—	—	—
TOTAL	30	2	2	17	5	3	1

Table 20: ISLQ responses showing children's languages learned before entering school

Inference from table 20: On average, it appears half of the children learn a non-So language before they enter school. Among the villages, Nong Nang Leung seems to have higher rates of children who are proficient in a language other than their mother tongue before school-going age. Isan seems to be the language that is more widely used than CT as more children seem to learn it<sup>12</sup>.

#### 4.1.4 Concept: subject demographics

##### Ability to speak LWC (ISLQ)

Table 14 (page 20) shows all So are proficient in either Isan or CT at least up to the level of “third best language”.

Inference from table 14: At the very least, all the So can speak either Isan or CT as their third best language, reflecting some level of proficiency.

## 4.2 Attitudes toward CT or Isan

### 4.2.1 Concept: ethnolinguistic identity

#### Choice of ethnolinguistic identity

The majority (>80%) of ISLQ respondents indicate So as their primary ethnic identity. When the response was a non-So identity, more people mentioned Thai over Isan as their primary identity (table 21).

<sup>12</sup> This assumes the children are learning non-So from their surroundings, e.g. observing and mimicking adult speech.

Village	Q#27			
	Ethnolinguistic identity			
	So	So (first) <sup>13</sup>	Thai	Isan
Don Yang	11	—	—	1
Kham Toey	8	1	2	1
Na Tao	8	—	3	1
Noi Siwilai	9	1	2	—
Nong Nang Leung	9	2	—	1
TOTAL	45	4	7	4

Table 21: ISLQ responses on primary ethnic identity

Inference from table 21: If Thai and Isan ethnic identities could be paralleled with CT speakers and Isan speakers respectively, the data suggests only a few So have clear positive attitudes toward CT or Isan. However, it cannot be said that So attitudes toward CT or Isan are negative. At best, So attitudes might be described as neutral. Based on this ethnic identity-language parallel, it might also be said that So people are more inclined toward CT than Isan.

#### 4.2.2 Concept: language attitudes

##### Children speaking LWC at home (ISLQ)

There were no reported negative So attitudes toward the children using CT at home. At worst, the So responded with a sense of ambivalence. About 40% clearly indicated positive attitudes toward CT (table 22).

Village	Q#43			Q#43 (a)		
	Children speak CT at home?			Attitudes to CT		
	N	Y	TOTAL	Neutral	Positive	TOTAL
Don Yang	80%	20%	100%	80%	20%	100%
Kham Toey	14%	86%	100%	67%	33%	100%
Na Tao	40%	60%	100%	40%	60%	100%
Noi Siwilai	33%	67%	100%	50%	50%	100%
Nong Nang Leung	0%	100%	100%	60%	40%	100%
TOTAL	32%	68%	100%	59%	41%	100%

Table 22: ISLQ responses about attitudes toward children's use of CT at home

13 “So (first)” responses are when the interviewee answered initially with “So”, but when presented with other choices, they chose answered other ethnic identities as well; without rejecting or withdrawing their earlier admission of So being the primary identity.

Thirteen percent (13%) of the ISLQ respondents reflected some negative bias toward children using Isan at home. The remaining responses were evenly split between positive and neutral (table 23).

Village	Q#43			Q#43 (a)			
	Children speak Isan at home?			Attitudes to Isan			
	N	Y	TOTAL	Negative	Neutral	Positive	TOTAL
Don Yang	50%	50%	100%	17%	67%	17%	100%
Kham Toey	25%	75%	100%	0%	38%	63%	100%
Na Tao	60%	40%	100%	40%	20%	40%	100%
Noi Siwilai	17%	83%	100%	0%	33%	67%	100%
Nong Nang Leung	14%	86%	100%	14%	71%	14%	100%
TOTAL	31%	69%	100%	13%	47%	41%	100%

Table 23: ISLQ responses about attitudes toward children's use of Isan at home

On average, positive attitudes toward both CT and Isan appear evenly balanced at 41%. The range in positive attitudes toward Isan (17%-67%) is very similar to CT (20%-60%). Na Tao has the highest percentage of negative attitudes toward Isan (40%).

The actual count for negative attitudes to Isan is four ISLQ responses (table 24). On closer inspection, the reasons given relate to “So being expected to speak So” and “a desire to preserve So”. The reasons could be interpreted to cover attitudes toward any non-So languages. One respondent implied that the children should speak nothing else in the house but So. However, this expected exclusive use of So does not extend to CT as can be seen from the favorable response toward CT.

Q#43		Q#43 (a)		Q#43 (b)	
Children speak CT at home?	Children speak Isan at home?	Feelings to children speaking CT	Feelings to children speaking Isan	Reasons for feelings about CT	Reasons for feelings about Isan
Yes	Yes	Want them to know all languages	Not so good	Want them to know all languages	In the house, they should speak So
-not available	No	-not asked	Good	-not available	Won't forget So language
Yes	No	Happy	Proud	Able to speak all languages	Using just So
No	No	They're So, so will speak So	Happy	-not asked	They're So, so they speak So

Table 24: ISLQ responses showing reasons given for negative attitudes toward Isan, based on children's use of Isan at home



Inference from tables 23 and 24: The So do not seem to have any negative attitudes toward CT. About 13% of the applicable ISLQ respondents indicated a negative attitude toward Isan. The reasons for negative attitudes seem to be based on a sense of ethnic identity (i.e. “So should speak So”) and a desire to preserve the So language. However, the same reasons were apparently not applicable to CT. CT may have a better level of acceptance than Isan.

### Intermarriage (ISLQ)

Very few So interviewees felt that marrying a LWC-speaking person (Isan or Thai) was unwelcome. Only 2/58 (3%) respondents reflected a negative attitude toward marrying a Thai/Isan person (table 25).

Village	Q#44		
	Attitudes to marrying LWC speaking person		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Don Yang	2	1	9
Kham Toey	—	—	10
Na Tao	—	1	11
Noi Siwilai	—	2	10
Nong Nang Leung	—	1	11
TOTAL	2	5	51

Table 25: ISLQ responses about attitudes toward So marrying a Thai or Isan person

Of the two negative responses, one interviewee said the reason was because of the different ethnicities. Another said that a So marrying a LWC-speaking person would live further away, making it more difficult to maintain contact with the children.

Inference from table 25: The majority of So seem positive toward intermarriage with a LWC-speaking person. This could suggest a positive bias toward CT and Isan.

## **4.3 Comprehension of the Photi Phaisan dialect**

### **4.3.1 Concept: linguistic relatedness**

#### Lexical comparison (WL)

The lexical similarity percentages between all villages were above 90%. The percentages by themselves do not prove intelligibility between the varieties, but they indicate that inherent intelligibility cannot be ruled out on the basis of lexical similarity.

High lexical similarity percentages (>95%) are shared between Noi Siwilai, Kham Toey, Na Tao, and Don Yang (figure 9).

Noi Siwilai					
97%	Kham Toey				
96%	97%	Na Tao			
96%	97%	97%	Don Yang		
92%	93%	94%	97%	Nong Nang Leung	
92%	91%	94%	93%	92%	Photi Phaisan

Figure 9: Lexical similarity percentages for all six villages

Using cutoffs of 93% and 95%, we can draw lexical similarity groupings showing the relationships between each variety (figure 10)

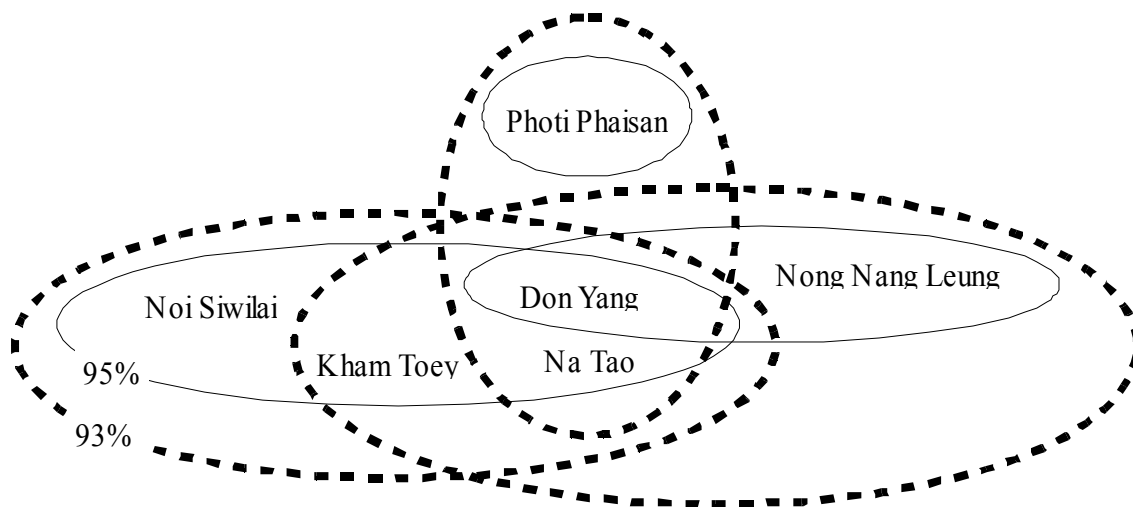


Figure 10: Lexical similarity contours showing villlage groupings

Inference from figure 10: The groupings indicate Photi Phaisan and Nong Nang Leung varieties as more lexically different than the other So varieties. Noi Siwilai, Kham Toey, Don Yang, and Na Tao appear to share more lexical similarities. Don Yang and Na Tao varieties also appear to be the most central varieties based on lexical comparison.

#### 4.3.2 Concept: comprehension

##### Language use with Photi Phaisan people (ISLQ)

Of the 46 interviewees who had spoken with So from Photi Phaisan, 45 said they communicated using So. Only one person used a non-So (Yaw) language for communication. Upon closer inspection, this interviewee might have misunderstood the question because the reason given for using Yaw was to communicate with Yaw relatives living in Photi Phaisan.

There were 35/45 (78%) ISLQ respondents saying they could use their local So variety to communicate with So from Photi Phaisan. Only one person said she would use the Photi Phaisan variety exclusively when speaking with So from Photi Phaisan (table 26).

Village	Q#34 (b)			TOTAL
	So variety used			
	Local & Photi Phaisan variety <sup>14</sup>	Local village variety	Photi Phaisan variety	
Don Yang	—	7	1	8
Kham Toey	2	4	—	6
Na Tao	1	8	—	9
Noi Siwilai	4	6	—	10
Nong Nang Leung	2	10	—	12
TOTAL	9	35	1	45

Table 26: ISLQ responses showing the So variety used when speaking to So people from Photi Phaisan

Nine of forty five (20%) respondents said that both the local and Photi Phaisan variety could or were used during conversation. Six of these responses were along the lines of “both varieties are the same”. Two respondents mentioned the local and Photi Phaisan variety being used interchangeably during conversation. One respondent said that each speaker would use their own variety to speak and still be able to understand one another. See table 27.

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14 This category includes responses which said or implied both varieties were used.

Q#34 (b)	Q#34 (c)	Q#34 (c) (i)	Q#36	Q#36 (a)
Kind of So spoken	Have to change style of speaking So?	Change how?	Level of understanding Photi Phaisan So	Differences in Photi Phaisan So & local village So
“it's the same”	-not asked	-not asked	(1) everything	-not asked
“speak same language”	no need	-not asked	(1) everything	-not asked
“it's the same”	change some words	some words	(1) everything	-not asked
“it's the same”	no need	-not asked	(1) everything	-not asked
each will speak his own variety and can still understand each other	Yes	words	(2) most things ~90%	“not so different”
“it's the same”	some times	some older words are used in P.P. Variety	(2) most things	“not so different”
both varieties – Kham Toey & Photi Phaisan	Yes	some vocabulary	(2) most things; “can hear most things if listen carefully”	“it's the same”
both varieties – Kham Toey & Photi Phaisan	Yes	accents on words	(1) everything	-not asked
“it's the same”	Yes sometimes	accent	(2) most things	the sounds & tones [siang thum, siang laem; “ne ne”]

Table 27: Actual ISLQ responses from the nine interviewees that were grouped “Local & Photi Phaisan variety” shown in table 26

Inference from tables 26 and 27: Most So interviewed (~98%) indicated that they are able to use their local So village variety to communicate with So speakers using the Photi Phaisan variety. Most Photi Phaisan speakers may be able to understand the surrounding So varieties in the region.

No So said they could not understand the Photi Phaisan variety. The majority of interviewees (82%) said they could understand “everything” or “most things” from Photi Phaisan So. The remaining (18%) ISLQ respondents mentioned they could at least understand “some things” from Photi Phaisan So (table 28).

Village	Q#36			TOTAL
	Level of understanding Photi Phaisan So			
	(1) everything	(2) most things	(3) some things	
Don Yang	7	1	2	10
Kham Toey	5	2	—	7
Na Tao	5	3	3	11
Noi Siwilai	6	4	1	11
Nong Nang Leung	4	5	3	12
TOTAL	27	15	9	51
Percentage	53%	29%	18%	100%

Table 28: ISLQ responses to level of understanding the Photi Phaisan variety of So

It may be worth noting that among the villages, the fewest number of respondents indicating they could “understand everything” were from Nong Nang Leung village.

The interviewees that indicated they could only understand “most or some things” mostly mentioned differences in “words” (spoken or used to call things) or “vocabulary”. Other differences mentioned involved the sounds and accents. Three respondents mentioned attitudes; they said that the Photi Phaisan variety of So is older/purer or more original than their local village variety (table 29).

Q#36 (a)	Q#36		
Differences in Photi Phaisan So & local village So	Level of understanding Photi Phaisan So		
	(2) most things	(3) some things	TOTAL
Accents & sounds	—	2	2
Photi Phaisan variety older/ original/ purer	2	1	3
Sounds, tones	1	—	1
Sounds, words	1	—	1
Vocabulary	1	1	2
Vocabulary, words	1	1	2
Words	3	3	6
TOTAL	9	8	17

Table 29: ISLQ responses about differences between Photi Phaisan and the local village So (measured against the level of understanding Photi Phaisan So)

Inference from tables 28 and 29: Most So may be able to understand the Photi Phaisan variety of So without difficulty i.e. they can either understand everything or most things when hearing Photi Phaisan So. Nong Nang Leung may have a smaller percentage of its population who can easily understand the Photi Phaisan So variety.

### Dialect perceptions (ISLQ)

From the dialect perceptions responses, only data that make mention of Photi Phaisan have been analysed with regards to comprehension of the So variety in Photi Phaisan. Eight ISLQ respondents mentioned Photi Phaisan So as speaking the same with the local village variety. Five other respondents mentioned Photi Phaisan So as “a little different” from the local village variety. No respondents mentioned Photi Phaisan So as “very different”.

The five respondents that mentioned Photi Phaisan So as “a little different” from the local village variety indicated there was no difficulty in hearing and understanding the Photi Phaisan variety of So (table 30).

Q#58	Q#65	Q#65 (a)
Villages that speak a little different	Level of understanding So from villages that speak a little different	Differences in So between local variety and villages that speak a little different
Kutsakoi, Phon Phaeng, Photi Phaisan, Kut Hu, Nong Hoy	(2) most things	“not different”
Photi Phaisan	(2) most things (almost everything)	“some words only”
Photi Phaisan, Ban Bong, Phon Thum	(1) everything	“different in some words”
Photi Phaisan, Kutsagoi, Phon Phaeng, Kut Hu, Nong Hoy, I Kut	(1) everything	-not asked
Kusuman, Photi Phaisan	(1) everything	“can understand but some words are different, nevertheless no need to change”

Table 30: ISLQ responses about level of understanding Photi Phaisan So, taken from dialect perceptions questions (responses only from those who mentioned Photi Phaisan as “speaking a little differently”)

Inference from table 30: All the So may be able to understand the Photi Phaisan variety of So well i.e. they can either understand everything or most things when hearing Photi Phaisan So

### Observation

Our team guide and interpreter was from Photi Phaisan and spoke the local So variety as his mother tongue. In all the villages surveyed, there were no communication problems when he used his So variety (Photi Phaisan) to speak to the villagers and interviewees. Certain words that were different were discussed (less than five words in all villages), but these arose from specific items from the word list. In normal communication and dialogue, there did not appear to be any cases where vocabulary, speech, accents, or tones hindered comprehension.

