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The current issue features articles that address significant topics in the fields of language and literature, translation studies, education, public policy, and humanities. A total of five articles are presented, comprising four research articles and one academic articles. Each contribution offers valuable insights that advance academic development and support practical applications. **The first article** is “A Study on Translation Strategies for Technology and Environmental Terms in Chinese–Thai News”. **The second article** is “Instructional Management Using Songs and Music Videos to Enhance Students’ Understanding of Mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019”. **The third article** is “Reforming the Thailand Higher Education Transition System: Toward a Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Model”. **The fourth article** is “Development of Policy Proposals for Economic, Social, and Environmental Development in Thailand: A Case Study of the Provincial Economic Development Zone in Maha Sarakham”. **The fifth article** is “A Study on the Intentional Use of Chinese Idioms in the Historical Drama Love Like the Galaxy”.

The editorial team of Nakhon Ratchasima Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (NJHSS) would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of authors for their contributions, as well as to the esteemed reviewers for their valuable guidance that help maintain the high quality and standard of our journal.

We sincerely hope that this issue will be beneficial to all readers and serve as an inspiration for further study and research in the future.

Thank you all for supporting our journal.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Teerawat Karnsopa', is written above the printed name.

(Dr. Teerawat Karnsopa)

Editor of Nakhon Ratchasima Journal of
Humanities and Social Sciences

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A Study on Translation Strategies for Technology and Environmental Terms in Chinese–Thai News

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Abstract

This study is a qualitative research investigating translation strategies for technology and environmental terms from Chinese into Thai. The study analyzed 50 bilingual Chinese-Thai news articles (2020-2025) from CRI Thai and CATTI resources, comprising 68 technology terms and 89 environmental terms. Newmark's (1988) translation theory framework was employed for analysis. The results indicate that strategies differ according to term type. For technology terms, literal translation was the most frequently used strategy (47.06%), followed by multiple-method translation (27.94%), free translation (17.65%), and transliteration (7.35%). For environmental terms, literal translation dominated (79.78%), followed by multiple-method translation (14.60%), while free translation (2.25%) and transliteration (3.37%) were comparatively rare. These findings suggest that environmental terms often have structures that are more directly translatable than technology terms. Overall, the choice of translation strategies depends significantly on the nature of the content and the complexity level of terms in each field. This highlights that strategy selection is influenced by content

characteristics, term universality, and communicative context. The findings provide practical guidance for translators and media practitioners to enhance the quality of Chinese–Thai news translation and cross-language communication.

Keywords : Technology terms, Environmental terms, Chinese–Thai news, Translation strategies

Introduction

In the 21st century, technology and the environment have become key drivers of global development, particularly within the framework of sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). International cooperation has therefore focused on innovation, green technology, and efficient resource management. For China and Thailand, which share a long-standing close relationship, collaboration has continuously expanded under initiatives such as the Belt and Road project and the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) strategy. This has led to extensive knowledge exchange, information sharing, and the production of specialized documents, especially in the fields of technology and the environment (Sun, 2023).

In this context, news media play a crucial role in conveying information between the two countries. However, such news often contains a large number of specialized terms, and inaccurate translation can affect audience comprehension and the credibility of the information (Xu, 2025). This issue is particularly critical in the current era of 'Green Technology' and sustainable development. As new technical concepts such as carbon neutrality, circular economy, and smart energy systems emerge almost daily, there is a noticeable lack of standardized Chinese–Thai translations for these terms. This rapid terminology influx poses a significant challenge for

translators, who must maintain technical accuracy while ensuring that these complex concepts remain accessible to the public. A review of the literature indicates that translating specialized terms requires attention to both linguistic accuracy and cultural context. Zhao and Li (2025) emphasize that professional translation must maintain terminological precision while facilitating cross-cultural understanding, while Zeng et al. (2022) note that Chinese-Thai e-commerce translations often require content adaptation to achieve information equivalence. Furthermore, studies by Chaianakijpong and Kaewsuwan (2022), as well as Areepong and Numtong (2024), reveal that translating technical terms in digital or specialized media typically requires a combination of strategies such as literal translation, transliteration, and contextual adaptation. This aligns with Newmark's (1988) framework, which proposes multiple translation methods to accommodate differences in content and communicative purpose.

Despite the ongoing development of Chinese-Thai translation studies, most research has focused on entertainment media, business contexts, or certain specialized documents such as online games, diplomatic materials, or medical texts. Studies specifically examining translation strategies for technology and environmental terms in news, a medium with a prominent role in public communication, remain limited. This gap has resulted in a lack of standardized approaches for translating specialized terms in news contexts, affecting the effectiveness of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication. Therefore, this study aims to investigate translation strategies for technology and environmental terms from Chinese into Thai in news articles, with the goal of developing suitable translation guidelines and enhancing China-Thailand communication efficiency.

Research Objectives

To examine translation strategies for technology and environmental terms from Chinese into Thai in bilingual online news articles.

Research Questions

What are the patterns of Chinese –Thai translation strategies for technology and environmental terms in news according to the translation theory framework?

Research Scope

This study focuses on technology and environmental terms appearing in news, with an emphasis on specialized technical terms that play a key role in conveying the meaning of news content. The data for the study consist of 50 bilingual Chinese-Thai news articles published on the CRI (China Radio International) Thai website and from CATTI (China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters), a reliable translation resource. The news articles were selected from the period 2020–2025 to reflect contemporary term usage in current contexts. The data collection process took approximately three months. For analysis, the researcher primarily employed Newmark's (1988) translation theory framework to classify and examine translation strategies. This study is limited to translations from Chinese into Thai and does not cover translation in other directions.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, focusing on translation strategies for technology and environmental terms from

Chinese into Thai in the context of news. The first step involved data collection. The researcher selected 50 bilingual Chinese–Thai news articles using purposive sampling based on thematic relevance. The selection criteria required that the articles must be news content related to technology and the environment, and must be available in both Thai and Chinese bilingual formats. These articles were sourced from reliable sources, including the CRI Thai website and CATI, a professional translation resource, published between 2020 and 2025. This selection aimed to ensure the data reflected contemporary language use and covered current topics in technology and environmental issues. Next, specialized terms appearing in the news were identified, focusing on technical terms or content-specific terminology. These terms were then categorized into two groups: technology terms and environmental terms. For analysis, the researcher primarily applied Newmark’s (1988) translation theory framework to classify and explain the translation strategies. To ensure data reliability, experts in Chinese–Thai translation were consulted to verify the accuracy of the analysis. The findings were also compared with related studies to confirm consistency and enhance the credibility of the research results.

Literature Review And Research Framework

Newmark’s (1988) translation theory is widely recognized as a key conceptual framework in the field of translation, emphasizing the relationship between linguistic form, meaning, and the purpose of a text. The classification of texts according to their communicative function was originally proposed by Reiss (2000), who divided texts into three types: expressive, informative, and operative. Newmark (1988) later applied this

concept to translation theory, using the terms expressive, informative, and vocative function to describe the characteristics and communicative purpose of texts in translation. News primarily falls into the informative category, although it often contains elements of the vocative function as well.

