**Proposal for a second language acquisition research project**

Bamboo School is a German non-profit organization devoted to improving education in remote villages along the Nam Ou River in northern Laos. The organization has been active in the region for six years now, and has constructed educational facilities in four villages, while establishing close relations with the local authorities.

Besides building infrastructure, Bamboo School supports volunteer English teachers in these four villages. However, traditional teaching methods in a classroom setting have proven to be of little success, mainly because the teachers did not speak the students’ native language. Therefore, the organization has recently begun implementing a new approach—the targeted support of natural language acquisition.

Bamboo School is now seeking academic support for its English program, and can in turn offer assistance with a possible language acquisition research project. It needs a professionally-written guideline for its volunteers that not only explains the natural approach, but also provides extensive examples of how to interact with the students in the target language in order to best trigger their language acquisition and development of learner’s varieties. There will be class time as well as informal play time so that the approach chosen by the cooperating linguists could also incorporate traditional teaching methods, if desired.

Language acquisition in these villages would then happen along the guidelines prepared by the researchers, and could be monitored and analyzed. The abundance of children in the villages would provide large quantities of data and allow for a reliable evaluation of the approach.

Two of the four villages are of ethnic minorities, which means that English would even be the third language for those children, since they grow up with Khmu and Hmong, respectively, and only start learning Lao in the first year of primary school.

Bamboo School has close relations to local authorities as well as national government agencies, and would be happy to help with the acquisition of research permits and similar bureaucratic formalities.

If you are interested, find Bamboo School at [www.die-bambusschule.de](http://www.die-bambusschule.de) (content predominantly in German) or send Bodo Peters an email at info@die-bambusschule.de