Inference from observation: So speakers in the villages appear to adequately comprehend the Photi Phaisan dialect and vice versa.

## 4.4 Attitudes toward the Photi Phaisan dialect

### 4.4.1 Concept: language attitudes

#### Intermarriage (ISLQ)

The majority of So indicated intermarriage with a So person from Photi Phaisan was positive. There were no negative attitudes to marrying a So person from Photi Phaisan. Four respondents indicated a neutral attitude (“don't know” or “it's up to them”) toward marrying a So person from Photi Phaisan (table 31).

Village	Q#45	
	Attitudes to intermarriage with Photi Phaisan So	
	Neutral	Positive
Don Yang	—	12
Kham Toey	2	10
Na Tao	1	11
Noi Siwilai	1	11
Nong Nang Leung	—	12
TOTAL	4	56

Table 31: ISLQ responses about attitudes toward marrying So person from Photi Phaisan

Closer study shows that most So view Photi Phaisan as same with their own village (“same people”, “same language”, “same customs” etc.). Table 32 shows 88% of the responses were along similar lines of “same-ness” between Photi Phaisan and the local village.

Others (network with other villages, “up to them”, and “none have happened yet”)	3	12%
Same-ness (people group, language, distance)	23	88%
TOTAL	26	100%

Table 32: Summary of reasons from ISLQ responses about feelings to marrying So person from Photi Phaisan

Inference from tables 31 and 32: Most So in this region do not appear to sense a difference between a So person from Photi Phaisan and from their village. Marrying a So from Photi Phaisan was viewed as positive.

#### Village where So is spoken best (ISLQ)

Photi Phaisan So was not considered by most interviewees to be the variety spoken best. About a quarter (22% or 31%<sup>15</sup>) of the interviewees thought Photi Phaisan So was the variety spoken most clearly and beautifully. More than half (53%) viewed their own

<sup>15</sup> The latter percentage 31% assumes Kusuman variety to be the same as the Photi Phaisan variety i.e. responses mentioning “Kusuman” are taken as the Photi Phaisan variety.

village So variety as the variety spoken best (table 33). Only Na Tao recorded responses where more or equal numbers of people viewed the Photi Phaisan variety of So as spoken best compared to their own village.

Village	Q#71				Q#71			
	Villages where So is spoken best				Villages where So is spoken best (Kusuman counted as Photi Phaisan)			
	Elsewhere	Own village	Photi Phaisan <sup>16</sup>	TOTAL	Elsewhere	Own village	Photi Phaisan	TOTAL
Don Yang	4	3	2	9	4	3	2	9
Kham Toey	2	8	2	12	1	8	3	12
Na Tao	4	4	4	12	2	4	6	12
Noi Siwilai	3	7	2	12	2	7	3	12
Nong Nang Leung	1	7	2	10	—	7	3	10
TOTAL	14	29	12	55	9	29	17	55
Percentage	25%	53%	22%	100%	16%	53%	31%	100%

Table 33: ISLQ responses about locations where So is spoken best

Inference from table 33: More So consider their own village variety as spoken clearer and more beautiful than the Photi Phaisan variety. Many So (~50%) appear to have positive attitudes toward their own village speech variety, but a significant amount (a quarter to a third) of So also appear to view Photi Phaisan So favorably.

## 4.5 Language vitality

### 4.5.1 Concept: children's proficiency

#### Intermarriage (KSLQ)

All five villages reported intermarriage with non-So groups as a common occurrence (table 34). The reported numbers who do marry a non-So spouse are not many; 4/5 KSLQ respondents chose the smallest scale of measure (i.e. “some”) to describe the number of people who marry a non-So. Locations of intermarriage households vary; some remain in the So village while others move away to other places. Four of five respondents stated explicitly or implied that the mother tongue of children born from intermarriages depends on where the family chooses to settle down. Only Noi Siwilai and Don Yang indicated that children born from intermarriages would have some ability to use So (not necessarily as their mother tongue), independent of the family's location.

16 This survey aims to find out if materials in Photi Phaisan are acceptable for use in other villages. Responses that mentioned “same everywhere”, or similar type answers, were grouped under Photi Phaisan, since they indicate potential acceptance of Photi Phaisan materials.



Village	Q#42	Q#42 (a)	Q#42 (b)	Q#43	Q#43 (a)	Q#43 (b)
	Common for So to marry non-So?	Non-So groups married by So	Do many marry non-So?	Locations of inter-marriage households	1st lang of inter-marriage children	Ability of inter-marriage children to speak So
Noi Siwilai	Yes	Yaw, Kaleung	(4) some	some follow groom, some follow bride	if didn't follow So parent, will not speak So. Will speak following wherever they move to	Can – some words
Nong Nang Leung	Yes	Yaw, Isan, Kaleung, “farang”	(3) half	depends on them; some in Nong Nang Leung, some outside	will follow the language of non-So parent	No
Don Yang	Yes	CT, Isan	(4) some	mostly in this village; some will move outside	So	-not asked-
Kham Toey	Yes	Lao Isan and Lao Lao	(4) some; ~30% of population	they move here into Kham Toey	So, if they live in Kham Toey	-not asked-
Na Tao	Yes	Yaw or Isan	(4) some; not more than 50%	both here in Na Tao and also elsewhere	if in Na Tao, will speak So; if elsewhere, probably CT	if living elsewhere, probably not

Table 34: KSLQ responses to intermarriage with non-So and children's (from intermarriage families) ability to speak So

Inference from table 34: Intermarriage alone does not necessarily appear to influence the language of children born from these marriages. The choice of location for the household appears to have a bearing on which mother tongue the children will eventually adopt.

#### Children speak well or not (ISLQ)

Two Nong Nang Leung interviewees thought that the children do not speak the So language well. Another two interviewees from the same village gave conditional “yes” answers (see footnote 17). The remaining four villages agreed that the children today continue to speak So well (table 35).

Village	Q#40			
	Do children speak So well?			
	No	Yes	Yes, conditional <sup>17</sup>	TOTAL
Don Yang	—	12	—	12
Kham Toey	—	12	—	12
Na Tao	—	12	—	12
Noi Siwilai	—	12	—	12
Nong Nang Leung	2	8	2	12
TOTAL	2	56	2	60

Table 35: ISLQ responses to children speaking So well or not

Inference from table 35: Nong Nang Leung may have lower language vitality when compared to the other villages.

#### Language taught by parents, including mixed marriages (ISLQ)

Table 36 shows So parents in all villages, except Nong Nang Leung, speak So to their children. There was one ISLQ respondent that said So parents would speak Isan with their children. The reason given may relate to feelings of inferiority (“parents are shy to use So because they are in the minority”).

About half of all the ISLQ respondents said that children from intermarriage with a non-So would continue to use the So language to some degree. A significant number of respondents (38%) mentioned So would be used only under certain conditions, e.g. “children would speak So only if they remained in the village of the So parent”. Twelve percent of the respondents indicated So would not be spoken by children with one parent intermarried with a non-So speaker.

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<sup>17</sup> For this category, one interviewee answered “not too bad if their parents are So” while another said “Yes they speak well but some children are forgetting the language”.

Village	Q#41			Q#42 (a)			
	So parent's language with children			Intermarriage children – do they speak So?			
	Isan	So	TOTAL	No	Not sure or conditional <sup>18</sup>	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	0%	100%	100%	0%	42%	58%	100%
Kham Toey	0%	100%	100%	8%	33%	58%	100%
Na Tao	0%	100%	100%	8%	75%	17%	100%
Noi Siwilai	0%	100%	100%	17%	25%	58%	100%
Nong Nang Leung	8%	92%	100%	25%	17%	58%	100%
AVERAGE	2%	98%	100%	12%	38%	50%	100%

Table 36: ISLQ responses showing children's use of the So language with parents (including parents from intermarriage)

Closer inspection of the data collected about language use among children from intermarriages indicate that So may not be the first language learned. Most children from intermarriages may pick up a non-So mother tongue (e.g. CT, Isan, Yaw) first. Only 12% of the interviewees gave answers suggesting So as the main language used between parents of intermarriages and their children. See table 37.

Village	Q#42			
	Intermarriage children – is So first or primary language?			
	Depends <sup>19</sup>	No	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	33%	42%	25%	100%
Kham Toey	8%	83%	8%	100%
Na Tao	67%	25%	8%	100%
Noi Siwilai	17%	75%	8%	100%
Nong Nang Leung	8%	83%	8%	100%
AVERAGE	27%	62%	12%	100%

Table 37: ISLQ responses showing if So is the first or primary language used by parents of intermarriages and their children

Inference from tables 36 and 37: Looking at So language use between So parents and their children, Nong Nang Leung appears to have slightly lower language vitality compared to the other villages. In most intermarriages between So and non-So, the So language may not be the primary language used with the children. Therefore, while about

<sup>18</sup> Respondents under this category mostly answered that the children would speak So under certain conditions (e.g. if they remained in a So village, if the So parent taught them). Some respondents reflected uncertainty (e.g. “children might use So”).

<sup>19</sup> Responses under this category did not state explicitly which language would be the first or primary language spoken by the children. Most responses reflected different languages learned under different conditions (e.g. “some speak Isan, others speak So”, “speak So if remain in village, speak Isan if elsewhere”).

half of the children from intermarriages were reported to speak So, probably not all speak it as a first language. This raises questions about their levels of proficiency. The data from table 37 suggests low language vitality in families with intermarriage. For a broader perspective about language vitality in the So community, it may be useful to consider the amount of intermarriage.

#### **4.5.2 Concept: bilingual proficiency**

##### Languages of wider communication & proficiency (KSLQ)

Table 13 (page 19) shows that the reported information suggests that the younger generation in all So villages are speaking the LWCs (Isan or CT) well.

Inference from table 13: In the future, most So will probably be fluent in a LWC. This could suggest low vitality, but only if it can be proven that So use is declining among the younger generation at a similar rate.

##### Best language (ISLQ)

Because of the screening criteria, only those who spoke So as their best language were accepted for ISLQs. Therefore, it would not be valid to only consider the sixty interviewees that made up the sampling quota. Instead, this data section will include the rejected samples (i.e. interviewees that failed the screening criteria) because this will be a fairer reflection of the So community.

All the approached interviewees that answered this question (Q#23) said So was their best language. Two interviewees said both So and CT were their best languages, but So was still one of their best languages.

Inference: All the interviewees (accepted or otherwise) mentioned So as one of their best language. Language vitality is likely high.

##### Language use at home (ISLQ)

Table 38 shows that the majority (~95%) of interviewees indicated that when they were young, they spoke only So with their parents, and that most of their parents spoke So with each other as well.

Village	Q#24 (d)			Q#24 (e)			Q#24 (f)			
	Language with father as child			Language with mother as child			Parents language with one another when child			
	Non-So	So	TOTAL	Non-So	So	TOTAL	Mixed	Non-So	So	TOTAL
Don Yang	1	10	11	—	12	12	1	—	11	12
Kham Toey	—	12	12	1	11	12	—	1	11	12
Na Tao	2	10	12	1	11	12	—	2	10	12
Noi Siwilai	—	12	12	—	11	11	—	—	11	11
Nong Nang Leung	—	12	12	—	12	12	2	—	10	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>59</b>

Table 38: Language use at home (with parents and parents with each other) when interviewee was child

Inference from table 38: Heavy reported use of So between children and their parents, and parents with each other, seems to suggest strong language vitality since other languages are not used in the home.

#### Self-reported bilingual proficiency evaluation (ISLQ)

Table 15 (page 20) shows more than 90% of the interviewees reported they can adequately use a non-So language in many different domains. These domains include sharing information, repeating information, and conversing with mother speakers of the non-So language.

Inference from table 15: The wide range of reported conversational ability in a non-So language appears to indicate strong bilingualism in the So community, or the non-So language could be gradually overtaking the mother tongue in many language use domains.

#### **4.5.3 Concept: domains of language use**

##### Public use of So (KSLQ)

The rate of So being spoken in public is evenly split among the domains and media types (table 39). Two domains (public meetings and funerals) feature frequent use of So while another two (official notices and announcements) do not. So is absent in the media form of cassettes and CDs, but is widely known and available to the community as a radio program. Three KLSQ respondents claimed knowledge of So literature, with two specifically mentioning books from Kusuman. To the knowledge of the village leaders, there have been no researchers who have stayed in their area and studied the So language.

Village	Availability or use of So in ... (Y/N)							
	Q#44	Q#45	Q#46	Q#47	Q#48	Q#49	Q#50	Q#51
	...Cassettes/ CDs	...Literature (any type) <sup>20</sup>	... Public meetings	... Official notices	...Funerals	...Announ- cements	...Presence of past researcher s into So?	... Radio programs <sup>21</sup>
Noi Siwilai	N	N	Y (sometimes)	N	N	N	N	Y
Nong Nang Leung	N	Y (books from Kusuman)	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y
Don Yang	N	Yes (books from Kusuman)	Y	N	Y	Y	-don't know	Y
Kham Toey	N	N	Y	N	Y (Yaw, CT also)	N	-don't know	Y
Na Tao	N	Y (books from Kusuman)	Y (CT/ Isan also used if non-So are present)	N	Y	N	-don't know	Y

Table 39: KLSQ responses showing public use of So in each village

Inference from table 39: Language vitality seems balanced without appearing very high or very low.

#### Domains of language use (ISLQ)

Many of the interviewees use So exclusively at home and with other So people. When interaction with non-So people is required, a non-So language is used (see Appendix C on page 70). It appears that the So language is only used when interacting with other ethnic So.

Inference from Appendix C: Language vitality appears high among So people.

#### Children's first language and language of play (ISLQ)

Table 19 (page 23) shows So featured prominently as the reported first language among children and as the language of play in four of the villages (Don Yang, Kham Toey, Na Tao, and Noi Siwilai). One hundred percent (100%) of the ISLQ respondents indicated “So only” as the children's first language. One hundred percent (100%) of the same respondents (except one from Noi Siwilai) mentioned So as part of the children's language of play. Only one quarter (25%) of the Nong Nang Leung respondents

20 A follow up question was asked “Do people read the literature” and the answers were always “Yes”.

21 A follow up question was asked “Do people listen to the radio programs” and the answers were always “Yes”.

mentioned a non-So language as the children's first language. Similarly, about 25% of Nong Nang Leung's respondents showed a non-So language alone as the children's language of play.

Inference from table 19: Language vitality seems to be strong in all the villages but may be slightly lower in Nong Nang Leung village.

Children learning non-So languages before school (ISLQ)

Table 20 (page 24) shows interviewees reported that about 50% of the So children start using a non-So language before entering school. This alone does not directly infer anything about language vitality. A corresponding decrease in So use by the same children might infer low language vitality. If not, the numbers could just mean that children start becoming bilingual before entering school.

Inference from table 20: The sizeable ratio of children reported to be learning a non-So language before school could suggest low language vitality, but only if it can be proven that So use is declining at a rate comparable to the rate the non-So language is learned. By itself, the data does not imply low language vitality. However, the data could suggest when So children start becoming bilingual.

**4.5.4 Concept: ethnolinguistic makeup of village**

Languages and ethnic groups (KSLQ)

Table 40 shows every village was reported to have So as the ethnicity with the highest population. Don Yang and Kham Toey reported the highest percentages at 99% and 98% respectively, and Na Tao village respondents reported 94% of Na Tao's population is So. Noi Siwilai and Nong Nang Leung respondents reported the lowest percentage (88%).