In addition, Newmark proposed eight translation methods that range from source-oriented to reader-oriented approaches, including literal translation, formal equivalence, faithful translation, and communicative translation. These methods serve as essential tools for analyzing translation strategies in different contexts. This aligns with the findings of Zhao and Li (2025), who emphasized that translation in specialized fields must preserve content accuracy while also considering reader comprehension and cultural differences. Translators need to select strategies appropriately to balance accuracy and clarity.

In the context of Chinese-Thai translation, previous studies have highlighted the diversity of translation strategies across different types of content. For example, Zeng et al. (2022) studied Chinese-Thai e-commerce translation and found that translations must adhere to the principle of “information equivalence,” using strategies such as addition or omission to suit the context. Research by Chaianakijpong and Kaewsuwan (2022) on online game translation indicated that media and audience factors influence strategy selection, including literal translation, free translation, and transliteration. Similarly, studies by Raksat et al. (2023) and Anprasert and Numtong (2016) on specialized document translation revealed that managing technical terminology is central to translation quality, requiring academic knowledge, interpretation skills, and systematic strategy selection. Furthermore, Areepong and Numtong (2024) demonstrated that translations

in specialized fields, such as medicine, often employ hybrid strategies based on Newmark's framework to ensure both accuracy and contextual appropriateness.

However, a review of the literature indicates that while Chinese-Thai translation studies cover diverse contexts, including literature, online games, e-commerce, official documents, and medical texts, research focusing specifically on technology and environmental terms in news remains limited. News presents a unique context due to its timeliness, formal style, and role in public communication. Therefore, this study adopts Newmark's (1988) theoretical framework as a foundation, synthesizing it with insights from related research to develop an analytical framework for Chinese-Thai translation strategies in news. The study focuses on classifying primary strategies, including literal translation, faithful translation, transliteration, and hybrid approaches, which can help explain how translation strategies are applied in news contexts and address gaps in knowledge within this field.

Research Results

This section presents the analysis of translation strategies for technology and environmental terms from Chinese into Thai in the context of news. The focus is on classifying translation patterns according to Newmark's (1988) framework to reflect translators' choices in specialized communicative translation.

Table 1

Summary of Translation Strategies for Technology and Environmental Terms

Translation Strategy	Technology Terms		Environmental Terms	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Literal translation	32	47.06	71	79.78
Free translation	12	17.65	2	2.25
Transliteration	5	7.35	3	3.37
Multiple-method translation	19	27.94	13	14.60
Total	68	100	89	100

As shown in Table 1, translation strategies for technology and environmental terms tend to differ. For technology terms, literal translation was used most frequently (47.06%), followed by multiple-method translation (27.94%), free translation (17.65%), and transliteration (7.35%). For environmental terms, literal translation dominated (79.78%), followed by multiple-method translation (14.60%), while free translation (2.25%) and transliteration (3.37%) were relatively rare. This indicates that environmental terms generally have structures that are more directly translatable than technology terms. Overall, the results suggest that the choice of translation strategies significantly depends on the nature of the content and the complexity level of terms in each field.

1. Translation Strategies for Technology Terms

Based on the analysis of 50 Chinese–Thai technology news articles, the study found that there are four main translation strategies frequently

used for technology-related terminology. These include literal translation, semantic translation, transliteration, and combined translation strategies.

1.1 Literal Translation of Technology Terms

Literal translation is one of the key strategies for conveying technology-related terms from Chinese into Thai. The main characteristic of this strategy is to preserve the structure and word order of the source language as closely as possible while selecting Thai terms that correspond directly in meaning to the Chinese terms. According to Newmark (1988), literal translation involves maintaining the word order and syntactic structure of the source language as much as possible, within the grammatical rules of the target language.

The study of Chinese–Thai technology news shows that this strategy is commonly applied to specialized and standardized terminology, such as terms related to robotics, artificial intelligence, and network systems. Its key features can be summarized as follows: 1) Preserving the word order of the source language; 2) Selecting Thai words that correspond directly to the Chinese terms; 3) Maintaining sentence structures similar to the original text and 4) Avoiding unnecessary additions or omissions of information.

Example of Literal Translation for Technology Terms

深度学习	การเรียนรู้เชิงลึก	智能识别系统	ระบบการรับรู้เชิงอัจฉริยะ
智能机器人	หุ่นยนต์อัจฉริยะ	交警机器人	หุ่นยนต์ตำรวจจราจร
智能轮椅	รถเข็นอัจฉริยะ	智能假肢	ขาเทียมอัจฉริยะ

 Example of Literal Translation for Technology Terms

监测网络	เครือข่ายการตรวจสอบ	分析轨道 数据	วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลวงโคจร
碰撞风险	ความเสี่ยงจากการชนกัน	智能停车 场	ลานจอดรถยนต์อัจฉริยะ

Example 1: The term 深度学习 is literally translated as “การเรียนรู้เชิงลึก” (deep learning). Here, 深度 means “deep” and 学习 means “learning” The translator places the main word, “การเรียนรู้” (learning), first, followed by the modifier “เชิงลึก” (deep). This preserves the original meaning of the Chinese term while maintaining readability in Thai.

Example 2: The term 智能识别系统 is literally translated as “ระบบการรับรู้เชิงอัจฉริยะ” (intelligent recognition system). 智能 means “intelligent,” 识别 means “recognition,” and 系统 means “system.” The translator positions the main word “ระบบ” (system) at the beginning, followed by the modifier “การรับรู้เชิงอัจฉริยะ” (intelligent recognition), which aligns with the syntax and logic of the Thai language. This allows readers to clearly understand the meaning of the technical term while remaining faithful to the original Chinese.

1.2 Semantic Translation

Semantic translation emphasizes conveying the meaning and content of the source text rather than strictly preserving its original linguistic form. According to Newmark (1988), semantic translation is “a translation that focuses on fully conveying the meaning and content of the source text rather than maintaining the original linguistic form.” In Chinese-Thai

technology news, semantic translation helps make complex technical content more comprehensible for Thai readers. Translators may adjust sentence structures, add explanations, or reorder information to suit the target language.

Examples of Semantic Translation for Technology Terms

人工智能	ปัญญาประดิษฐ์	知识推理	การให้เหตุผลเชิงความรู้
指令控制	รองรับคำสั่ง	风电装机	กำลังการผลิตติดตั้งไฟฟ้าพลังงานลม
卫星星座	กลุ่มดาวเทียม	宽视场相机	กล้องมุมกว้าง
算力单元	หน่วยประมวลผล	可信数据空间	ฐานข้อมูลน่าเชื่อถือ
无人商店	ร้านค้าอัจฉริยะไร้คนขาย	数据共享信任机制	กลไกแบ่งปันข้อมูล

Example 1: The term 算力单元 (computing unit) could be literally translated as “processing power”, but the translator used “หน่วยประมวลผล” to focus on the functional meaning, making it easier for Thai readers to understand in context.

Example 2: The term 无人商店 (unmanned store) could be literally translated as “store without people”. However, the translator added “อัจฉริยะ” (smart/intelligent) to convey that the store operates automatically, rather than literally having no staff, allowing readers to correctly understand the concept.