	Q#28	Q#29 (a)	Q#29 (b)	Q#29 (b) (ii)	Q#29 (c)	Q#29 (c) (ii)		
Village	Population	People group that is most	People group 2nd most	Number of people (2 <sup>nd</sup> most)	People group 3rd most	Number of people (3 <sup>rd</sup> most)	Non-So population estimate	Percentage of So
Don Yang	419	So	Isan	6	None	0	6	99%
Kham Toey	1,004	So	Yaw	20	None	0	20	98%
Na Tao	963	So	Yaw	~40	Isan	~20	60	94%
Noi Siwilai	464	So	Kaleung	~20	Yaw	~20	40	91%
Nong Nang Leung	1,473	So	Isan	~100	Yaw	~70	170	88%

Table 40: Ethnolinguistic makeup of villages

Inference from table 40: A higher proportion of ethnic homogeneity usually correlates with a higher vitality for the mother tongue of that ethnic group (Nahhas, Kelsall and Mann n.d.: 16). So language vitality in Don Yang, Kham Toey, Na Tao, and Noi Siwilai is probably high. Nong Nang Leung appears to have a lower language vitality than the rest of the villages.

First language as child (ISLQ)

Because of the screening criteria, only those who spoke So as their first language (as children) were accepted for ISLQs. Therefore, it would not be valid to only consider the sixty interviewees that made up the sampling quota. Instead, this data section will include the rejected samples (i.e. interviewees that failed the screening criteria) because this will be a fairer reflection of the So community.

Only one person answered a non-So language (Isan) as her first language when she was a child. The rest of the respondents claimed So as their first language (table 41).

Q#21		
First language spoken as child		
Isan	So	TOTAL
1%	99%	100%

Table 41: ISLQ responses to first language spoken as a child

Inference from table 41: Ninety nine percent (99%) of all the interviewees mentioned So as their first language when they were children; indicating high language vitality.

**4.5.5 Concept: contact**

Intermarriage (KSLQ)

Table 34 (page 35) shows that intermarriages with non-So is few (although 30% and 50% for Kham Toey and Na Tao respectively might be considered more significant than the subjective response “some”).

Inference from table 34: From the subjective KLSQ responses alone, there appears little marital contact between the So and non-So as reflected in only “some” intermarriages. Fewer intermarriages with non-So may mean more frequent use of the So language as spouses would probably not have to speak another language to communicate with each other. Language vitality might be assumed high in this case.

Young people moving to city (KSLQ)

Table 3 (page 4) shows that many younger So people are moving away from the village to seek work opportunities. Exploring this trend further (table 42), it appears that most of the younger generation return to the village to marry, settle down, and raise families. Only Nong Nang Leung said that their younger people do not return to the village to settle once they leave.



Village name	Q#52 (b)	Q#52 (c)
	Many younger people go live elsewhere outside village?	Do they come back to stay?
Noi Siwilai	Yes, many	Yes, they will come back
Nong Nang Leung	Many; usually grandchildren. About 50-70%	No, just come back to visit
Don Yang	A lot; about 40 people (~10%)	Yes, will return to settle down
Kham Toey	~50% will go	Yes, after they are done finding money
Na Tao	~100-200 people (~10-20%)	Yes

Table 42: KSLQ responses indicating numbers of youth who leave the village and if they return or not

Inference from table 42: It appears Nong Nang Leung is the only village where the younger generation leave the village permanently, with not many returning. With a reduced pool of potential So speakers in the future, Nong Nang Leung may have lower language vitality compared to other villages.

#### Travel between So villages (KSLQ)

Only Noi Siwilai and Na Tao interviewees indicated frequency of travel suggesting high amounts of contact (i.e. weekly or everyday) with other So villages. Don Yang and Kham Toey interviewees mentioned many people visit other So villages but at lower frequencies. Nong Nang Leung had the least contact with other So villages i.e. few people making visits and rarely. See table 43.

Village name	Q#53	Q#53 (b)	Q#53 (b)	Q#53 (d)	Q#53 (d)	Q#53 (e)	Q#53 (f)
	Do the people visit other So villages?	Numbers who visit villages speaking the same	Numbers who visit villages speaking different	Frequency of visits to villages speaking the same	Frequency of visits to villages speaking different	Lang used to communicate	Any trouble communicating in So?
Noi Siwilai	Yes	Many	None	Weekly	None	So	None
Nong Nang Leung	Yes	None <sup>22</sup>	Few	None	Once per year	So	None
Don Yang	Yes	Many	Few	About ten times per year	Once per year	So	None
Kham Toey	Yes	Many	Many	About twice per year	During festivals or occasions	So	None
Na Tao	Yes	Many	Few	Everyday	About three-four times per year	So	None

Table 43: KLSQ responses indicating amounts of contact with other So villages

Inference from table 43: Noi Siwilai and Na Tao may have higher language vitality compared with the other villages, while Nong Nang Leung may have the lowest vitality.

#### 4.5.6 Concept: geographical distribution

##### Map

Most So villages are found close together in Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom provinces. Road networks provide easy access between villages. The team estimates that the So villages furthest from each other take about 1½ to 2 hours travel by car. See figure 3 (page 2) for a general picture of the So village locations.

Inference: Language vitality may be maintained as the villages are generally within easy access to each other.

#### 4.5.7 Concept: population

##### Village name and population (KSLQ)

KLSQ respondents in all five villages mentioned So populations had increased from when the village was first established. Nong Nang Leung noted that while ethnic So numbers were increasing, not all were able to speak the language. See table 44.

<sup>22</sup> Nong Nang Leung interviewees reported that other villages spoke differently from them. Therefore, the responses for villages that spoke the same were listed as “None” i.e. there were no villages that Nong Nang Leung considered as speaking the same So as them.

Village	Q#30
	So population increase/decrease
Noi Siwilai	Increase
Nong Nang Leung	Increase in ethnicity but not all speak So
Don Yang	Increase
Kham Toey	Increase
Na Tao	Increase (population mix hasn't changed; still predominantly So; language still local language)

Table 44: KSLQ responses about So population growth

Inference from table 44: Increase in populations may suggest a sustainable pool of So speakers will be available to keep the language alive. Language vitality would then be high. However, Nong Nang Leung appears an exception to the norm; the village leader's response suggests that language vitality may not correspond with population growth.

#### 4.5.8 Concept: educational policy

##### Schools (KSLQ)

All schools in the villages teach in CT. So is not used. The same situation applies in schools outside the village where many So children continue their education (most village schools only provide education up to primary 6 level); the language of instruction is CT, and So is not used to help teach (table 45).

Village	Q#32	Q#32 (b)	Q#32 (b) (i)	Q#33	Q#33 (d)	Q#33 (d) (i)
	Is there school in village?	Language of instruction (school in village)	Is So used to help teach?	Do children go elsewhere for schooling?	Language of instruction in schools outside the village	Is So used to help teach?
Noi Siwilai	Yes	CT	No	Yes	CT	No
Nong Nang Leung	Yes	CT	No	Yes	CT	No
Don Yang	Yes	CT	No	Yes	CT	No
Kham Toey	Yes	CT	No	Yes	CT	No
Na Tao	Yes	CT	No	Yes	CT	No

Table 45: KLSQ responses showing languages of instruction and the place of the So language in schools

Inference from table 45: The use of CT and the absence of So in the schools would imply low language vitality in the case of educational policy and practice.

#### 4.5.9 Concept: language attitudes

##### Children's language of play (ISLQ)

The majority (88%) of the ISLQ respondents did not mention any negative attitudes toward the children's use of So as language of play (table 46). Only one interviewee explicitly expressed a negative attitude toward So use. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents did not clearly indicate any positive or negative attitude toward the So language (see footnote 23).

Village	Q#38 (a)				
	Feelings toward children's language of play (attitudes toward So use)				
	Negative	Neutral	Not clear <sup>23</sup>	Positive	TOTAL
Don Yang	—	5	1	4	10
Kham Toey	—	4	—	8	12
Na Tao	—	3	3	6	12
Noi Siwilai	—	4	2	4	10
Nong Nang Leung	1	8	—	2	11
TOTAL	1	24	6	24	55
PERCENTAGE	2%	44%	11%	44%	100%

Table 46: ISLQ responses on attitudes about children's language of play

Inference from table 46: Only a small percentage of the So community indicated a negative attitude toward children speaking So when playing. It is possible to infer language vitality as not low. But because of the high number of “Neutral” responses, it is probably not accurate to suggest clear high language vitality in this area. More likely, language vitality is medium to moderately high.

##### Children speak well or not (ISLQ)

There were only two non-neutral responses about attitudes to children speaking So well or not<sup>24</sup>. One answer reflected a positive attitude to So while another reflected a sense of resignation about the situation (table 47).

23 Answers in this category were about use of a non-So language. All six answers included the use of a non-So language as the children's language of play in an earlier question (Q#38). Subsequently, the answers to this question Q#38 (a) referred to the non-So language.

24 The ISLQ was designed to ask about attitudes only if the interviewee answered “no” to an earlier question about children speaking So well or not.

Q#40	Q#40 (a)	Q#40 (b)
Do children speak So well?	How do children not speak So well?	How do you feel about children not speaking So well?
No	Cannot speak because noone teaches	Want to have a teacher to come & teach the children
No	Some children are forgetting the language	Since children speak Isan with parents who are non-So, the grandparents follow

Table 47: ISLQ responses indicating attitudes about children speaking So well or not

Inference from table 47: Two responses may be not statistically sufficient to determine language vitality. At the most, they appear to suggest a non-negative attitude toward the So language, from which may be weakly inferred high language vitality.

### Stopped speaking (ISLQ)

Only 11 interviewees were asked about attitudes toward ethnic So who stopped speaking So. The ISLQ was designed so that this question would be asked only if the interviewee affirmed there were So people who had stopped using the language. From the responses (table 48), most of the So (55%) felt badly (e.g. “not so good”, “sad”) when asked how they felt about So people not speaking So anymore, indicating a positive attitude to their language. Another 36% indicated a neutral or ambivalent attitude (e.g. “up to them”, “depends on them”). Only one person indicated negative attitudes toward the So language.

Village	Q#46 (b)			
	Feelings to So stopped speaking			
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	TOTAL
Kham Toey	—	1	—	1
Na Tao	—	2	2	4
Noi Siwilai	—	1	—	1
Nong Nang Leung	1	—	4	5
TOTAL	1	4	6	11
PERCENTAGE	9%	36%	55%	100%

Table 48: ISLQ responses showing attitudes toward ethnic So who had stopped speaking So

Inference from table 48: A generally positive attitude (clearly non-negative) toward the So language was expressed by most So interviewed. From this, it's possible to infer medium to moderately high language vitality in the So community.

### Twenty years from now (ISLQ)

From table 49, most (44%) of the ISLQ responses about attitudes to So children speaking So 20 years in the future were categorized as “Not clear” i.e. the respondent did not indicate either a positive or negative (or even neutral) attitude toward So use (see table 50

for actual responses in this category). Thirty eight percent (38%) of the ISLQ responses were clearly positive, while 13% were neutral (e.g. “up to them”, “don't feel anything”). There was only one negative response (“feels good that there will be little (few) So speaking So”).

Village	Q#47 (a)				
	Feelings to children speaking So 20 years ahead				
	Negative	Neutral	Not clear	Positive	TOTAL
Don Yang	—	—	1	1	2
Kham Toey	—	—	—	2	2
Na Tao	—	—	1	—	1
Noi Siwilai	1	—	3	1	5
Nong Nang Leung	—	2	2	2	6
TOTAL	1	2	7	6	16
PERCENTAGE	6%	13%	44%	38%	100%

Table 49: ISLQ responses about attitudes to So children speaking So 20 years in the future

Q#47	Q#47 (a)
Will there be children speaking So 20 years in the future?	How do you feel about that?
Won't have	Happy they can speak other languages
Probably not	Will change to Isan
Some can, some can't	Didn't mention feelings, just said “So might disappear, or persist”
Yes, but few	-didn't answer
None! “nobody will speak So anymore”	Have to follow the times; cannot be helped
Yes, but population will be only 50% speaking So	The children will go to BKK and stop speaking So
Concerned that there will be no more	Won't be around, so can't say

Table 50: Actual ISLQ responses from the seven interviewees whose answers to Q#47 (a) were classified as “Not clear”

Inference from tables 49 and 50: The seven ISLQ responses categorized as “Not clear” may be interpreted to mean positive, negative, or neutral attitudes toward the So language. Either extremes would change the overall situation. An interpretation of a negative bias to this category would result in more negative attitudes (increase to 50%) than positive (remain at 38%). While an opposite interpretation of a positive bias would boost the positive attitude percentages (82%) significantly. This data set is not clear enough to provide any meaningful indication of language vitality.

### Cultural values (ISLQ)

Every So interviewee (100%) replied positively to a desire for their children to preserve the So identity. Exploring the responses further (table 51), 90% of the interviewees were able to articulate reasons for their desire. Among them were “a sense of obligation toward the ancestors”, “a desire to keep something of the So identity for their children”, “a concern that elements of being So might be lost” etc.

Village	Q#48 (b)		
	Ability to articulate reasons for desire?		
	No	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	1	11	12
Kham Toey	2	10	12
Na Tao	1	11	12
Noi Siwilai	2	10	12
Nong Nang Leung	—	12	12
TOTAL	6	54	60
PERCENTAGE	10%	90%	100%

Table 51: ISLQ responses showing numbers of those able to provide reasons for their desire to have children preserve So identity

Inference from table 51: Many (90%) of the So are able to express reasons for wanting to see their children preserve the So identity. That they are able to articulate such reasons implies some degree of having given the question more thought, instead of just answering “yes”. Thus, the stated desire to see the children preserve their So identity infers positive attitudes. A strong indication of positive attitudes toward preserving the So identity hints at potentially strong language vitality.

### Felt advantage toward literacy (ISLQ)

All, but one interviewee, felt positively that reading and writing So had benefits. The one interviewee who replied otherwise said he did not know if there would be felt advantages toward literacy in the So language. Of the 59 interviewees who felt positively that literacy in So was beneficial, 85% were able to give reasons for why they thought there would be benefits in reading and writing So (table 52).

Village	Q#53 (a)		
	Ability to articulate reasons to benefit?		
	No	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	2	10	12
Kham Toey	2	10	12
Na Tao	1	11	12
Noi Siwilai	2	9	11
Nong Nang Leung	2	10	12
TOTAL	9	50	59
PERCENTAGE	15%	85%	100%

Table 52: ISLQ responses showing numbers of those able to provide reasons for benefits to reading and writing So

Inference from table 52: The majority of ISLQ respondents agreed there was a felt advantage to So literacy. There were no negative responses. Many were also able to articulate reasons to the perceived benefits in reading and writing So. Perceived advantages to So literacy could indicate language pride. They could also reflect a desire to see the language grow from oral communication to written. Either way, the majority of positive attitudes expressed toward So literacy might infer high language vitality.

#### Desired literature (ISLQ)

Most So interviewees gave opinions on desired literature in the So language, although about one-third of the responses were prompted after examples given by the interviewer. There were nine interviewees that either answered “don't know” or did not answer anything (“null responses”). The analysis of this question assumes only the unprompted answers (except for the nine “null” responses) as truly reflecting a desire for literature<sup>25</sup>. Going by this assumption, about half (53%) of the interviewees expressed, without prompts or aids, a desire for literature in So (table 53).

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25 It's the author's opinion that interviewees that have to be prompted with examples actually may not have a desire for any kinds of literature. Their responses may possibly be out of a sense of politeness to the researchers in that “any answer would do as long as there is an answer”.



Village	Q#54		
	Sense of truly desiring literature		
	No	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	8	4	12
Kham Toey	3	9	12
Na Tao	5	7	12
Noi Siwilai	7	5	12
Nong Nang Leung	5	7	12
TOTAL	28	32	60
PERCENTAGE	47%	53%	100%

Table 53: ISLQ responses showing numbers of expressed opinions without promptings about desired literature in So

Inference from table 53: About half of the interviewees were able to articulate their desires for things written in So without prompting from the researchers. Desire for literature is interpreted as indicative of high language vitality. Based on the data here, language vitality might be assumed to be medium.