1.3 Transliteration

Transliteration is a strategy that conveys the sound of a source language term into the target language without translating its meaning. According to Newmark (1988), transliteration is “the transfer of the phonological system of one language into another.” This strategy is commonly used for proper names, new technical terms, acronyms, or international terms.

Examples of Transliteration for Technology Terms

聊天机器人	Chatbot	传感器	เซนเซอร์
区块链	บล็อกเชน	物联网传感器	เซ็นเซอร์ IoT
健康码	เฮลท์โค้ด		

Example 1: The term 区块链 (blockchain) is transliterated as “บล็อกเชน” in Thai, borrowing directly from the English term. This is because there is no exact Thai equivalent, and the term is internationally standardized within the technology field.

Example 2: The term 聊天机器人 (chatbot) is transliterated as “Chatbot”, directly adopting the English term. This is appropriate for Thai technology reports, as experts and media share a common understanding of the term, ensuring clear and internationally consistent communication.

1.4 Combined Translation Strategies

Combined translation strategies involve integrating two or more translation methods to render a single term or text. For example, literal translation may be combined with transliteration, or semantic translation

may be combined with transliteration. This approach helps convey complex terms and concepts in a way that is both understandable and appropriate for the Thai context.

Examples of Combined Translation Strategies for Technology Terms			
大语言模型	โมเดลภาษาขนาดใหญ่	视觉识别	คอมพิวเตอร์วิทัศน์
人形机器人	หุ่นยนต์ฮิวแมนนอยด์	外骨骼机器人	หุ่นยนต์ exoskeleton
农业植保无人机	โดรนดูแลรักษาพืชพันธุ์ทางการเกษตร	脑机接口	อินเทอร์เฟซคอมพิวเตอร์สมอง
AI 手语翻译设备	อุปกรณ์แปลภาษามือ AI	智能电网技术	เทคโนโลยีโครงข่ายไฟฟ้าอัจฉริยะสมรรถกฤต
氢燃料电池汽车	รถยนต์เซลล์เชื้อเพลิงไฮโดรเจน	电解槽	เครื่องอิเล็กโทรไลเซอร์

Example 1: The term AI 手语翻译设备 is translated as “อุปกรณ์แปลภาษามือ AI”. The word “设备” is translated literally as “อุปกรณ์” (device), while the acronym AI is transliterated directly to preserve its international recognition and facilitate reader comprehension.

Example 2: The term 氢燃料电池汽车 is literally translated as “รถยนต์เซลล์เชื้อเพลิงไฮโดรเจน” (hydrogen fuel cell vehicle). The phrase “电池汽车” is rendered literally as “รถยนต์เซลล์เชื้อเพลิง” (fuel cell vehicle), while “氢” is transliterated as “ไฮโดรเจน” to maintain scientific accuracy.

2. Translation Strategies for Environmental Terms

Translating environmental terms from Chinese into Thai is essential for conveying environmental concepts clearly and accurately to readers. The main translation strategies used include literal translation, semantic translation, transliteration, and combined strategies.

2.1 Literal Translation

Literal translation for environmental terms is often applied to phrases or compound words with clear structures that can be directly interpreted from their individual components. This strategy helps preserve the syntactic structure of the source language while fully conveying the intended meaning.

Examples of Literal Translation for Environmental Terms			
气候变化	การเปลี่ยนแปลงสภาพภูมิอากาศ	极端天气	สภาพอากาศสุดขั้ว
温室气体	ก๊าซเรือนกระจก	气溶胶	ละอองลอย
全球沙尘暴预测	คาดการณ์พายุฝุ่นทั่วโลก	绿色建筑	อาคารสีเขียว
水位	ระดับน้ำ	洪水	น้ำท่วม
大气成分浓度	ระดับความเข้มข้นในองค์ประกอบชั้นบรรยากาศ	积水	น้ำขัง

Example 1: The term 气溶胶 (aerosol) consists of the words “ละออง” (particle) and “ลอย” (suspended), reflecting the physical state of

fine particles floating in the air. Translating both components into Thai helps readers visualize the concept accurately.

Example 2: The term 绿色建筑 (green building) combines “อาคาร” (building) and “สีเขียว” (green). In Thai, “สีเขียว” conveys not only color but also symbolic environmental meaning. This literal translation preserves both the lexical meaning and contextual significance, allowing readers to understand that it refers to buildings designed for sustainability and environmental friendliness.

2.2 Semantic Translation

Environmental terms often involve complex concepts embedded within cultural, policy, and social contexts. Semantic translation helps readers grasp the core meaning of a term without being constrained by the linguistic form of the Chinese source. This strategy emphasizes conveying the function and purpose of the term, allowing complex or specialized environmental terminology to be communicated clearly and understandably.

Examples of Semantic Translation for Environmental Terms

碳汇	การดูดซับคาร์บอน
大气本底站	สถานีตรวจวัดชั้นบรรยากาศ

Example 1: The term 碳汇 (carbon sequestration) is translated semantically rather than literally translating 汇 . The translation “การดูดซับคาร์บอน” (carbon absorption) explains the function of the concept, referring to the process by which organisms or ecosystems reduce

carbon in the atmosphere. This makes the meaning clear and accurate for Thai readers.

Example 2: The term 大气本底站 (atmospheric background station) is translated semantically by explaining its primary function. Since 本底 refers to a baseline or reference value, a literal translation would be unclear in Thai. The phrase “ตรวจวัด” (monitoring) is used to convey the station’s main role of measuring and tracking atmospheric components, helping Thai readers understand its purpose and function.

2.3 Transliteration

Transliteration in environmental terms is typically applied to proper names, scientific terms that do not yet have Thai equivalents, and international acronyms. Unlike technology terms, which are frequently transliterated, this strategy helps maintain standards and mutual understanding at the international level.

Examples of Transliteration for Environmental Terms

二氧化碳	คาร์บอนไดออกไซด์
双碳	Dual Carbon
臭氧	โอโซน

Example 1: The term 二氧化碳 (carbon dioxide) is transliterated from English rather than literally translated into Thai. This is a standardized scientific term used globally in environmental and academic contexts. Transliteration ensures that Thai readers understand the term consistently and preserves its original meaning.

Example 2: The term 双碳 (Dual Carbon) retains the English form without translating it into Thai. This is a specialized policy and environmental term used internationally. Transliteration allows Thai readers to grasp the concept accurately without confusion or distortion of meaning.

2.4 Combined Translation Strategies

Some environmental terms are complex, involving scientific, policy, and social contexts. Using combined translation strategies—such as literal translation, semantic translation, and transliteration—enables translators to convey the full meaning, ensuring both scientific accuracy and reader comprehension.

Examples of Combined Translation Strategies for Environmental Terms

碳排放	การปล่อยคาร์บอน	碳中和	ความเป็นกลางทางคาร์บอน
碳达峰	การปล่อยคาร์บอนสูงสุด	碳交易	การซื้อขายคาร์บอน
塑料垃圾	ขยะพลาสติก	光伏发电	ไฟฟ้าโซลาร์เซลล์
氢能	พลังงานไฮโดรเจน	绿色氢气	ไฮโดรเจนสีเขียว
葡萄园碳汇	การดูดซับคาร์บอนจากไร่องุ่น	合成气体	ก๊าซสังเคราะห์

Example 1: The term 碳排放 (carbon emission) uses a combination of literal translation and transliteration. 排放 is translated literally as “การปล่อย” (emission), while “คาร์บอน” is transliterated from English to maintain international standardization. This ensures that readers understand both the scientific concept and its environmental context clearly.

Example 2: The term 碳中和 (carbon neutrality) combines semantic translation with transliteration. 中和 is translated semantically as “ความเป็นกลาง” (neutrality) to convey the concept of balancing carbon in the ecosystem, while “คาร์บอน” is transliterated to preserve scientific accuracy and global standardization. This strategy allows for clear and comprehensible communication in policy and environmental contexts.

Discussion Of Results

This study aimed to examine translation strategies for technology and environmental terms in Chinese-Thai news. The results indicate that translators primarily employ four strategies: literal translation, semantic translation, transliteration, and combined strategies. There is a noticeable difference in the choice of strategies between the two domains.

Technology terms tend to rely heavily on literal translation and transliteration due to their international standardization and rapid development. This tendency is further reinforced by key digital-era factors—particularly information velocity and the role of English as a lingua franca—which encourage the use of English-based transliteration in technology news more frequently than in other domains. Preserving word forms and phonetic transcription plays a crucial role in maintaining accuracy and consistency with international usage. In contrast, environmental terms generally have clear semantic structures that can be directly rendered into Thai, making literal translation the preferred approach. For more complex terms, particularly those related to policy or specialized concepts, translators often use semantic translation or combined strategies to convey both academic meaning and social context comprehensively. This pattern aligns with

Newmark's (1988) concept that translation strategies should be selected flexibly according to the characteristics of the text and the purpose of communication. It also corresponds with findings from Zhao and Li (2025) and Zeng et al. (2022), who emphasized that specialized translation must balance accuracy and cross-cultural comprehensibility. Compared to previous research, such as the studies by Chaianakijpong and Kaewsuwan (2022) and Areepong and Numtong (2024), this study further highlights that the nature of the subject matter is a key factor influencing strategy selection. Specifically, technology terms are highly dynamic and often rely on international vocabulary, making transliteration more common. Environmental terms, being more semantically stable, are more suitable for literal translation. Thus, the choice of translation strategies in news depends not only on language but also on content characteristics, the degree of internationalization of terms, and the communicative context.

Based on these findings, practical guidelines for translators can be proposed. For technology terms, transliteration is appropriate for international terms or new words without established Thai equivalents. Terms with clear meanings that have Thai equivalents should be translated literally, while complex or highly technical terms may require additional explanation to ensure contextual understanding. For environmental terms, literal translation is generally preferred due to semantic clarity. However, international or scientific terms should be transliterated, and terms related to policy or social concepts may benefit from additional explanation to convey the core meaning effectively. These guidelines help translators select suitable strategies, enhance accuracy, and support effective cross-cultural communication between Chinese and Thai.

Recommendations

This study provides guidelines for selecting translation strategies for technology and environmental terms in Chinese–Thai news. Translators should consider the nature of the terms, the complexity of the content, and the communication context. For technology-related terms, emphasis should be placed on transliteration and literal translation, while for environmental terms, literal translation can be used as the main approach, supplemented by explanations or combined strategies when necessary. These recommendations can serve as practical guidance to improve the quality of news translation and support cross-cultural communication between China and Thailand effectively.

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Instructional Management Using Songs and Music Videos to Enhance Students' Understanding of Mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019

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Abstract

This research entitled “Instructional Management Using Songs and Music Videos to Enhance Students’ Understanding of Mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019” aims to: 1) examine the consistency between the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” and the concepts and principles of dispute mediation; 2) compare students’ learning achievement before and after the instructional management using songs and music videos; and 3) investigate students’ satisfaction with this instructional approach.

This study employs a mixed-methods research design. The Documentary research was conducted to analyze the consistency between the song lyrics and the relevant concepts, theories, and legal principles related to dispute mediation. Quantitative research methods were used to examine students’ learning achievement and satisfaction. The sample consisted of students enrolled in the course on Alternative Dispute Resolution. The research instruments included pre-test and post-test

achievement tests as well as a satisfaction questionnaire regarding the instructional management. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores.

The findings reveals that the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” reflect key concepts and principles of mediation, including negotiation, conciliation, peaceful communication, and the resolution of disputes through amicable means. The comparison of learning achievement indicates that the students’ post-test scores were higher than their pre-test scores at the .05 statistical significance level, demonstrating that the use of songs and music videos as instructional media effectively enhanced students’ understanding of mediation processes. Furthermore, the results of the satisfaction assessment showed that students reported the highest level of satisfaction with the instructional approach. They indicated that such media made the lessons more engaging, easier to understand, and more closely connected to real-life situations. The results suggest that integrating creative media such as songs and music videos into legal education can effectively enhance students’ learning outcomes and promote a better understanding of alternative dispute resolution processes.

Keywords: mediation, instructional management, songs and music videos, alternative dispute resolution, learning achievement

Introduction

Instructional management in the field of law or legal studies at the higher education level generally emphasizes the transmission of knowledge through the lecture and discussion method. This approach typically involves explaining legal principles and provisions, and providing examples based on

court decisions, with learners primarily assuming the role of listeners and note-takers. Even though this teaching method is well-organized and academically sound, many students still find it difficult to understand legal concepts. In particular, they struggle to connect the law written in statutes with real-life situations, and they often have trouble applying legal rules and interpreting laws when dealing with complicated facts or legal problems. In order to align with course-level teaching strategies, it is therefore necessary to design instruction that enables learners to acquire knowledge and develop skills in accordance with the prescribed learning outcomes, by employing methods such as the demonstration method or the simulation method.

The course on Alternative Dispute Resolution is described as follows: “Concepts of dispute resolution; forms of alternative dispute resolution or out-of-court dispute settlement, such as mediation, compromise, and arbitration”. The objective of this course is to provide students with knowledge and understanding of various methods for resolving disputes without resorting to litigation (Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University, 2022). The researcher finds that students typically possess an understanding of the theories, concepts, principles, and processes of dispute resolution, such as negotiation, mediation, or conciliation, at a superficial level only. However, they still lack an in-depth understanding of the roles of communication skill: listening, and restorative problem-solving, which constitute the core of the out-of-court dispute resolution process. Instruction that relies solely on lectures may therefore be insufficient in helping learners visualize real-life situations or understand the social and emotional context of the parties in a dispute.

In the current educational context, and in accordance with Section 22 of the National Education Act A.D. (1999), which states: “Education shall be based on the principle that all learners are capable of learning and self-development and shall regard learners as being of the utmost importance. The educational process shall promote learners’ ability to develop at their own pace and to their fullest potential” (National Education Act A.D. 1999 and Amendment (No. 3) A.D. 2010, 2010, p. 13), the learner-centered approach and the use of diverse learning media have been widely recognized as being capable of enhancing learners’ understanding, motivation, and participation more effectively than traditional instruction.