#### Desire to read & write (ISLQ)

Most (63%) of the interviewees answered affirmatively to a desire to read and write So (table 54). Ten (17%) of the responses were categorized as conditional/unsure e.g. “if there is time, I will go”, “it depends on time”. Twelve (20%) interviewees expressed a negative desire to read and write So.

Village	Q#55			
	Stated desire to read and write			
	Conditional/ unsure	No	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	—	3	9	12
Kham Toey	3	2	7	12
Na Tao	1	3	8	12
Noi Siwilai	6	1	5	12
Nong Nang Leung	—	3	9	12
TOTAL	10	12	38	60
PERCENTAGE	17%	20%	63%	100%

Table 54: ISLQ responses showing apparent desire to read and write So

The “yes” and “conditional/unsure” answers were investigated deeper. A follow-up question about the number of hours each interviewee was willing to commit to learning to read and write So was asked. Some interviewees were unwilling or unable to commit a certain number of hours per day to learn. Conservatively, these responses have been categorized as “not being able to commit to learning to read and write So” (table 55).

68% of the interviewees were able to commit a certain number of set hours to learning to read and write So. The ability to commit certain hours may likely reflect a truer desire to learn to read and write So. A desire to learn to read and write in the vernacular correlates with the vernacular's vitality.

Village	Able to commit to learning to read and write So		
	No	Yes	TOTAL
Don Yang	4	8	12
Kham Toey	4	8	12
Na Tao	5	7	12
Noi Siwilai	3	9	12
Nong Nang Leung	3	9	12
TOTAL	18	42	60
PERCENTAGE	32%	68%	100%

Table 55: ISLQ responses reflecting a truer desire to read and write So after accounting for the number of hours of committed learning

Inference from tables 54 and 55: The majority of ISLQ respondents show a desire to learn to read and write in So as reflected by the number of people who expressed a commitment to this activity. Language vitality is inferred as moderately high here.

#### 4.5.10 Concept: ethnolinguistic identity

##### Primary ethnic identity (ISLQ)

From table 21 (page 25), more than 80% of the respondents claimed So as their primary ethnic identity.

Inference from table 21: Eighty percent of the interviewees represents a healthy majority, and indicates strong language vitality in this area.

##### Cultural values (ISLQ)

Every ISLQ respondent expressed positively a desire to have their children preserve the So identity. There were no negative responses. A desire for the children to retain aspects of their So identity could infer a desire to continue using the So language.

Inference: Language vitality is high, as evidenced by 100% respondents indicating a desire for the children to pass on and preserve their So identity.

## 5 Conclusions

### 5.1 Mastery of CT or Isan

Isan appears more widely used than CT in So communities. However, not all the community may be sufficiently proficient in Isan to use materials developed in this language. The older generation reportedly do not speak Isan well enough. For the future, it seems that significant numbers of children are learning Isan early enough in their childhood years. However, their level of proficiency is unclear. The self-reported bilingual proficiency questions do suggest a “higher-than-basic” level of proficiency, but they are not objective enough to determine if the So are able to use materials developed in Isan without problems.

Respondents from Nong Nang Leung village seem to indicate a higher degree of adequate mastery in CT or Isan than other villages.

Research question	Concepts	Tool	Inference
Adequate mastery of CT or Isan?	Bilingual proficiency	KSLQ Q#34	Possibly adequate (children study at least 9 years in CT)
		KLSQ Q#35-Q#38	Not adequate (CT not widely used, and older people do not speak Isan proficiently)
		ISLQ Q#23	Possibly adequate (all speak Isan or CT to some degree). More are proficient in Isan than CT
		ISLQ Q#28-Q#33	Possibly adequate (all speak Isan or CT to some degree)
	Domains of language use	ISLQ Q#26	Possibly adequate for Isan. Isan spoken more widely than CT
		ISLQ Q#37, Q#38	Not adequate (no first language; few language of play), except maybe in Nong Nang Leung
		ISLQ Q#39	Possibly adequate (many children learn LWC before school). Isan more widely used than CT. More Nong Nang Leung children than other villages learn non-So before school
	Subject demographics	ISLQ Q#22	Possibly adequate (all speak Isan or CT to some degree)
	Languages and ethnic groups	KLSQ Q#35-Q#38, Q#39, Q#40, Q#41	Possibly adequate (most can speak other than So, but not sure if Isan or CT)

Table 56: Summary of inferences about mastery of CT or Isan

### 5.2 Attitudes toward CT or Isan

The percentage of positive attitudes toward CT or Isan was unclear. The intermarriage questions revealed more positive attitudes (88%) compared to the questions on children's LWC use at home (41%). It's possible that the So favor CT more than Isan; some clear negative attitudes were inferred regarding Isan use, but none for CT.

Research question	Concepts	Tool	Inference
Attitudes to CT or Isan?	Ethnolinguistic identity	ISLQ Q#27	Few positive attitudes toward Thai or Isan (Thai appears more favored)
	Language attitudes	ISLQ Q#43	Less than half have positive attitudes to Isan and CT. No clear negative attitudes to CT, but some clear negative attitudes to Isan
		ISLQ Q#44	Very few negative attitudes to Isan and CT (Majority clearly positive to Isan and CT)

Table 57: Summary of inferences on attitudes to CT or Isan

### 5.3 Comprehension of the Photi Phaisan dialect

The So in this region seem to have adequate comprehension of the Photi Phaisan variety. Most (at least 80%) are able to understand “everything” or “most things” when listening to a speaker of the Photi Phaisan variety. So speakers also appear to be able to use their own village varieties to communicate with other So from Photi Phaisan without problems.

Nong Nang Leung may have fewer people who can comprehend the Photi Phaisan variety of So without difficulty.

Research question	Concepts	Tool	Inference
Adequate comprehension of Photi Phaisan variety?	Linguistic relatedness	WL	No So varieties are inherently unintelligible
	Comprehension	ISLQ Q#34, Q#36	Adequate comprehension both ways (village varieties ↔ Photi Phaisan variety). Nong Nang Leung might have fewer people with adequate comprehension
		ISLQ Q#63, Q#65, Q#68, Q#70	Adequate comprehension
		Observation	Adequate comprehension

Table 58: Summary of inferences about comprehension toward Photi Phaisan variety of So

### 5.4 Attitudes toward the Photi Phaisan dialect

There do not seem any negative attitudes toward the Photi Phaisan variety of So. If anything, most So in this region appear to have a favorable, at worst neutral, impression toward the Photi Phaisan variety. In terms of a prestige dialect, many So view their own village variety as the “best” i.e. spoken most clearly and beautifully. However, a quarter to a third of the So community do consider the Photi Phaisan variety as the prestige dialect, which shows a significant percentage of the population do favor the Photi Phaisan variety.

Research question	Concepts	Tool	Inference
Attitudes to Photi Phaisan variety?	Language attitudes	ISLQ Q#45	Positive attitudes; at worst, view as similar
		ISLQ Q#71	1/4 to 1/3 show clear positive attitudes. Half show positive attitudes to own village variety

Table 59: Summary of inferences about attitudes toward Photi Phaisan variety of So

## 5.5 Language vitality

In general, responses show higher counts of “high or medium/moderate vitality” than “low vitality”. Most cases of “low vitality” are not absolute; they depend on other factors (e.g. lots of youth speaking a LWC well would mean low vitality only if it can be proven that So use is in decline). Across most of the villages, it would appear the So will continue to be used by future generations indicating overall strong language vitality.

An exception to the norm is Nong Nang Leung. Nong Nang Leung registered seven counts of low vitality (or potentially low vitality). This particular community may have lower language vitality than other So villages in the region.

Research question	Concepts	Tool	Inference
Will So be used in future generations?	Children's proficiency	KSLQ Q#42, Q#43	Unclear. Language vitality influenced by choice of location to settle down. Data does not indicate this
		ISLQ Q#40	High vitality except for Nong Nang Leung
		ISLQ Q#41	High vitality except for Nong Nang Leung
		ISLQ Q#42	Potentially low vitality (depends on number of intermarriages)
	Bilingual proficiency	KSLQ Q#36	Potentially low vitality (youth speak LWC well; vitality depends on So use in future)
		ISLQ Q#23	High vitality (So is best language for all)
		ISLQ Q#24 (d), (e), (f)	High vitality (Only So used with parents, and between parents)
		ISLQ Q#28-Q#33	Unclear. More data needed about specific use in these domains
	Domains of language use	KSLQ Q#44-Q#51	Balanced vitality (neither high nor low)
		ISLQ Q#26	High vitality (depends on population; numbers do indicate big population)
		ISLQ Q#37, Q#38	High vitality except for Nong Nang Leung
		ISLQ Q#39	Potentially low vitality (but only if proven So use is declining at same rate)
	Ethnolinguistic makeup of village	KSLQ Q#28, Q#29	High vitality except for Nong Nang Leung
		ISLQ Q#21	High vitality (99% first language)
	Contact	KSLQ Q#42, Q#43	Potentially high vitality (few intermarriages with non-So based on subjective responses)

Research question	Concepts	Tool	Inference
		KSLQ Q#52	Low vitality for Nong Nang Leung. Unclear for other villages (youth leave regularly and frequently, but they do return)
		KSLQ Q#53	Vitality depends; some high (e.g. Na Tao, Noi Siwilai), some low (e.g. Nong Nang Leung)
	Geographical distribution	Map	High vitality (villages close by each other)
	Population	KSLQ Q#30	Potentially high vitality (increasing population), except Nong Nang Leung
	Educational policy	KSLQ Q#32, Q#33	Low vitality (CT language of instruction)
	Language attitudes	ISLQ Q#38	Moderate vitality (not low vitality)
		ISLQ Q#40	Potentially high vitality (but not statistically viable)
		ISLQ Q#46	Moderate vitality (not low vitality)
		ISLQ Q#47	Unclear (depends on “not clear” category)
		ISLQ Q#48	High vitality (Able to give reasons)
		ISLQ Q#53	High vitality (View So literacy positively)
		ISLQ Q#54	Medium vitality
	Ethnolinguistic identity	ISLQ Q#27	High vitality
		ISLQ Q#48	High vitality

Table 60: Summary of inferences about language vitality

## 5.6 Summary

Four villages (Noi Siwilai, Don Yang, Kham Toey, and Na Tao) have sufficient self-reported comprehension of the So variety from Photi Phaisan. All four also have positive attitudes toward Photi Phaisan So and language vitality is high in these villages. Therefore, it appears likely that materials developed in the Photi Phaisan variety can be used in these four villages and their neighbouring communities. Further comprehension testing using Recorded Text Testing (RTT) could be used to confirm this conclusion.

There is indication that fewer So in Nong Nang Leung have sufficient comprehension of the Photi Phaisan variety, but this is based on one data set (table 28 on page 31). One data set alone is insufficient to generalize as to whether or not the So in Nong Nang Leung have inadequate comprehension of Photi Phaisan So. However, Nong Nang Leung has indications of relatively lower So language vitality than the other villages. Nong Nang Leung also appears to have higher potential of adequate mastery in Isan or CT compared to other villages. The only negative indication of adequate mastery in a LWC is the older generation speaking Isan poorly. Assuming Nong Nang Leung is unable to use materials developed in the Photi Phaisan variety, they may be able to use materials developed in either CT or Isan. Isan appears to be the LWC more widely used, but CT appears to be

avored more. Additional research would need to be conducted to confirm this finding, such as bilingualism testing in CT or Isan.

## **6 Recommendations**

It is worth investigating the reasons why Nong Nang Leung may potentially not be able to use materials developed in Photi Phaisan So. The team should probably find out if this village is an exception to the norm, or if there may be factors that suggest other villages with sociolinguistic situations like Nong Nang Leung would not be able to use materials developed using Photi Phaisan So.

The potential use of LWC materials in Nong Nang Leung (e.g. community development, literature sharing) requires a decision to be made between the two LWCs in this region (CT or Isan). Isan appears to be more widely used but CT seems to have a more positive status. The team would have to choose between adequate mastery (Isan seems better) and language attitudes (CT seems better).

It may be useful to consider conducting RTT to evaluate comprehension between other villages and the Photi Phaisan variety of So. RTT results would help to determine the extensibility of the current development project using Photi Phaisan So.

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<sup>26</sup> Cited with author's permission in email correspondence dated 12 December 2007.

## Appendix A: List of So villages

Tables 61 and 62 contain a list of So villages in Sakon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom provinces. Survey sites were selected from this list. Some villages were not selected because these have been surveyed or researched before. Villages listed with Markowski as source were provided by a So informant in Kusuman.

### Sakon Nakhon province

District อำเภอ	Subdistrict ตำบล	Village หมู่บ้าน	Population (village leader or KKU)	Lat/Long หมู่บ้าน	Distance to Kusuman <sup>27</sup>	Other Notes	Village group	Near main road	Selection rationale
Kusuman อ. กุสุมาลย์	Kusuman ต. กุสุมาลย์	Kusuman บ. กุสุมาลย์		~17° 19' 45" ~104° 20' 15"		Mixed So and Isan;	A	yes	
		Kok Samhong บ. กอกส้มโฮง [ว. ซิมโง]		~17° 17' 40" ~104° 19' 20"	~4 km	Two separate areas on RTS, marked the larger	A	no	
		I Kut บ. อีกุด	672	~17° 22' 15" ~104° 19' 20"	~5km		A	yes	
		Nong Hoy บ. นองหอย [ว. นองฮอย ปู่ด, ว. นองฮอย กียห์]		~17° 23' 0" ~104° 19' 50"	~7km	Officially listed as one village, but have two parts, separated geographically	A	yes	
	Na Pho ต. นาโพธิ์	Ban Born บ. บอน	566	~17° 21' 0" ~104° 17' 20"	~8km	Maybe only 30- 40% So	A	yes	
		Kha Kai บ. ข่าไค้	587	~17° 21' 40" ~104° 17' 40"	~9km		A	yes	
		Khok Muang บ. โคกม่วง	325	~17° 22' 0" ~104° 18' 0"	~10km		A	yes	
		Khok Sawang บ. โคกสว่าง	283	~17° 22' 30" ~104° 18' 40"	~12km		A	yes	

<sup>27</sup> Average distance calculated from Map Magic program.