Incorporating media that are closely related to learners’ daily lives, such as songs and music videos, into the instructional process is therefore an alternative approach that can help reduce the abstractness of legal content and enable learners to connect knowledge with real-life situations more easily. This is also consistent with the use of role-play teaching methods, in which realistic situations and simulated roles are created to allow learners to express their knowledge, ideas, and behaviors (Jongkonklang, 2025, pp. 203–204).

The song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” (We Can Talk), produced by the Department of Rights and Liberties Protection, is a media resource whose content reflects concepts related to communication skill: listening, and peaceful conflict resolution. These themes are consistent with the core content of the Alternative Dispute Resolution course, specifically the topic of dispute settlement through mediation. Incorporating the lyrics and music video of this song into the instructional process thus has the potential to help learners understand the principles of dispute resolution in a concrete

manner, visualize the communication process between disputing parties, and better apply legal principles to real-life situations. Similarly, teaching English by playing international songs for students helps learners understand vocabulary and the meaning of the lyrics more easily. It also enables them to remember the lyrics and sing the songs.

Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying instructional management using songs and music videos to enhance knowledge and understanding of dispute mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019 for students enrolled in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course. The purpose is to examine the effects of such media on students' knowledge and understanding, learning achievement, and satisfaction. This research is significant as a new approach to instructional management in the field of law or legal studies, aims at developing instructional models that are aligned with the contemporary educational context and at promoting learners' ability to understand and apply legal principles more effectively. Based on the aforementioned issues, it can be seen that instructional management in law courses, particularly the Alternative Dispute Resolution course in the section on dispute mediation, requires the development of diverse instructional models that are more consistent with the nature of the content and the learners. The incorporation of songs and music videos that reflect concepts of communication and peaceful conflict resolution may serve as a new approach to help learners understand legal principles more easily.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the consistency between the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” and the principles and concepts of dispute

mediation in order to promote a better understanding of legal concepts in a more accessible manner.

2. To compare students' learning achievement before and after instructional management using songs and music videos in order to reflect the effectiveness of learning through creative media.

3. To investigate students' satisfaction with instructional management using songs and music videos in order to provide guidelines for developing more engaging approaches to legal education.

Research Scope

1. Conceptual Framework

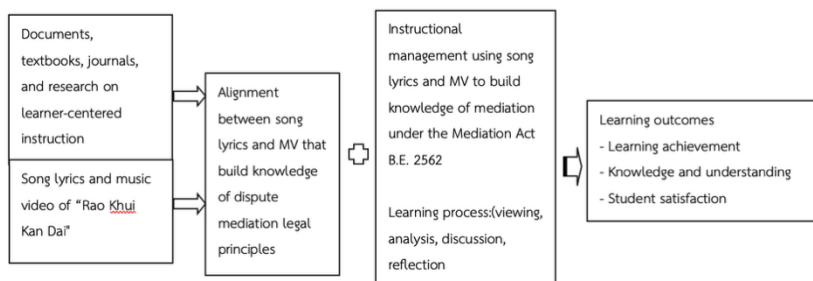


Figure 1

Conceptual Framework for the Research

2. Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this research are formulated as follows:

1. Students who receive instructional management through the lyrics and music video of the song "Rao Khui Kan Dai" will demonstrate higher post-test learning achievement scores than pre-test scores. This

hypothesis reflects the expectation that the use of songs and music videos as instructional media can effectively enhance students' understanding and learning of legal concepts.

2. Students will report a high level of satisfaction with instructional management through the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” This hypothesis indicates that the use of creative media in instructional management can appropriately increase students' engagement and interest in the learning process.

Research Methodology

This research entitled “Instructional Management Using Songs and Music Videos to Enhance Students' Understanding of Mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019” was a pre-experimental research study employing a one-group pretest-posttest design. The researcher conducts the instructional management using the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” as supplementary instructional media in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course. Subsequently, students' learning outcomes before and after the learning activities were compared.

1. Population and Sample

1.1 The population of this research consists of students enrolled in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course in the second semester of the academic year 2025.

1.2 The sample consists of students enrolled in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course, selected through purposive sampling based on the criterion of full participation in the designated learning activities, 56 students in total.

2. Research Variables

2.1 The independent variable is instructional management using the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” by the Department of Rights and Liberties Protection.

2.2 The dependent variables are students’ knowledge and understanding of alternative dispute resolution, learning achievement, and students’ satisfaction with instructional management using songs and music videos.

3. Research Instruments

The research instruments used in this study consisted of the following:

3.1 An instructional plan for the Alternative Dispute Resolution course, which integrated the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” with content on communication skill: negotiation, and out-of-court dispute resolution through the mediation process via learning activities such as viewing, content analysis, discussion, and reflection.

3.2 A learning achievement test, consisting of a pretest and posttest, designed to measure knowledge and understanding of out-of-court dispute resolution through the mediation process. Content validity was verified by qualified experts.

3.3 A satisfaction questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, designed to assess students’ satisfaction with and attitudes toward the instructional management using songs and music videos.

4. Instrument Construction and Quality Assurance

The researcher constructed the instruments by reviewing relevant theories, concepts, and related research. The instruments were then submitted to qualified experts in law and education for content validity verification, and revisions were made based on their recommendations.

5. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted according to the following procedures:

5.1 Administration of the pretest.

5.2 Implementation of instructional management using the song and music video “Rao Khui Kan Dai”.

5.3 Administration of the posttest.

5.4 Administration of the satisfaction questionnaire to students.

6. Data Analysis

Data analysis employed the following statistics:

6.1 Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation.

6.2 Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores.

6.3 Interpretation of satisfaction levels according to the rating scale criteria.

7. Research Ethics

This research took into account research ethics. The researcher informed the sample of the research objectives, and the collected data were used for academic purposes only.

Research Results

The research to redundant aims to examine the lyrics and music video in relation to legal provisions, and to study the effects of instructional management using songs and music videos on students' knowledge and understanding, learning achievement, and satisfaction. The researcher collected data from the sample, which consisted of students enrolled in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course in the second semester of the academic year 2025, and analyzed the data using descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation, as well as a comparison of pre-test and post-test scores. The results of the data analysis are presented as follows:

1. Analysis of the Consistency between the Song Lyrics, Music Video, and Legal Principles

In the analysis of the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai”, the researcher examined the consistency of the song's content with the provisions of the Mediation Act A.D. 2019 by analyzing issues related to communication skill: listening, negotiation, and dispute resolution through the mediation process. The findings revealed that the content of the song reflects concepts of peaceful conflict resolution, constructive communication, and mutual openness to listening, which are essential principles of the mediation process under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019, particularly the principle of voluntariness of the parties, the principle of negotiation, and the principle of building mutual understanding.

Furthermore, the song lyrics also reflect the concept of restorative justice, which emphasizes forgiveness, the restoration of relationships, and

the transformation of conflict into cooperation. They also reflect the concept of community justice, which views conflict as a normal aspect of communal living that can be resolved through communication and cooperation among community members. Therefore, the song lyrics are consistent with the principles and concepts of dispute mediation and alternative dispute resolution, and can appropriately be used as instructional media to promote knowledge and understanding of the mediation process.

With regard to the analysis of the consistency between the music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” and the concept of dispute mediation, it was found that the images and events depicted in the music video reflect the process of conflict management and dispute mediation through peaceful means. The video begins with the emergence of conflict between individuals, a situation commonly found in society. Subsequently, a third party is introduced to serve as a mediator to help the disputing parties communicate and understand each other better. Additionally, scenes depicting parties sitting together, talking, and listening to each other’s views reflect the essential principles of the mediation process under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019, which emphasizes voluntary agreement between the parties and the role of a neutral facilitator in the negotiation process. As the negotiation progresses, the disputing parties are able to reduce tension and accept a mutual agreement, resulting in a compromise and the restoration of interpersonal relationships. This is consistent with the concept of restorative justice, which aims to remedy harm and build reconciliation in society.

2. Results of the Study on Students' Knowledge and Understanding

The researcher administered pre-test and post-test examinations to study the knowledge and understanding of 56 students enrolled in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course regarding non-litigation dispute resolution. The findings revealed that 43 students (76.79%) showed an increase in scores, 13 students (23.21%) maintained the same scores, and no students (0.00%) showed a decrease in scores. This indicates that after participating in the learning activities on the process of mediation, students demonstrated an increase in scores rather than maintaining or decreasing their scores.

Furthermore, the results of the pre-test and post-test administered to 56 students enrolled in the Alternative Dispute Resolution course, calculated using the mean and standard deviation (S.D.) of the pre-test and post-test scores, revealed that students had a pre-test mean score of 17.04 (S.D. = 1.97) and a post-test mean score of 18.80 (S.D. = 1.16) out of a total of 20 points. This demonstrates that after participating in the learning activities on dispute mediation, students had higher learning achievement and a slight decrease in score dispersion, reflecting that learners gained a more consistent level of understanding of the content.

Table 1

Pre-test and Post-test Results of Students

Item	N	Mean	S.D.
Pre-test Score	56	17.04	1.97
Post-test Score	56	18.80	1.16

3. Comparison of Learning Achievement Before and After Instruction

To test the hypothesis that students who received instructional management using the song and music video had higher post-test learning achievement than pre-test achievement, the researcher compared the pre-test and post-test scores. The findings revealed that students had a pre-test mean score of 17.04 (S.D. = 1.97) and a post-test mean score of 18.80 (S.D. = 1.16). When the difference in scores was tested using a paired-sample t-test, the t-value was 8.45 with a Sig. value of .000, which was less than the statistical significance level of .05. This demonstrates that instructional management using the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” was able to enhance students’ learning achievement, which is consistent with Research Hypothesis 1.

Table 2

Comparison of Learning Achievement Before and After Instruction

Test	N	Mean	S.D.	t	Sig.
Pre-test	56	17.04	1.97		
Post-test	56	18.80	1.16	8.45	.000

4. Students’ Satisfaction with Instructional Management Using Songs and Music Videos

The researcher collected data on students’ satisfaction using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The analysis of students’ satisfaction with instructional management using song lyrics and music videos as learning media revealed that, overall, students expressed the highest level of satisfaction (Mean = 4.71, S.D. = 0.54). When examined on an item-by-item

basis, all items were rated at the highest level. The item with the highest mean was overall satisfaction with the instructional management (Mean = 4.76, S.D. = 0.47), followed by the item indicating that the teaching format helped create a positive learning atmosphere (Mean = 4.74, S.D. = 0.49). This demonstrates that the use of songs and music videos as learning media can help promote understanding and create a positive learning atmosphere for students. Therefore, the analysis revealed that students' satisfaction with instructional management using songs and music videos was at a high level or above, which is consistent with Research Hypothesis 2.

Discussion of Results

Based on the findings of the research entitled “Instructional Management Using Songs and Music Videos to Enhance Students’ Understanding of Mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019”, the results can be discussed as follows:

1. The Use of Song Lyrics and Music Videos in Explaining the Concept of the Process of Mediation

The research findings revealed that the lyrics and music video of the song “Rao Khui Kan Dai” contain content that is consistent with the concepts and principles of dispute mediation under the Mediation Act A.D. 2019, particularly the key principles, namely the principle of voluntariness of the parties, the principle of negotiation, and the principle of having a neutral third party to facilitate the negotiation. The song lyrics reflect concepts of communication skill: listening, and compromise, which are the core of the mediation process. Additionally, the lyrics reflect the concept of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), which focuses on resolving disputes

through peaceful means and avoiding litigation. This is evidenced by phrases such as “Living under the same roof, it is natural for teeth and tongue to clash”, “Speak gently and calmly, as siblings do”, “A matter like this can be mediated and cleared up”, “Resolving the problem with understanding is better than letting it escalate and waste time”, “Stay calm; if there is an issue, mediate and negotiate”, “Transform conflict into invaluable friendship”, and so forth. This is consistent with the note appended to the Mediation Act (Community Sector) A.D. 2019, which states: “...Community Mediation Centers are used to settle or resolve such disputes, with due regard to the consent of the parties concerned. This leads to a reduction in the volume of cases brought before the courts, reduces problems of conflict, fosters reconciliation in society, reduces the national budget expenditure, and promotes harmonious coexistence in society. It is therefore necessary to enact this Act” (Mediation Act A.D. 2019, 2019, p. 21).

Regarding the music video, it was found that the images and events depicted in the music video clearly reflect the stages of the mediation process, from the emergence of conflict, the involvement of a mediator to facilitate negotiation, the opportunity for the parties to engage in dialogue, to the eventual reaching of an agreement. This is consistent with Section 11, which states: “The mediator shall have the following duties and powers: (1) to determine the approach and arrange for mediation of the dispute; (2) to assist, facilitate, and advise the parties in finding ways to settle the dispute; (3) to conduct the mediation with neutrality; (4) to prepare a dispute settlement agreement based on the outcome of the mediation. In cases where the mediator acts in good faith in the performance of duties, the

mediator shall be protected from both civil and criminal liability” (Mediation Act A.D. 2019, 2019, p. 4).

The aforementioned research findings are consistent with the concept of multimedia learning, which posits that the use of visual media, audio, and simulations can help learners understand content more easily and can enable them to connect theoretical knowledge with real-life situations more effectively. This is also consistent with Mayer’s (2009) Multimedia Learning Theory, which explains that learning through media that combines visual and auditory elements can enhance learners’ learning efficiency.