District อำเภอ	Subdistrict ตำบล	Village หมู่บ้าน	Population (village leader or KKU)	Lat/Long หมู่บ้าน	Distance to Kusuman	Other Notes	Village group	Near main road	Selection rationale
		Muang Kao บ. เมืองเก่า	113	~17° 20' 40" ~104° 18' 25"	~4km	Surveyed before	A	yes	Not selected – surveyed before
	Photi Phaisan ต. โพธิ์ไพศาล	Photi Phaisan บ. โพธิ์ไพศาล	621 (VL) 579	~17° 22' 10" ~104° 22' 10"	~7km	Spelled differently on some maps. Surveyed before	A	yes	Selected for pilot test and as reference/ prestige dialect village (even though surveyed before)
		Khok Nong Pheu บ. โคกหนองฝือ	244	~17° 20' 50" ~104° 23' 30"	~8km	Newer village, not named on RTS	A	no	
		Kutsagoi บ. กุดสะกอย	415	~17° 21' 30" ~104° 24' 30"	~11km		A	yes	
		Phon Phaeng บ. โพนแพง	755	~17° 23' 25" ~104° 23' 0"	~9km		A	yes	
		Huay Kok บ. ห้วยกอก	381	~17° 24' 0" ~104° 22' 20"	~11 km		A	yes	
		Nong Khem บ. หนองเค็ม	268	~17° 24' 0" ~104° 22' 0"	~12km		A	yes	
		Khok Klang บ. โคกกลาง	170			Not on RTS		yes	
		Kut Hu บ. กุดฮู	660	~17° 24' 0" ~104° 21' 20"	~13km		A	yes	
		Phon Muang บ. โพนม่วง		~17° 23' 30" ~104° 21' 40"	~12 km		A	yes	

Table 61: So village list in Sakon Nakhon including selection rationale

Nakhon Phanom province

District อำเภอ	Subdistrict ตำบล	Village หมู่บ้าน	Population (village leader or KKU)	Lat/Long หมู่บ้าน	Distance to Kusuman	Other Notes	Village group	Near main road	Selection rationale
Phon Sawan อ. โพนสวรรค์	Ban Kho ต. บ้านค้อ <sup>28</sup>	Na Kham บ. นาค้า	410? 523?			Only older speak. Surveyed before			Not selected – surveyed before
		Na Tao บ. นาเต่า	425	17° 32' 0" 104° 17' 40"	~27km	Not on RTS, but school is on Map Magic	C	yes	Selected for medium population
		Ngiw บ. จิว [ว. ตูวาร]	544	~17° 31' 0" ~104° 18' 0"	~26km		C	yes	
		Sang Kaew บ. สร้างแก้ว	302		~26km	New village; mostly moved from Ngiw	C	yes	
		Khon Khii (?)				Not sure, possibly So			
	Na Hua Bo ต. นาหัวบ่อ	Nong Saeng บ. นองแสง			~27 km	Not sure how many still speak So			
		Phon Tum บ. โพนตุม		~17° 31' 0" ~104° 22' 0"	~27km				
	Phon Chan ต. โพนจาน	Phon Chan บ. โพนจาน	81 ?	~17° 26' 0" ~104° 25' 0"	~16km	Alternative spellings, especially subdistrict			
		Bong Kham บ. บงคำ [ว. บ้านบง]	329	17° 24' 10" 104° 25' 30"	~14km	Informant's student is there; school director is his friend; south of highway 2028	A1	no	
		Phon Chareon บ. โพนเจริญ							
		Noi Siwilai บ. น้อยศรีวิสัย [ว.					A1	no	Selected because most isolated

28 Ban Kho subdistrict has mostly Yaw speakers.

District อำเภอ	Subdistrict ตำบล	Village หมู่บ้าน	Population (village leader or KKU)	Lat/Long หมู่บ้าน	Distance to Kusuman	Other Notes	Village group	Near main road	Selection rationale
		ฮวยลาย]							
	Phon Sawan ต. โพนสวรรค์	Nong Nang Leung บ. นองนางเล็ง [ว. ลี เล็ง]	806	~17° 26' 45" ~104° 28' 35"	~22 km		B	yes	Selected for big population
		Khok Kong บ. โคกก่อง		~17° 26' 25" ~104° 29' 30"	~25 km		B	yes	
	Phon Bok ? ต. โพนบก	Phon Phek ? บ. โพนเพ็ก	714	~17° 26' 50" ~104° 29' 50"	~25km	Need to confirm if this Phon Phek or in T. Phon Sawan OR T. Na Hua Bo	B	yes	
	Na Khamin ต. นาขมิ้น	(Ban) Dong บ. ดง		~17° 31' 30" ~104° 26' 0"	~28km	Not sure how many speak So; informant's ancestors are from here			
		Khok Na Di บ. โคกนาดี		~17° 31' 30" ~104° 29' 0"	~30 km		D	yes	
		Na Khamin บ. นาขมิ้น [ว. ตะ เม่น]	470	~17° 32' 0" ~104° 29' 30"	~31 km		D	yes	Not selected – similar to village group B and C
		Don Yang บ. ดอนยาง [ว. กุด ปะเกี้ยว]	163		~35km		D	no	Selected for small population
		Thung Noi บ. ฟุ่งน้อย	653	~17° 32' 0" ~104° 32' 0"	~35km		D	no	
		Don Sawan บ. ดอนสวรรค์							
		Na Nam Kham บ. นานำคำ [ว. นำ คำ]	187						
Tha Uthen อ. ท่าอุเทน	Tha Cham Pa ต. ท่าจำปา	Huai Phra บ. ห้วยพระ	452	~17° 34' 0" ~104° 30' 0"	~36 km	Not named on RTS, but marked as village.	E	yes	

District อำเภอ	Subdistrict ตำบล	Village หมู่บ้าน	Population (village leader or KKU)	Lat/Long หมู่บ้าน	Distance to Kusuman	Other Notes	Village group	Near main road	Selection rationale
						Surveyed before			
		Kham Haak บ. คำฮาก [ว. นอง เดิน]				Not in KKU website, so not sure this is listed in the right tambon; out past Thung Noi/Don Yang			
		Don Daeng บ. ดอนแดง	223	~17° 35' 0" ~104° 29' 0"	~39 km		E	yes	
		Don Daeng Noi บ. ดอนแดงน้อย					E	yes	
		Don Tiw บ. ดอนดี							
		Kham Toey บ. คำเตย	605	~17° 34' 0" ~104° 27' 30"	~42km		E	yes	Selected for large population
	Pha Thai ต. พะทาย	Pha Thai บ. พะทาย [ว. ประตี ยาย]	320	~17° 45' 0" ~104° 19' 0"	~65 km	Maybe 30-40 km north of Tha Uthen. Surveyed before			Not selected – surveyed before
		Na Kha Tha บ. นาข่าท่า							
		Na Di ? บ. นาดี				Not sure if this was for Pha Thai subdistrict; KKU does not list Na Di there			

Table 62: So village list in Nakhon Phanom including selection rationale

## Appendix B: Word list analysis methodology

The word list analysis follows lexicostatistical comparison methods. Words from different speech varieties are compared to see if cognate relationships exist between them. Lexically similar words are considered cognate pairs. The percentage of the sum of cognate pairs is then calculated to see if two speech varieties might be intelligible or not.

Words are broken down into segments and segment pairs between different speech varieties are compared following a set of criteria based on the Blair method (Nahhas and Mann 2007). Each segment pair is then assigned a category depending on whether it meets any of the criteria in the categories or not. The following categories show criteria used for this survey.

### Category 1

- a) exact matches
- b) vowels differ by one phonological feature
- c) phonetically similar consonants that occur consistently for at least 3 word pairs
- d) the following consonant pairs occurring in the same position: [r-l], [tʃ-tç], [ʔ-k]

### Category 2

- a) vowels differ by more than one phonological feature
- b) phonetically similar consonants by not consistently attested (less than 3 word pairs)

### Category 3

- a) phonetically dissimilar consonants
- b) segments that correspond to nothing (absence-of-segment) in other variety

### Ignore

- a) breathy distinctions
- b) vowel length
- c) tonal distinctions

Once all segment pairs are assigned a category, the following rule is then applied to determine if the two words are lexically similar or not.

Two items are judged to be phonetically similar if:

1. at least 50% of the segments compared are in category 1, AND
2. at least 75% of the segments compared are in category 1 and category 2



Only segments from the word's main syllable have been compared and analysed. So words, like most other Mon-Khmer languages, are made up of pre-syllables and main syllables. As with other Mon-Khmer languages, the semantic root lies in the main syllable. In his reconstruction of proto-Katuic, Sidwell (2004: 20) mentions that pre-syllables generally reflect secondary information such as derivation or transitivity. Word studies on Katuic varieties such as Katu (Costello 1966) and Pacoh (Watson 1966) provide evidence for this.

The following four words in table 63 from the So survey provide an example in identifying the main syllables for analysis:

English	stone	dog	fruit	tree
Photi Phaisan	ko:l	ɛtʃɔ:r	pələj ɛluan	tənəm ɛluan
Noi Siwilai	ko:l	ɛtɕɔ:r	pələj	tənəm ɛluan
Nong Nang Leung	ko:l	atɕɔ:r	palaj ʔaluan	tanəm ʔaluan
Don Yang	ko:l	ɛtɕɔ:r	pələj ɛluan	tənəm ɛluan
Kham Toey	ko:l	ɛtʃɔ:h	pələj ɛluan	tənəm ɛluan
Na Tao	ko:l	ɛtʃɔ:	pələj ɛluan	tənəm aluan

Table 63: Example of four So words with minor and major syllables

The first word “stone” is unambiguously monosyllabic and can be compared directly. The following word “dog” contains a minor syllable in the form [a] or [ɐ], and a major syllable in the form [tʃɔ:r], [tɕɔ:r], or other equivalents. The minor pre-syllable is ignored from the lexicostatistical analysis as it does not add anything to the core meaning of the word. Only the main syllables are compared. In the following two words “fruit” and “tree”, the segment containing [luan] suggests semantic content as relating to trees or plants and is ignored in the lexicostatistical analysis as it also likely does not impact the core meaning of the word.

Applying this method of identifying segments for comparison, the words are only compared based on the main syllable forms as found in table 64.

English	stone	dog	fruit	tree
Photi Phaisan	ko:l	tʃɔ:r	ləj	nəm
Noi Siwilai	ko:l	tɕɔ:r	ləj	nəm
Nong Nang Leung	ko:l	tɕɔ:r	ləj	nəm
Don Yang	ko:l	tɕɔ:r	ləj	nəm
Kham Toey	ko:l	tʃɔ:h	ləj	nəm
Na Tao	ko:l	tʃɔ:	ləj	nəm

Table 64: Example of four So words with only the major syllables (containing root content)

The words are then compared between each village variety and each segment is assigned a specific category following the pre-determined criteria. For the four example words, this step would yield the following results in table 65.

English	stone	dog	fruit	tree
Photi Phaisan – Noi Siwilai	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 1a	1a 1b 1a	1a 1a 1a
Photi Phaisan – Nong Nang Leung	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 1a	1a 1b 1a	1a 1a 1a
Photi Phaisan – Don Yang	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 1a	1a 1b 1a	1a 1a 1a
Photi Phaisan – Kham Toey	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 3a	1a 1b 1a	1a 1a 1a
Photi Phaisan – Na Tao	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 3b	1a 1b 1a	1a 1a 1a
Noi Siwilai – Nong Nang Leung	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Noi Siwilai – Don Yang	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Noi Siwilai – Kham Toey	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 3a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Noi Siwilai – Na Tao	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 3b	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Nong Nang Leung – Don Yang	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Nong Nang Leung – Kham Toey	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 3a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Nong Nang Leung – Na Tao	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 3b	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Don Yang – Kham Toey	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 3a	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Don Yang – Na Tao	1a 1a 1a	1d 1a 3b	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a
Kham Toey – Na Tao	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 3b	1a 1a 1a	1a 1a 1a

Table 65: Lexical similarity criteria application

Applying the two rules for judging phonetic similarity, word varieties from each village can then be determined as lexically similar or not. See table 66.

English	stone	dog	fruit	tree
Photi Phaisan – Noi Siwilai	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Photi Phaisan – Nong Nang Leung	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Photi Phaisan – Don Yang	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Photi Phaisan – Kham Toey	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Photi Phaisan – Na Tao	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Noi Siwilai – Nong Nang Leung	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Noi Siwilai – Don Yang	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Noi Siwilai – Kham Toey	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Noi Siwilai – Na Tao	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Nong Nang Leung – Don Yang	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nong Nang Leung – Kham Toey	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Nong Nang Leung – Na Tao	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Don Yang – Kham Toey	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Don Yang – Na Tao	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Kham Toey – Na Tao	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Table 66: Lexical analysis showing phonetic similarity (Yes or No)

## Appendix C: Domains of language use

		26(a)	26(b)	26(c)	26(d)	26(e)	26(f)	26(g)	26(h)	26(i)	26(j)	26(k)	26(l)	26(m)	26(o)	26(n)	26(p)
		HOME							SOCIAL SETTING				VILLAGE LEVEL BUSINESS			GOVT	
		With parents	Grand parents	Siblings	Spouse	Children	Grand children...	Home	So friends	Non-So friends	So in market	Non-So in market	Funeral	Village meeting	Spirit ceremony	Govt worker	Teacher
So, Isan & Yaw	So	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—
So & Yaw		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
So & others		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
So & Isan		1	—	1	1	2	6	—	1	—	2	—	15	8	3	—	—
So & CT		—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
So		58	59	58	33	35	47	16	58	—	57	—	39	36	53	—	—
Isan & Yaw		—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	10	—	6	—	—	—	1	—
Isan		—	—	1	2	—	3	1	—	34	1	36	2	5	1	23	2
CT & Yaw		—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
CT & Isan		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	5	—	2	—	6	—
CT		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	3	—	28	6
Yaw		—	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	5	—	5	—	—	—	—	—
-their language		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	6	1	—	—	2	—
-skip-		—	—	—	20	22	3	43	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	52
-not asked		1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
-don't know		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	3	—	—	
TOTAL		60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60

Table 67: Domains of language use

## Appendix D: Distribution of So phones based on collected word lists

Tables 68 and 69 show the phone distribution list based on the 117-item word lists collected in Photi Phaisan, Noi Siwilai, Nong Nang Leung, Don Yang, Kham Toey, and Na Tao

Consonants				
	Bilabial/Labiodental	Dental/Alveolar/Post-alveolar	Palatal/Velar	Glottal
Plosives	p, p <sup>h</sup> , p <sup>w</sup> , b	t, t <sup>h</sup> , d	k, k <sup>h</sup>	ʔ
Nasals	m	n	ɲ, ɲ <sup>j</sup>	
Trill		r		
Fricatives		s, ʃ		h
Affricates	v	tʃ, tʃ̥, tʃ <sup>h</sup>		
Approximants	w, ʋ	l	j	

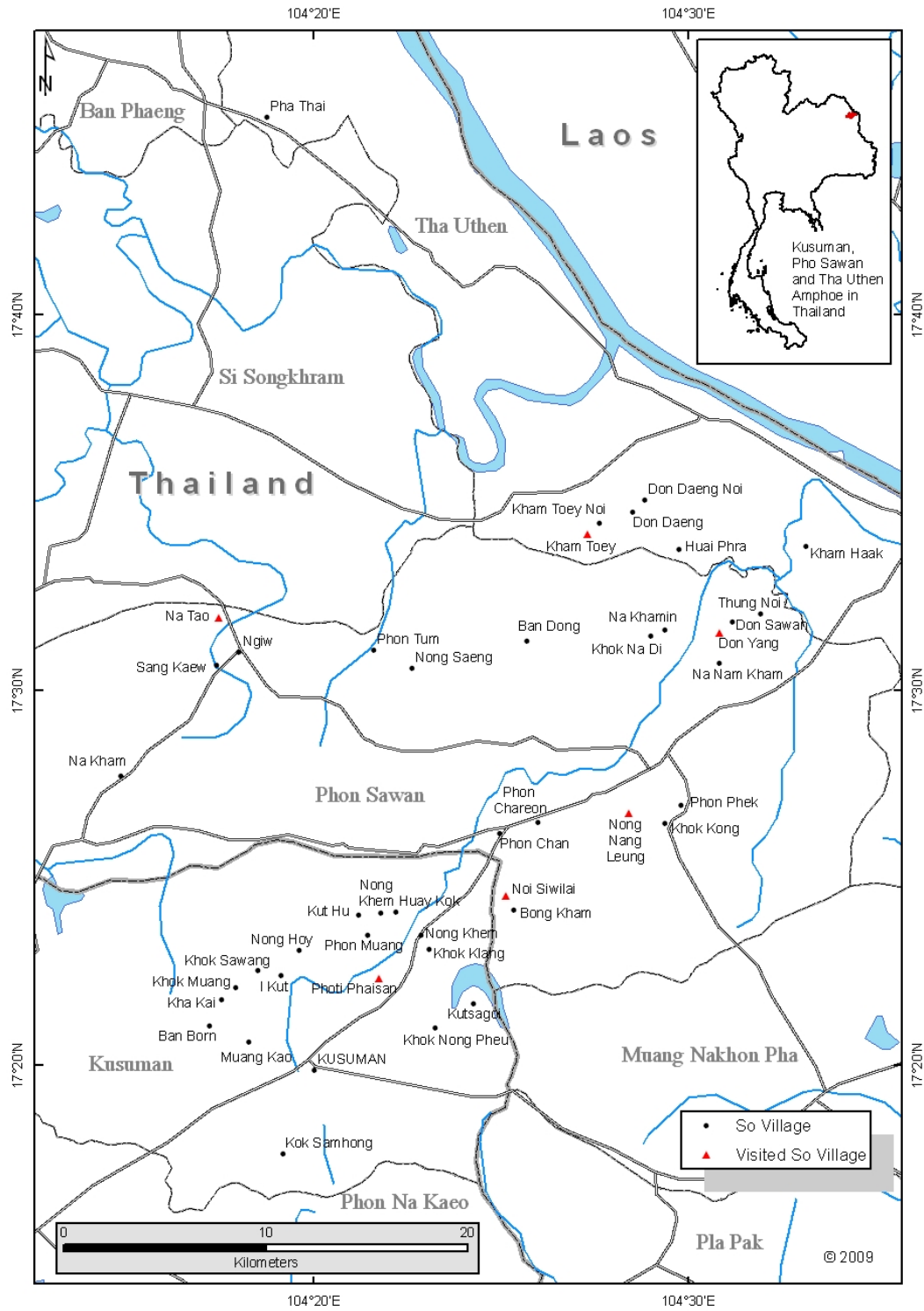
Table 68: List of consonants based on collected word lists

Vowels			
	Front	Central	Back
Close	i, ɪ	ɨ	ɯ, u, ʊ
Close-mid	e	ə	o
Open-mid	ɛ	ɐ	ɔ
Open	a	ɐ	ɒ

Table 69: List of vowels based on collected word lists

## Appendix E: Map

The following map shows the location of known So villages, including those that were visited for this survey.