2. The Effects of Using Songs and Music Videos on Students’ Knowledge and Understanding the Process of Mediation

The findings revealed that students had higher post-test mean scores than pre-test mean scores, indicating that instructional management using songs and music videos as learning media was able to enhance students’ level of knowledge and understanding regarding the alternative dispute resolution process. The use of songs and music videos as learning media enabled learners to clearly visualize dispute scenarios and the mediation process, which helped them understand the role of the mediator, the steps of negotiation, and approaches to peaceful dispute resolution. These research findings are consistent with the concept of active learning, which emphasizes learners’ active participation in the learning process and the use of activities or learning media that stimulate critical thinking and knowledge connection. This is also consistent with the course learning outcomes (CLOs), which require learners to explain fundamental knowledge

of alternative dispute resolution, provide examples of factual situations related to alternative dispute resolution occurring in society or local communities, apply information technology appropriately for information retrieval, and exercise rights and freedoms without affecting others while conducting themselves as good citizens, in accordance with the Thai Qualifications Framework (TQF 2) of the Bachelor of Laws program (Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University, 2022). Furthermore, the use of songs and videos in instructional management can promote learning achievement in both the cognitive and affective domains, as such media stimulate learners' interest and enable them to develop a deeper understanding of the content. This is consistent with Ritcharoon (2013), who explained that learning achievement can be measured through various methods, such as pre-test and post-test assessments, evaluation of classroom activities, and evaluation of learners' learning behaviors.

3. The Effects of Using Songs and Music Videos on Learning Achievement

The comparison of students' learning achievement before and after instruction revealed that post-test mean scores were significantly higher than pre-test mean scores at the .05 statistical significance level. This demonstrates that the use of songs and music videos as learning media can effectively improve students' learning achievement. This finding is consistent with the research of Jiamsak and Jiamsak (2025), who studied the development of English language teaching materials through songs and found that learners' post-test learning achievement was significantly higher than pre-test achievement at the .05 statistical significance level.

The use of songs and music videos as learning media helps transform legal content, which is often abstract and complex, into content that is easier to understand and more relatable to learners, thereby enabling them to better retain the content and understand legal principles. These research findings are consistent with the views of Hallam (2010), who explained that music plays a significant role in stimulating the human learning process and can help create a relaxed learning atmosphere that fosters motivation for learning.

4. Students' Satisfaction with the Instructional Model

The research findings revealed that students expressed the highest level of satisfaction with instructional management using songs and music videos, particularly in terms of creating a positive learning atmosphere, the engaging nature of the lessons, and the ability to connect legal content with real-life situations. This is consistent with the findings of Gairat et al. (2024), who studied the effects of using information and communication technology for teaching general music to primary school students. The study found that 1) The effectiveness of the learning management approach using YouTube videos for teaching general music to Grade 6 students was measured at 78.20/89.50 and 2) Student satisfaction with learning and skill development in general music, supported by YouTube videos, was very high. The overall satisfaction score had an average 4.59, categorized as excellent.

These research findings reflect that the use of diverse learning media that is aligned with the social context can effectively stimulate learners' interest and promote active participation in the classroom.

5. New Findings

The research yielded the following new findings in both academic and instructional innovation dimensions:

5.1 The research indicates that song lyrics and music videos serve not merely as entertainment media but can function as a “meaning-making tool” that helps translate mediation principles such as negotiation, listening, and voluntariness, into images and situations that are more accessible to learners. This represents an expansion of the use of artistic media into legal education in a concrete manner.

5.2 Songs and music videos serve as an “intermediary bridge” between legal knowledge and learners’ real-life contexts. A key finding is that learners were able to better connect legal principles of dispute mediation with everyday situations through the content and imagery in the music video, resulting in contextual understanding, which typically does not arise from lecture-based instruction alone.

5.3 The use of creative media helps develop the “emotional and attitudinal dimension” alongside legal knowledge. In addition to increased learning achievement, the research found that song media stimulates feelings of openness, listening, and positive attitudes toward peaceful dispute resolution, reflecting that legal education can simultaneously develop both cognitive and affective domains.

5.4 The instructional model using songs and music videos can function as an “Innovative Active Learning Model in Legal Education”. The research findings indicate that designing learning activities in conjunction with media-such as content analysis, discussion, and role-play simulation enhances learner participation and results in significantly higher learning

achievement, thus lending itself to development as a new teaching model in law curricula.

5.5 The use of songs with content specifically aligned with the law is a critical factor for learning effectiveness. A significant new finding is that “content alignment” between the media and legal principles is the key variable that makes learning effective, it is not only the use of media to generate interest, but rather the use of media that accurately reflects legal principles.

5.6 Legal studies can be expanded from “knowing the law” to “understanding and applying the law in a social dimension” through creative media. The research findings reflect that learners did not merely memorize legal provisions but were able to understand the role of mediation as a tool for building reconciliation in society, which represents an elevation of learning from the theoretical level to practical application.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations for Applying the Research Findings

1.1 The use of songs, music videos, or other creative media should be promoted as tools for instructional management in law courses, in order to help learners understand complex content easier.

1.2 Instructors should design learning activities that provide opportunities for students to analyze the content of the media, such as through discussion, case study analysis, or simulation of dispute mediation scenarios.

1.3 Agencies related to the justice process, such as the Department of Rights and Liberties Protection, can develop songs or other creative media for disseminating legal knowledge to the public and students.

1.4 Educational institutions should support the development of instructional innovations that integrate digital media and arts and cultural media to enhance learning effectiveness in the 21st century.

2. Recommendations for Future Research

2.1 Future studies should explore other form findings of learning media, such as short films, simulation dramas, or educational games, in teaching law courses or dispute resolution courses.

2.2 Future studies should be conducted with a larger sample size or with students from multiple institutions to compare learning outcomes.

2.3 Future studies should examine the long-term effects of using songs and music videos in instruction on learners' retention and ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations.

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Reforming the Thailand Higher Education Transition System: Toward a Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Model

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Abstract

Thailand's higher education system continues to face graduate unemployment, skill misalignment, and insufficient transitions from education to employment, despite ongoing advancements in curriculum development, quality assurance, and outcome-based education. Recent reforms have predominantly concentrated on employability through disparate initiatives, such as curriculum enhancements, internships, and entrepreneurship programs; however, they have not sufficiently integrated competency development, work-integrated learning, university–industry collaboration, and entrepreneurial support into a unified transition system. This study aims to assess structural deficiencies in Thailand's higher education transition system, examine relevant international transition models, and propose a competency-based and entrepreneurial transition

framework adapted to the Thai context. The study utilizes documentary research and comparative policy analysis to synthesize evidence from higher education policy documents, labor market surveys, global best practices, and scholarly literature. The findings indicate four major structural deficiencies: a misalignment between curriculum and labor market demands, inadequate university-industry collaborations, insufficient entrepreneurial assistance, and the absence of a unified national transition framework. This study's innovative contribution is the invention of the Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework, which connects macro-level governmental incentives, meso-level institutional reform, and micro-level student competency advancement. The paradigm advances modern reform dialogues by shifting higher education from degree acquisition to structured career and entrepreneurial development trajectories. It offers practical implications for performance-driven university governance, employer partnerships, graduate assessment, regional innovation ecosystems, and the sustained competitiveness of Thailand's workforce.