## Appendix F: Word lists

The following 117-item word list was used to survey Noi Siwilai, Nong Nang Leung, Don Yang, Kham Toey, and Na Tao. The “Ref.434” column refers to the numbering of the same word-item in the 434-item word list. This word list takes only the words from the MSEA 434-item word list which have a weight of 3 based on Mann’s MSEA comparative word list (matching 2004 print copy). Some words were not found in the 434-item MSEA wordlist and have been added with their Thai translations: These are #38, #73, and #80.

#	Ref. 434	English	Central Thai	#	Ref. 434	English	Central Thai
1	1	sky	ท้องฟ้า	60	200	to sew (cloth)	เย็บ (ผ้า)
2	2	sun	พระอาทิตย์ [ดวงอาทิตย์]	61	212	fire	ไฟ
3	3	moon	พระจันทร์ [ดวงจันทร์]	62	213	ashes	ขี้เถ้า
4	4	star	ดวงดาว	63	214	smoke	ควัน
5	5	cloud	เมฆ	64	223	to smell	ได้กลิ่น
6	7	rain	ฝน	65	224	to see	เห็น
7	11	wind	ลม	66	227	to eat	กิน
8	12	night	กลางคืน	67	230	to be full	อิ่ม
9	18	year	ปี	68	232	to drink (water)	ดื่ม (น้ำ)
10	23	water	น้ำ	69	234	to vomit	อาเจียน
11	24	river	แม่น้ำ	70	235	to spit	ถุย [ถ่ม]
12	26	earth, soil	ดิน	71	239	to breathe	หายใจ
13	29	stone	หิน	72	240	to blow (air)	เป่า (ลม)
14	35	mountain	ภูเขา	73		to squeeze	รัด/บีบ
15	38	tree	ต้นไม้	74	244	to laugh	หัวเราะ
16	42	root	ราก	75	252	to know	รู้
17	43	leaf	ใบ	76	259	to be afraid	กลัว
18	44	flower	ดอก	77	261	to sleep	นอนหลับ
19	45	fruit	ผลไม้	78	267	to scratch	เกา
20	47	grass	หญ้า	79	269	to die	ตาย
21	71	salt	เกลือ	80		to live (not die)	อยู่ (ไม่ตาย)
22	72	animal	สัตว์	81	271	to sit	นั่ง
23	81	dog	หมา [สุนัข]	82	272	to stand	ยืน
24	83	to bite	กัด	83	283	to fall	ตก
25	87	milk (breast/milk)	น้ำนม	84	288	to give	ให้
26	89	horn (of buffalo)	เขา (ของควาย)	85	289	to tie	ผูก
27	90	tail	หาง	86	291	to rub, scrub	ถู
28	93	bird	นก	87	292	to wash	ล้าง
29	95	wing	ปีก	88	297	to cut (hair)	ตัด (ผม)
30	96	feather	ขนนก	89	301	to dig	ขุด
31	98	egg	ไข่	90	308	to burn	เผา
32	101	fish	ปลา	91	314	to hunt	ล่า
33	102	snake	งู	92	315	to kill	ฆ่า
34	110	louse (head)	เหา	93	322	one (person)	หนึ่ง (คน)
35	116	fly	แมลงวัน	94	323	two (persons)	สอง (คน)
36	119	head	หัว	95	324	three (persons)	สาม (คน)

#	Ref. 434	English	Central Thai
37	122	hair	ผม
38		neck	คอ
39	125	eye	ตา
40	127	nose	จมูก
41	129	ear	หู
42	130	mouth	ปาก
43	131	tongue	ลิ้น
44	133	tooth	ฟัน
45	139	abdomen (belly)	ท้อง
46	141	heart	หัวใจ
47	143	liver	ตับ
48	144	intestines	ลำไส้
49	145	hand	มือ
50	150	finger nail	เล็บมือ
51	157	foot	เท้า
52	159	bone	กระดูก
53	162	fat	ไขมัน
54	163	skin	ผิวหนัง
55	164	blood	เลือด
56	171	person	คน
57	174	child (one's own)	ลูก
58	182	name	ชื่อ
59	184	road, path	ถนน, ทาง

#	Ref. 434	English	Central Thai
96	325	four (persons)	สี่ (คน)
97	326	five (persons)	ห้า (คน)
98	334	to be many (people)	หลาย (คน)
99	341	to be long	ยาว
100	345	to be thick	หนา
101	346	to be thin	บาง
102	353	to be round	กลม
103	355	right (side)	(ด้าน) ขวา
104	356	left (side)	(ด้าน) ซ้าย
105	358	to be far	ไกล
106	359	to be near	ใกล้
107	362	black	ดำ
108	363	white	ขาว
109	364	red	แดง
110	368	to be new	ใหม่
111	369	to be old (thing not person)	เก่า
112	383	to be cold	หนาว
113	384	to be sharp (knife)	คม (มีด)
114	386	to be heavy	หนัก
115	416	I (1 <sup>st</sup> singular)	ฉัน
116	420	you, thou (2 <sup>nd</sup> singular)	คุณ
117	430	warm	อุ่น



## Appendix G: Knowledgeable sociolinguistic questionnaire

Questions	Central Thai
1. Interviewee Number	
2. Survey	
3. Village Name	
4. Interviewer Name	
5. Date	
6. Language of Elicitation	
7. Language of Response	
8. Interpreter Name (if needed)	
9. Comments (anything unusual or noteworthy about this interview)	
10. What is your name?	พี่ชื่ออะไร ครับ
11. Gender	
12. How old are you?	อายุเท่าไร ครับ
13. Are you married?	แต่งงานแล้วหรือยัง ครับ
14. (if MARRIED) Do you have any children?	มีลูกไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) How many?	มีกี่คน ครับ
15. What is your job?	ทำงานอะไร ครับ
16. Up to what level of education did you complete?	เรียนจบชั้นอะไร ครับ
(a) What school did you go to?	เรียนที่โรงเรียนไหน ครับ
(b) Over there, what language do the teachers use to teach?	ที่นั่นครูใช้ภาษาอะไรสอน ครับ
17. Where were you born?	เกิดที่ไหน ครับ
18. Where did you grow up?	เติบโตที่ไหน ครับ
19. Where do you live now?	ตอนนี้อยู่ที่ไหน ครับ
20. How long have you lived there/here?	อยู่ที่ นี้/นั้น มานานเท่าไรแล้ว ครับ
21. What language did you speak first as a child?	ตอนเป็นเด็กพูดภาษาอะไรได้เป็นภาษาแรก ครับ
22. Now, can you speak any other languages?	ตอนนี้ พูดภาษาอื่นได้ไหม ครับ
23. Which language do you speak best?	พูดภาษาอะไรเก่งที่สุด ครับ
(a) ....do you speak second best?	...พูดเก่งเป็นอันดับที่สอง ละครับ
(b) ....do you speak third best?	...พูดเก่งเป็นอันดับที่สาม ละครับ
24. Where was your father born?	พ่อเกิดที่ไหน ครับ
(a) What about your mother... where was she born?	แม่ละครับ... แม่เกิดที่ไหน ครับ
(b) What people group is your father?	พ่อเป็นคนเผ่าอะไร ครับ
(c) What about your mother... what people group is she?	แม่ละครับ... เป็นคนเผ่าอะไร ครับ
(d) What language did your father usually speak to you when you were a child?	ตอนที่ผมเป็นเด็ก พ่อพูดภาษาอะไรกับผม ครับ

(e) What about your mother... what language did she usually speak to you when you were a child?	แม่พูดภาษาอะไรกับพี่ ครับ
(f) When you were a child, what language did your parents speak to each other?	ตอนที่พี่เป็นเด็ก พ่อกับแม่พูดภาษาอะไรกัน ครับ
25. (if MARRIED) Where was your husband/wife born?	สามี/ภรรยา เกิดที่ไหน ครับ
(a) What people group is your husband/wife from?	สามี/ภรรยา เป็นคนเผ่าอะไร ครับ
26. What is the official name of this village?	ชื่อที่เป็นทางการของหมู่บ้านนี้ ชื่ออะไร ครับ
(a) What "Tambon" is it in?	ตำบลอะไร ครับ
(b) What "Amphoe" is it in?	อำเภออะไร ครับ
27. How many houses are in this village?	หมู่บ้านนี้มีกี่หลังคาเรือน ครับ
28. What is the total number of people in this village?	หมู่บ้านนี้มีทั้งหมดกี่คน ครับ
29. In this village, what are the people groups here?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้ มีคนเผ่า อะไรบ้าง ครับ
(a) Which group is the most?	เผ่าไหน มีคนมากที่สุด ครับ
(b) Which group is the second most?	เผ่าไหน มีคนมากเป็นอันดับที่สอง ครับ
i. About how many houses?	มีประมาณ กี่หลังคาเรือน ครับ
ii. About how many people?	มีคนประมาณกี่คน ครับ
(c) Which group is the third most?	เผ่าไหนมีคนมากเป็นอันดับที่สาม ครับ
i. About how many houses?	มีประมาณ กี่หลังคาเรือน ครับ
ii. About how many people?	มีคนประมาณกี่คน ครับ
30. Now, if counting by percentage, are there more So people or fewer?	ในปัจจุบันนี้ ถ้าคิดเป็นเปอร์เซ็นต์ มีคนโส้ มากขึ้นหรือน้อยลง ครับ
31. Where did the people who live in this village come from?	ชาวบ้านในหมู่บ้านนี้ ย้ายมาจากที่ไหน ครับ
(a) Since when did they move here?	ย้ายมาอยู่ที่นี้ ตั้งแต่เมื่อไหร่ ครับ
(b) (if moved here RECENTLY) When they moved here, what other groups were they around?	ตอนที่ย้ายมามีคนเผ่า อะไรอยู่ร่วมกันบ้าง ครับ
(c) (if moved here RECENTLY) When they first moved here, what other languages were used here?	และตอนที่ย้ายมาตอนแรกมีภาษาอะไรบ้างที่ใช้ที่นี่ ครับ
(d) Why did they move here?	เขาย้ายมาอยู่ที่นี้ เพราะอะไร ครับ
(e) Do people from here still keep in contact with people from [mention place came from]?	คนที่นี่ ยังติดต่อกับคนที่นี่น้อยอยู่ไหม ครับ
32. Is there a school in this village?	หมู่บ้านนี้มีโรงเรียนไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) Until what levels are taught?	สอนถึงชั้นไหน ครับ
(b) (if YES) What language is used for teaching?	การสอนใช้ภาษาอะไร ครับ
(c) Do you know if the teachers use So to help in teaching?	พี่ทราบไหมว่า ครูใช้ภาษาโส้ ช่วยในการสอนหรือเปล่า ครับ
(d) (if YES) The students in this school are what people groups?	นักเรียนที่โรงเรียน เป็นคนเผ่าอะไรบ้าง ครับ
(e) (if YES) Which ethnic group has the most students?	เผ่าไหนมีนักเรียนมากที่สุด ครับ

(f) (if YES) Which ethnic group has the second most students?	เผ่าไหนมีนักเรียนมากอันดับที่สอง ครับ
(g) (if YES) Which ethnic group has the third most students?	เผ่าไหนมีนักเรียนมากอันดับที่สาม ครับ
33. Do any children go to any other villages/towns for school?	มีเด็ก ๆ ไปเรียน ที่หมู่บ้านอื่น หรือในเมืองไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) Mostly, do the children study here or other places? How many?	ส่วนมากเด็กเรียนที่นี่หรือเรียนที่อื่น ครับ มากขนาดไหน ครับ
(b) (if YES) Where?	ที่ไหน ครับ
(c) (if YES) What levels do they go for?	เขาไปเรียนชั้นอะไร ครับ
(d) (if YES) What is the language of instruction in that school?	โรงเรียนนั้น สอนใช้ภาษาอะไร ครับ
(e) Do you know if the teachers use So to help in teaching?	พี่ทราบไหมว่า ครูใช้ภาษาโล้ ช่วยในการสอนหรือเปล่า ครับ
(f) (if YES) The students in that school are what people groups?	นักเรียนโรงเรียนนั้น เป็นคนเผ่าอะไรบ้าง ครับ
34. About how many years of education do children from this village usually complete?	ส่วนมาก เด็ก ๆ เรียนจบชั้นอะไร ครับ
35. Other than So, what other languages do people speak in this village?	ที่หมู่บ้านนี้ นอกจากภาษาโล้ แล้ว ชาวบ้านพูดภาษาอะไรอีกบ้าง ครับ
36. [Ask for each language given in #35]	
(a) What type of people speak [language] well?	คนกลุ่มไหนที่พูดภาษา [ ] เก่ง ครับ
(b) Are there any types of people in this village who speak [language] poorly?	แล้วมีคนพูดภาษา [ ] ไม่เก่งไหม ครับ
i. What types of people?	เป็นใครบ้าง ครับ
37. Other than So, which language is used by the most people in this village?	นอกจากภาษาโล้ แล้ว ในหมู่บ้านนี้ คนส่วนใหญ่ใช้ภาษา อะไร ครับ
38. Meaning to say, in this village, the language used by the most people is So, and the second-most is [Refer language #37]. If so, what is the third-most?	สรุปว่า ในหมู่บ้านนี้ ใช้ภาษาโล้ มากที่สุดเป็นอันดับหนึ่ง และ ใช้ภาษา [ ] มากเป็นอันดับที่สอง แล้วภาษาที่ ใช้มากเป็นอันดับที่สามคือภาษาอะไร ครับ
(a) About how many speak [Refer language #37]? (1) All (2) Most (3) Half (4) Some	คนที่พูดภาษา [ ] มีประมาณ กี่คน ครับ เช่น (1)ทุกคน (2)ส่วนมาก (3)ครึ่งหนึ่ง (4)บางคน
(b) About how many speak [Refer language #38]? (1) All (2) Most (3) Half (4) Some	คนที่พูดภาษา [ ] มีประมาณ กี่คน ครับ เช่น (1)ทุกคน (2)ส่วนมาก (3)ครึ่งหนึ่ง (4)บางคน
39. Do you know of any So people in this village who don't speak So any more?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้มีคนโล้ที่ไม่พูดภาษาโล้แล้วไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) Are there many?	มีมากไหม ครับ
(b) (if YES) What languages do they speak?	พวกเขาพูดภาษาอะไรบ้าง ครับ
40. Are there So people in this village who speak So poorly?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้ มีคนโล้ที่พูดภาษาโล้ ไม่ค่อยเก่ง ไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) What types of people?	เป็นคนกลุ่มไหน ครับ
(b) (if YES) What languages do they speak well?	พวกเขาพูดภาษาอะไรเก่งบ้าง ครับ
(c) (if YES) What language do you use with them?	แล้วพี่พูดภาษาอะไรกับเขา ครับ
41. Are there people in this village who speak only So?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้ มีคนโล้ที่พูดแต่ภาษาโล้ เท่านั้น ไหม ครับ

(a) (if YES) What types of people?	เป็นคนกลุ่มไหน ครับ
42. In this village, is it common for So people to marry people from other groups?	ที่หมู่บ้านนี้ คนโสดแต่งงานกับคนเผ่าอื่นเป็นเรื่องธรรมดาไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) What people groups do they marry?	แต่งงานกับคนเผ่าอะไรบ้าง ครับ
(b) People who marry people from other groups; are there many? (1) All (2) Most (3) Half (4) Some	คนที่แต่งงานกับคนเผ่าอื่น มีมากไหม ครับ เช่น (1)ทุกคน (2)ส่วนมาก (3)ครึ่งหนึ่ง (4)บางคน
43. If a So person from this village marries a person from another group, usually where do they live? [in So area or outside]	ถ้ามีคนโสดจากหมู่บ้านนี้แต่งงานกับคนเผ่าอื่น ปกติเขาจะอยู่ที่ไหนกัน ครับ [ที่หมู่บ้านโสด หรือ ที่อื่น]
(a) Usually, what language do their children speak first?	ปกติลูกเขาจะพูดภาษาอะไรได้ก่อน ครับ
(b) (if NOT So) Can they speak So?	แล้วลูกพูดภาษาโสด ได้ไหม ครับ
44. Are there cassettes/CDs in So?	มีเทป หรือ แผ่นซีดี ที่เป็นภาษาโสด ไหม ครับ
(a) Do people listen to them?	มีคนฟัง ไหม ครับ
45. Have you ever seen anything written in So?	ที่เคยเห็นอะไรที่เขียนเป็นภาษาโสดไหม ครับ
(a) What things?	เป็นอะไร ครับ
(b) Do people read them?	มีคนอ่าน บ้างไหม ครับ
46. What language is used at public meetings?	ในการประชุมของหมู่บ้าน ใช้ภาษาอะไร ครับ
(a) (if NOT So) Do they ever use So in public meetings?	เคยมีการใช้ภาษาโสดในการประชุมของหมู่บ้านไหม ครับ
47. What language is used in official notices?	หมายประกาศหลวง ใช้ภาษาอะไร ครับ
48. What language is used at funerals?	เวลาจัดพิธีศพ ใช้ภาษาอะไร ครับ
49. Are announcements (loudspeaker) made in So?	เสียงตามสาย ใช้ภาษาโสดไหม ครับ
50. Do you know of outsiders who have lived in the area for a while and researched about So?	ที่ทราบบ้างไหมครับว่า มีคนที่เคยมาอยู่ที่นี้ไม่นาน และ ทำการวิจัยเกี่ยวกับภาษาโสด ไหมครับ
(a) Who?	เป็นใคร ครับ
51. Are there radio programs in So?	มีรายการวิทยุที่เป็นภาษาโสดไหม ครับ
(a) Do you listen to it?	ที่ฟังรายการนั้นไหม ครับ
(b) Do you know if other people listen to it?	ที่ทราบไหมว่า มีคนอื่นฟังรายการนั้นด้วยหรือเปล่า ครับ
52. Are any of your young people from this village now living in towns/cities? Example: Bangkok, Khon Khaen	มีคนหนุ่มสาวจากหมู่บ้านนี้ ไปอยู่ในเมืองไหม ครับ เช่น ขอนแก่น กรุงเทพ ฯลฯ
(a) (if YES) Why did they go?	พวกเขาไปทำอะไรบ้าง ครับ
(b) (if YES) Do very many go?	คนที่เป็นไป มีมากไหม ครับ
(c) (if YES) Do they come back to live here (to stay)?	แล้วพวกเขาจะย้ายกลับมาอยู่ที่นี้ไหม ครับ
53. Do people from this village visit other So villages?	คนหมู่บ้านนี้ได้ไปเยี่ยมหมู่บ้านโสดที่อื่นบ้างไหม ครับ
(a) Where?	ที่ไหน ครับ
Which villages do you think speak differently from this village?	ที่คิดว่า หมู่บ้านไหนที่พูดภาษาโสด ต่างจากหมู่บ้านนี้บ้าง ครับ
The villages that speak differently... The villages that speak the same...	หมู่บ้านที่พูด ต่างกัน... หมู่บ้านที่พูด เหมือนกัน...
(b) Do very many go?	...คนที่เป็นไปมากไหม ครับ
(c) Why do they go?	...ไปทำอะไรบ้าง ครับ

(d) How often do they go?	...ไปบ่อยแค่ไหน ครับ
(e) Are they able to speak to each other in So or do they have to use another language?	...เวลาคู่กัน เขาใช้ภาษาโສໂໜม หรือ ต้องใช้ภาษาอื่น ครับ
(f) (if they USE So) Do they have any trouble understanding each other?	...เขามีปัญหาในการเข้าใจกันบ้างไหม ครับ
(g) (if they USE So) Do they have to adjust the way they speak So to communicate? [Example: accent, vocabulary, slower]	...เพื่อจะคุยให้เข้าใจกัน เขาต้องปรับการพูดภาษาโສໂໜมของเขาไหม ครับ [อย่างเช่น สำเนียง คำศัพท์ พูดช้าลง]
54. Were there any distractions or interruptions that interfered with the flow of the interview or seemed to influence some of the responses?	
55. Did the subject seem to understand the language of elicitation?	
56. Did the subject seem shy or fairly confident about expressing his/her opinions?	
57. Did the interpreter change any of the questions? Note what was actually asked.	
58. Other observations about the interview?	
59. Were there any questions that seemed to work really well? Which questions? Why?	
60. Were there any questions that seemed to not work well? Which questions? Why?	

## Appendix H: Individual sociolinguistic questionnaire

Preliminary Information	Central Thai
1. Interviewee Number	
2. Survey	
3. Village Name	
4. Interviewer Name	
5. Date	
6. Language of Elicitation	
7. Language of Response	
8. Interpreter Name (if needed)	
9. Comments (anything unusual or noteworthy about this interview)	
10. What is your name?	พี่ชื่ออะไร ครับ
11. Gender	
12. How old are you?	อายุเท่าไรครับ
13. Are you married?	แต่งงานแล้วหรือยัง ครับ
14. (if MARRIED) Do you have any children?	มีลูกไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) How many?	มีกี่คน ครับ
15. What is your job?	ทำงานอะไร ครับ
16. Up to what level of education did you complete?	เรียนจบชั้นอะไร ครับ
(a) What school did you go to?	เรียนที่โรงเรียนไหน ครับ
(b) Over there, what language do the teachers use to teach?	ที่นั่นครูใช้ภาษาอะไรสอน ครับ
17. Where were you born?	เกิดที่ไหน ครับ
18. Where did you grow up?	เติบโตที่ไหน ครับ
19. Where do you live now?	ตอนนี้อยู่ที่ไหน ครับ
20. How long have you lived there/here?	อยู่ที่ นี้/นั้น มานานเท่าไรแล้ว ครับ
21. What language did you speak first as a child?	ตอนเป็นเด็กพูดภาษาอะไรได้เป็นภาษาแรก ครับ
22. Now, can you speak any other languages?	ตอนนี้ พูดภาษาอื่นได้ไหม ครับ
23. Which language do you speak best?	พูดภาษาอะไรเก่งที่สุด ครับ
(a) ....do you speak second best?	...พูดเก่งเป็นอันดับที่สอง ละครับ
(b) ....do you speak third best?	...พูดเก่งเป็นอันดับที่สาม ละครับ
24. Where was your father born?	พ่อเกิดที่ไหน ครับ
(a) What about your mother... where was she born?	แม่ละครับ... แม่เกิดที่ไหน ครับ
(b) What people group is your father?	พ่อเป็นคนเผ่าอะไร ครับ
(c) What about your mother... what people group is she?	แม่ละครับ... เป็นคนเผ่าอะไร ครับ
(d) What language did your father usually speak to you when you were a child?	ตอนที่ผมเป็นเด็ก พ่อพูดภาษาอะไรกับผม ครับ

(e) What about your mother... what language did she usually speak to you when you were a child?	แม่และครับ... แม่พูดภาษาอะไรกับพี่ ครับ
(f) When you were a child, what language did your parents speak to each other?	ตอนที่พี่เป็นเด็ก พ่อกับแม่พูดภาษาอะไรกัน ครับ
25. (if MARRIED) Where was your husband/wife born?	สามี/ภรรยา เกิดที่ไหน ครับ
(a) What people group is your husband/wife from?	สามี/ภรรยา เป็นคนเผ่าอะไร ครับ
26. What languages do you speak...	พี่พูดภาษาอะไร...
(a) .... with your parents?	...กับพ่อแม่ ครับ
(b) ....with your grandparents?	...กับปู่ย่าตายาย ครับ
(c) ....with your siblings?	...กับพี่น้อง ครับ
(d) (if MARRIED) ...with your husband/wife?	...กับ สามี/ภรรยา ครับ
(e) (if HAVE children) ...with your children?	...กับลูกละ ครับ
(f) (if OLD and HAVE children) ...with your grandchildren / nieces / nephews?	...กับหลานละ ครับ
(g) [if NOT CLEAR] So, in your house, what language do you use the most?	ถ้าอย่างนั้น ในบ้านของพี่ พี่พูดภาษาอะไรมากที่สุด ครับ
(h) What languages do you speak with So friends?	พี่พูดภาษาอะไรกับเพื่อนคนโล้ ครับ
(i) .... with non- So friends?	...กับเพื่อนที่ไม่ใช่คนโล้ ครับ
(j) ....at the market with So people?	...กับคนโล้ที่ตลาด ครับ
(k) ....at the market with non- So people?	...กับคนที่ไม่ใช่โล้ที่ตลาด ครับ
(l) ....at a funeral?	...ที่งานศพ ครับ
(m) ....at a village meeting?	...ในการประชุมหมู่บ้าน ครับ
(n) ....with a government worker?	...กับเจ้าพนักงานรัฐ ครับ
(o) .... at a spirit ceremony?	...เวลาทำพิธีเกี่ยวกับผี ครับ
(p) ....with your teacher?	...กับครู ครับ
27. Do you think of yourself first as Thai, Isan, So, or something else?	ความคิดแรก พี่คิดว่าตัวเองเป็นคนอะไร ครับ คนไทย คนอีสาน คนโล้ หรือ คนเผ่าอื่น
28. Can you buy something in Central Thai/Isan?	พี่สามารถใช้ ภาษาไทย/อีสาน ในการซื้อของได้ไหม ครับ
29. Can you tell about your family in Central Thai/Isan?	พี่ สามารถใช้ ภาษาไทย/อีสาน เล่าเรื่องเกี่ยวกับครอบครัว ได้ไหม ครับ
30. If you overhear two Central Thai/Isan people speaking Central Thai/Isan in the market can you describe in So again (what you heard)?	ถ้าพี่ได้ยินคนไทย/อีสาน พูด ภาษาไทย/อีสาน ที่ตลาด พี่จะสามารถอธิบายซ้ำเป็นภาษาโล้ ได้ไหม ครับ
31. Could you use Central Thai/Isan to explain work to a Central Thai/Isan speaker so he can do it himself?	สมมติว่าพี่จะอธิบายงานให้กับคนไทย/อีสาน เพื่อให้เขาทำงานด้วยตัวเอง พี่จะอธิบายเป็นภาษาไทย/อีสานได้ไหม ครับ
32. Can you speak Central Thai/Isan as fast as a Central Thai/Isan person and still be understood?	พี่พูดภาษาไทย/อีสาน เร็วเท่ากับคนไทย/อีสานได้ไหม และคนฟังจะเข้าใจไหม ครับ
33. Can you speak Central Thai/Isan as well as a Central Thai/Isan person?	พี่คิดว่า พี่พูด ภาษาไทย/อีสาน ได้ดีเท่ากับคนไทย/อีสานไหม ครับ

34. Do you ever meet So people from Photi Phaisan village?	ที่เคยพบกับคนที่มาจาก เมือง โฟ ไหม ครับ
(a) (If YES) What language do you use when speaking with So people from Photi Phaisan village?	ที่ใช้ภาษาอะไรเมื่อคุยกับคนที่มาจาก เมือง โฟ ครับ
(b) Do you speak the kind of So from this village or the kind from Photi Phaisan village?	ที่พูดภาษาโล้แบบหมู่บ้านนี้ หรือแบบของ เมือง โฟ ครับ
(c) Do you have to change your style of speaking to understand each other?	ที่ต้องปรับการพูด เพื่อจะให้เข้าใจกันใหม่ ครับ
i. (if YES) Change how?	ปรับยังไง ครับ
35. [If they answer something other than “So”] Why don’t you use So with them?	ทำไมไม่ใช้ภาษาโล้กับเขา ครับ
36. When you hear someone speak Photi Phaisan village So variety, do you understand (1) everything (2) most things (3) some things or (4) nothing at all?	เวลาที่ได้ยินคนพูดภาษาโล้แบบ เมือง โฟ ที่เข้าใจได้ (1)ทั้งหมด (2)ส่วนมาก (3)บางอย่าง (4)ไม่เข้าใจเลย
(a) (if NOT “everything”) How is So from Photi Phaisan village different with So from this village?	โล้แบบ เมือง โฟ กับ โล้แบบหมู่บ้านนี้ ต่างกัน ยังไง ครับ
37. What language do So children in this village speak first?	เด็กๆ โล้ที่หมู่บ้านนี้ พูดภาษาอะไรเป็นภาษาแรก ครับ
38. When So children in this village play together, what language do they use?	ตอนที่เด็กๆ โล้ที่หมู่บ้านนี้เล่นด้วยกัน เขาใช้ภาษาอะไร ครับ
(a) How do you feel about that?	ที่รู้สึกยังไง ครับ
39. When the children in this village have never even gone to school at all, when they are still small, can they speak any other languages other than So?	ตอนที่เด็ก ๆ หมู่บ้านนี้ยังไม่เคยไปโรงเรียนเลย ตอนที่ยังเล็กอยู่ เขาสามารถพูดภาษาอื่นนอกจากภาษาโล้ ได้ไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) What languages?	ภาษาอะไรบ้าง ครับ
40. Do you think the So children in this village speak So well?	ที่คิดว่าเด็กๆ โล้ในหมู่บ้านนี้ พูดภาษาโล้เก่งไหม ครับ
(a) (if NO) How do they not speak well?	พูดภาษาโล้ไม่เก่งยังไง ครับ
(b) (if NO) How do you feel about that?	ที่รู้สึกยังไง ครับ
41. When speaking with their children, what language do So parents use?	เวลาพ่อแม่คนโล้คุยกับลูก ๆ เขาพูดภาษาอะไร ครับ
(a) (If not So) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
42. If a So person is married to a non-So person, what language do they use with their children?	ถ้าคนโล้แต่งงานกับคนที่ไม่ใช่คนโล้ เขาจะใช้ภาษาอะไรคุยกับลูกของเขา ครับ
(a) (if So NOT mentioned) Do they use So?	เขาจะใช้ภาษาโล้ไหม ครับ
(b) (if DON'T use So) Why?	เพราะอะไรครับ
43. Do your children ever speak Central Thai/Isan at home?	ลูกของที่เคยพูดภาษาไทย/อีสาน ที่บ้านไหม ครับ
(a) [For each language] How do you feel when they do that?	ที่รู้สึกยังไง ครับ
(b) [For each language] Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
44. If a young So person married a Central Thai/Isan person, do you think it is good or not?	ถ้ามีคนโล้แต่งงานกับคนไทย/อีสาน ที่คิดว่าดีหรือไม่ดี ครับ



(a) (if NO) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
(b) Are there a lot of marriages between So and Central Thai/Isan?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้ การแต่งงานคนโส้กับคนไทย/อีสาน มีมากไหม ครับ
i. How many?	นี่กี่คู่ ครับ
45. If a young So person married a person from Photi Phaisan village, do you think it is good or not?	ถ้ามีคนโส้แต่งงานกับ ที่มาจาก เมือง โฟ พิคิดว่าดีหรือเปล่า ครับ
(a) (if NO) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
(b) Are there a lot of marriages between So and people from Photi Phaisan village?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้ การแต่งงานคนโส้กับคนที่มาจาก เมือง โฟ มีมากไหม ครับ
(c) How many?	นี่กี่คน ครับ
46. Are there So people in the village who have stopped speaking So?	ในหมู่บ้านนี้ มีคนโส้ ที่เลิกพูดภาษาโส้แล้ว ไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
(b) (if YES) How do you feel about that?	รู้สึกยังไง ครับ
47. 20 years from now, will there be children of this village who can speak So?	พิคิดว่าอีก 20 ปีข้างหน้า จะยังคงมีเด็ก ๆ ในหมู่บ้านนี้ที่พูดภาษาโส้อยู่ ไหม ครับ
(a) (if NO) How do you feel about that?	รู้สึกยังไง ครับ
48. Do you want to see your children pass on and preserve So identity?	พียอยากเห็นลูกหลาน สืบทอด และ รักษาความเป็นคนโส้ไว้ไหม ครับ
(a) What do you want them to pass on and preserve?	อยากรจะให้เขาสืบทอด และ รักษาอะไรบ้าง ครับ
(b) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
49. Are the young people in this village abandoning the So customs?	มีคนหนุ่มสาวในหมู่บ้านนี้ ที่เลิกทำตาม ธรรมเนียมคนโส้ไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
50. Do you know of any books written using So?	พียทราบไหมว่า มีหนังสือที่เป็นภาษาโส้บ้างไหม ครับ
51. Have you ever read or written So?	พียเคยอ่านหรือเขียนภาษาโส้ไหม ครับ
52. (if LITERATE in So)	
(a) Read what?	อ่านอะไร ครับ
(b) Write what?	เขียนอะไร ครับ
53. Do you think being able to read and write So is beneficial?	พียคิดว่าการอ่านเขียนภาษาโส้ ได้มีประโยชน์ไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) How is it beneficial?	มีประโยชน์ ยังไง ครับ
(b) (if NO) Why?	เพราะอะไร ครับ
54. Suppose someone wrote books in So, what kinds of things would you like to have written in your language?	สมมุติว่ามีคน เขียนหนังสือเป็นภาษาโส้ พียอยากจะให้เขาเขียนเกี่ยวกับเรื่องอะไรบ้าง ครับ
55. If someone came to your village to teach how to read and write So, would you go?	สมมุติว่า มีคนมาสอนการอ่านเขียนภาษาโส้ พียจะไปเรียนกับเขาไหม ครับ
(a) How many hours per day would you go?	จะไปเรียน วันละกี่ชั่วโมง ครับ
56. Do you know any other villages that speak So?	พียรู้จักหมู่บ้านอื่น ที่พูดภาษาโส้ไหม ครับ
(a) (if YES) Where?	ที่ไหนบ้าง ครับ
57. Which villages speak So the same as here?	...หมู่บ้านไหนที่พูดภาษาโส้ เหมือนกับที่นี่ ครับ
58. Which villages speak So a little different from here, but you can still understand each other	...หมู่บ้านไหน ที่พูดภาษาโส้ต่างจากที่นี่นิดหน่อย แต่ยังสามารถเข้าใจกันได้ ครับ

59. Which villages speak So very differently from here, so different that you have trouble understanding each other?	...หมู่บ้านไหน ที่พูดภาษาโล้ ต่างจากที่นี่มากจนเข้าใจกันได้ยาก ครับ
60. The villages that speak the same, (remind them which villages they named) what do you call their language?	หมู่บ้านที่พูดภาษาโล้เหมือนกัน พี่เรียกภาษานั้นว่าภาษาอะไร ครับ
61. The villages that speak a little different, (remind them which villages they named) have you gone to those places?	หมู่บ้านที่พูดต่างกันนิดหน่อย พี่เคยไปไหม ครับ
(a) Where?	ที่ไหน ครับ
62. Do you often talk with people from there?	พี่คุยกับคนที่นี่บ่อยไหม ครับ
63. (if YES) What language do you use when speaking with each other?	พี่ใช้ภาษาอะไรเมื่อ คุยกัน ครับ
(a) Do you speak the kind of So from this village or the kind from that village?	พี่พูดภาษาโล้แบบหมู่บ้านนี้ หรือโล้แบบหมู่บ้านนั้น ครับ
(b) Do you have to change the way you speak to understand each other?	พี่ต้องปรับการพูด เพื่อจะเข้าใจกันได้หรือเปล่า ครับ
i. (if YES) Change how?	ปรับยังไง ครับ
64. [If they answer something other than “So”] Why don’t you use So with them?	ทำไมไม่ได้ใช้ภาษาโล้กับเขา ครับ
65. When you hear them speak their variety, do you understand (1) everything (2) most things (3) some things or (4) nothing at all?	เวลาที่ได้ยินคนที่นี่พูดภาษาโล้แบบของเขา พี่เข้าใจได้ (1)ทั้งหมด (2)ส่วนมาก (3)บางอย่าง (4)ไม่เข้าใจเลย
(a) (if NOT “everything”) How are they different?	ต่างกันยังไง ครับ
(b) What do you call that language?	พี่เรียกภาษานั้นว่าภาษาอะไรครับ
66. The villages that speak a very different, (remind them which villages they named) have you gone to those places?	หมู่บ้านที่พูดต่างกันมาก พี่เคยไปไหม ครับ
(a) Where?	ที่ไหน ครับ
67. Do you often talk with people from there?	พี่คุยกับคนที่นี่บ่อยไหม ครับ
68. (if YES) What language do you use when speaking with each other?	พี่ใช้ภาษาอะไรเมื่อคุยกัน ครับ
(a) Do you speak the kind of So from this village or the kind from that village?	พี่พูดภาษาโล้แบบหมู่บ้านนี้ หรือโล้แบบหมู่บ้านนั้น ครับ
(b) Do you have to change the way you speak to understand each other?	พี่ต้องปรับการพูด เพื่อจะเข้าใจกันได้หรือเปล่า ครับ
i. (if YES) Change how?	ปรับยังไง ครับ
69. [If they answer something other than “So”] Why don’t you use So with them?	ทำไมไม่ได้ใช้ภาษาโล้กับเขา ครับ
70. When you hear them speak their variety, do you understand (1) everything (2) most things (3) some things or (4) nothing at all?	เวลาที่ได้ยินคนที่นี่พูดภาษาโล้แบบของเขา พี่เข้าใจได้ (1)ทั้งหมด (2)ส่วนมาก (3)บางอย่าง (4)ไม่เข้าใจเลย
(a) (if NOT “everything”) How are they different?	ต่างกันยังไง ครับ
(b) What do you call that language?	พี่เรียกภาษานั้นว่าภาษาอะไรครับ
71. In what place would you say So is spoken the nicest and clearest?	พี่คิดว่า คนที่ไหนพูดภาษาโล้ เพราะที่สด ชัดที่สุด ครับ

72. Were there any distractions or interruptions that interfered with the flow of the interview or seemed to influence some of the responses?	
73. Did the subject seem to understand the language of elicitation?	
74. Did the subject seem shy or fairly confident about expressing his/her opinions?	
75. Did the interpreter change any of the questions? Note what was actually asked.	
76. Other observations about the interview?	
77. Were there any questions that seemed to work really well? Which questions? Why?	
78. Were there any questions that seemed to not work well? Which questions? Why?	

## Appendix I: Observations from Pha Thai and Khok Muang

After completing fieldwork for the five selected villages, the team made an unscheduled visit to two other So villages in the region – Pha Thai and Khok Muang. The purpose was simply to make sure there were no obvious differences in the sociolinguistic situation among the So; data from the earlier five villages had not shown any data outside the team's expectations.

The team did not collect any word lists or questionnaires, but talked to some of the people about language use. Their responses, comments, and other observations were written down in a notebook. These have been tabulated and correlated with the survey research questions so that inferences can be made. Tables 70 and 71 show the inferences drawn from the written responses and comments.

Responses, comments, and observations	Inferences	
Social gatherings see high use of So and Isan; So currently the most used	Possibly strong bilingualism in Isan	Possible adequate mastery of Isan
Pha Thai villagers can communicate easily with our guide	No comprehension problems between Pha Thai and Photi Phaisan variety	Adequate comprehension to Photi Phaisan So
Na Tao perceived as speaking different So variety, but can still understand with no problems	Na Tao is one of closest So villages to Pha Thai. Perception as “different” might suggest Photi Phaisan variety (further) is also “different”. Distance may impact comprehension	Unclear comprehension to Photi Phaisan So
Consider all So the same; still communicate using So	Perception could possibly include Photi Phaisan So	Possible positive attitudes to Photi Phaisan So
Ancestors came from Kusuman	Possibly retain some sense of kinship to Kusuman So	Possible positive attitudes to Photi Phaisan So (if perception that Kusuman = Photi Phaisan)
Kutsagoi uses “older, ancient” So	May perceive Kutsagoi variety as purer; Kutsagoi is nearby Photi Phaisan and may be very similar	Possible positive attitudes to Photi Phaisan So (if Kutsagoi= Photi Phaisan)
So lady impressed that Kusuman youth maintain So use	Perceive that own village use of So is less than in Kusuman	Possible positive attitudes to Photi Phaisan So (if perception that Kusuman = Photi Phaisan) Low language vitality
Children's use of So declining. Even if both parents So and speak So with them, the children will reply in Isan	Declining use of So among younger generation	Low language vitality
One lady is ethnically So but speaks So with Isan accent (not natural)	Ethnic So adults not speaking So well	Low language vitality

Responses, comments, and observations	Inferences	
Youth in nearby So villages Suan Kluay and Na Ka Tha speaking So less	Sociolinguistic situation in surrounding So villages may influence or reflect use in Pha Thai	Low language vitality
Ethnic So lady speaks Isan to her own children	Language used in home domain is non-So	Possible adequate mastery of Isan Low language vitality
Ethnolinguistic makeup is ~50% mix between So and Isan	High percentage of mixed ethnicities may influence language use	Possibly low language vitality
Children can understand So, but don't speak as much as adults (mentioned in two separate conversations)		Possibly decreasing language vitality
Know about COC books from 20-30 years ago	Knowledge of So literature, but unsure about attitudes to them	Unclear language vitality
Pha Thai and surrounding villages divided into 10 sections ("muu"). 7/10 sections inhabited by So	No population numbers to determine the concentration of ethnic So...	Unclear language vitality
Pha Thai has annual So festival on 17 February	Possibly increased pride in So ethnolinguistic identity	High language vitality
Two Isan people were found to speak So fluently!	So language is exerting influence instead of being influenced	High language vitality
Na Tao, Ngiw, Sang Kaew, Phon Phaeng, Kusuman considered same variety	Perception of sameness extends as far as Kusuman (furthest of villages)	Dialect perceptions: So everywhere is same Possible adequate comprehension and positive attitudes to Photi Phaisan So (if perception that Kusuman=Photi Phaisan)
So in Pha Thai and surrounding villages speak the same i.e. no differences in sounds or accents	Pha Thai and surrounding So villages speak similar variety	Dialect perceptions: Pha Thai and surrounding villages (Na Ka Tha and Kaeng Samho) are same

Table 70: Responses, comments, and observations from informal visit to Pha Thai

A subjective assessment of the comments and responses from Pha Thai suggest possible positive attitudes to Photi Phaisan So; although adequate comprehension is suspect. However, there do seem to be many opinions that hint at low So language vitality in Pha Thai. There are too few responses to infer anything about mastery and attitudes toward CT or Isan.

Responses, comments, and observations	Inferences	
Mentioned that “all So are the same; equally good; no specific place as the best”	Could suggest acceptance attitudes to Photi Phaisan So as reference dialect	Possibly positive attitude to Photi Phaisan So
Considers Na Tao as more pure So, with 100% So words compared to 90% in own village	May indicate that Photi Phaisan is not considered prestige dialect i.e. purest or nicest. But doesn't mean a negative attitude to Photi Phaisan So either	Unclear attitudes to Photi Phaisan So
Ethnolinguistic makeup: Only five non-So (Isan) live here and they “become So” i.e. learn So language, customs etc..	High percentage of ethnic So in this village; they exert influence on non-So who live here	High language vitality
Comment on other village Na Phiang: Older middle-aged people still speak So	Infer that younger generation not using So as much	Low language vitality in Na Phiang
Comment on other village Kha Kay and Ban Born: age-group <40 cannot speak or understand So; age-group 40-50 can understand but cannot speak; age-group >50 can speak and understand	So used only among older people; So use is lost in the younger generation	Low language vitality in Kha Kay and Ban Born
Comment on other village Mueang Kao: speak Isan mostly	LWC (Isan) is used more frequently than So	Low language vitality in Mueang Kao
Comment on other village Pha Thai: language use is declining	So use declining	Low language vitality in Pha Thai
Comment on other villages Khok Sawang, I Kut, Nong Hoy, Don Daeng: considered as “same So”	Perception that the villages mentioned speak the same variety	Dialect perceptions: Khok Sawang, I Kut, Nong Hoy, and Don Daeng are same
Comment on other village Na Phiang Kao: different language used here (half vocabulary is different), called Tri	Possibly different language spoken in Na Phiang Kao	Dialect perceptions: So language boundaries possibly at Na Phiang Kao

Table 71: Responses, comments, and observations from informal visit to Khok Muang

Most of the Khok Muang responses were about language use in other villages. The comments suggested declining So language vitality in selected villages. The information might be useful to help decide survey sites if there were to be a survey done on So villages with declining language vitality (see paragraph on Nong Nang Leung under section 6: recommendations).

## Appendix J: Population

The village demographics show populations from 400+ to about 1,500 people (table 72). The data has been further analysed by calculating the average number of people in each household and comparing this with the “population per private household” statistic (National Statistical Office of Thailand n.d.<sup>29</sup>).

The estimates of “population per household” show four So villages had higher ratios than the district-wide average. Kham Toey's score was equivalent to the national statistical averages. Correlating “population per household” scores with village populations indicate that So villages may have larger populations than the district-wide average.

Village	Q#26 (a)	Q#26 (b)	Q#27	Q#28		
	Sub-district (Tambon)	District (Amphoe)	Number of houses	Number of people	Average number of people per household	District average for population per private household
Noi Siwilai	Phon Can	Phon Sawan	84	464	5.5	4.1
Nong Nang Leung	Phon Sawan	Phon Sawan	240	1,473	6.1	4.1
Don Yang	Na Khamin	Phon Sawan	83	419	5.0	4.1
Kham Toey	Thacampa	Tha Uthen	241	1,004	4.2	4.2
Na Tao	Ban Kho	Phon Sawan	197	963	4.9	4.1

Table 72: KLSQ responses showing selected village demographics (name, places and population)

Assuming the correlations are valid, all the villages would not seem to have low language vitality as the populations appear to be equal to or above the national average.

<sup>29</sup> The National Statistical Office of Thailand did not have data showing average population per village. The data was modified to make like-for-like comparisons.