Keywords: Competency-Based Education, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Graduate Transition, Skill Mismatch, Work-Integrated Learning, Thailand Higher Education System

Introduction

The Thai higher education system has been under constant renovation for the last twenty years due to economic restructuring, technological disruption and changing labor market needs. Policies such as the Thailand Qualifications Framework (TQF), Outcome-Based Education

(OBE) and work-integrated learning (WIL) policies have been introduced to improve the quality of graduates and the university-industry interface. However, graduate unemployment, educational mismatch, and underemployment are perpetual structural concerns in the Thai labor market (Pholphirul, 2017; Vivatsurakit, 2021). The above challenges are indicative of the fact that the rise in higher education enrollment has not been accompanied by an equally efficient transition framework integrating higher education, employment and entrepreneurship.

International literature has increasingly argued that graduate employability is not only a matter of accomplishment in higher education but also of the interaction between competencies, institutional support and labor market dynamics and the development of professional identity (Clarke, 2018; Holmes, 2013). Human Capital Theory generally assumes that education is an investment to increase productivity and economic competitiveness (Becker, 1964). The contemporary literature on employability argues that achieving educational outcomes is not only about acquiring knowledge but also about higher education institutions' capacity to foster major transitions into work and innovation ecosystems (Tomlinson, 2017). The methodologies of competence-based and outcome-oriented approaches have been fundamental in the global reform of higher education within this framework.

Outcome-Based Education and competency-based education emphasize measurable learning results, practical skills, and workplace readiness rather than the material addressed (Brauer et al., 2021). Despite the rising usage of OBE frameworks and curriculum reviews in Thai institutions to conform to TQF requirements, implementation often has

been haphazard and compliance-driven. Existing changes have been largely concentrated on curriculum modification and quality assurance approaches, with little consideration given to wider transition mechanisms connecting competency development, work-integrated learning, employer engagement and entrepreneurial support networks. As a result, many graduates continue to struggle to transform their academic credentials into tangible opportunities for employment or entrepreneurship.

Studies at the global scale show that effective transition systems require structured collaboration among academics, business and governments. The Triple Helix paradigm highlights the significance of cooperation among universities, companies, and governments to support innovation, workforce development, and regional economic growth (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). Research on work-integrated learning has found that the provision of structured workplace experiences significantly enhances graduation preparation, professional identity and employability outcomes (Billett, 2009; Fleming et al., 2018). Research on entrepreneurial universities highlights their contribution to human capital formation, venture creation, knowledge commercialization and innovation ecosystems (Etzkowitz, 2017; Guerrero & Urbano, 2012).

While studies on graduate employability, outcome-based education and entrepreneurial institutions are increasing, previous research has mostly examined these in isolation. Research on Thai higher education has mainly focused on curriculum reforms, education mismatch or labor market outcomes separately without integrating competency-based education, work-integrated learning, university-industry collaborations and entrepreneurial ecosystem development into a unified transition framework. This fragmented

approach limits the potential of higher education reforms to address the structural complexities of graduate transition in Thailand.

The paper points out a significant research gap and suggests an integrated Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF) that combines competency-based curriculum reform, structured work-integrated learning, strategic university-industry partnerships, and entrepreneurial support systems within a multi-tiered governance structure.

In contrast to earlier research that primarily conceptualizes employability as an individual outcome or a curriculum question, this study conceptualizes graduate transition as a systemic and institutional challenge, requiring coordinated interaction between policy, higher education institutions, industries and innovation ecosystems. Therefore, the study contributes to the reform debate in higher education by reconceptualizing universities as integrated transition ecosystems that promote employment, innovation and venture growth in Thailand, rather than as purely degree-producing institutions.

Research Objectives

This study aims to: (1) analyze the structural deficiencies within Thailand's higher education transition system that contribute to graduate unemployment, skill mismatch, and weak education-to-work transition outcomes; (2) examine international models and best practices related to competency-based education, work-integrated learning, university-industry collaboration, and entrepreneurial university development; and (3) propose a Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF) that integrates policy, institutional, and competency-based mechanisms to

support graduate employability and entrepreneurial development in Thailand.

Research Scope

This is a conceptual and policy-oriented study that does not employ primary empirical data collection, such as surveys, interviews or field observations. This study, instead, employs documentary analysis and comparative policy synthesis to analyze the structural problems of the higher education transition system in Thailand and to offer a reform-oriented framework to enhance graduate transition results. The three interrelated dimensions encompass the scope of the study.

First, at a conceptual level, the study investigates theories and techniques linked to graduate employability, competency-based education, work-integrated learning, university-industry partnership, and entrepreneurial universities. Particular attention is given to the link of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) and competency development with education-to-work transition mechanisms in modern higher education systems.

Second, the study examines higher education institutions in Thailand and their curriculum structures, work-integrated learning arrangements, university-industry relationships and entrepreneurial support systems at the institutional level. The analysis also includes the establishment of the Thailand Qualifications Framework (TQF), assessment of learning outcomes, reform of competency-based curricula, and OBE practices, which have had increasing impact on the governance and quality assurance of Thai higher education.

Thirdly, at the policy level, the study explores the national higher education reform policies, labor market alignment strategies, and innovation-oriented development frameworks for graduate employability and entrepreneurial development. Comparative analysis of international transition models, such as cooperative education, dual education systems, and entrepreneurial university ecosystems, to discover policy and institutional mechanisms applicable to the setting of Thailand.

The project thus intends to build an integrated understanding of how competency-based reform, OBE implementation, WIL mechanisms, and entrepreneurial ecosystem development can be systematically linked to each other in the higher education transition system of Thailand.

Literature Review

1. Theoretical Foundations

1.1 Human Capital Theory: Human Capital Theory offers a fundamental economic justification for investing in education, asserting that education increases individual productivity, hence elevating their incomes and facilitating overall economic growth (Becker, 1964). Within the context of higher education reform, this theory supports the view that universities function as engines of skill formation and national competitiveness. Nonetheless, detractors contend that the mere acquisition of human capital does not ensure effective integration into the job market. Also, structural factors, labor market segmentation, and signaling dynamics affect the outcomes of graduates (Tomlinson, 2012). So, even though human capital theory explains why investing in education is a good idea, it doesn't entirely

explain why graduates are still underemployed or have skills that don't match their jobs.

1.2 Employability Theory: Employability has progressed beyond a limited skills-centric perspective. Holmes (2013) defines employability from three angles: possession (skills and traits), position (social and structural advantage), and process (identity construction and career navigation). In the same way, Clarke (2018) suggests a multidimensional paradigm that includes human capital, social capital, individual agency, and the labor market setting. These viewpoints indicate that employability is not solely a result of curriculum design but is shaped by structural and institutional frameworks. So, to make the transition from school to work better, we need to coordinate the structure of the school system instead of only changing the curriculum (Tomlinson, 2012).

1.3 Competency-Based Education (CBE): Competency-Based Education (CBE) focuses on learning outcomes that can be shown to meet the needs of the workplace. CBE does not focus on time-based development or topic covered. Instead, it focuses on measurable competencies that show applicable skills and professional standards (Brauer et al., 2021). In principle, CBE makes things clearer between colleges and companies by making it clear what skills graduates should have. But for it to work, the curriculum design, assessment methodologies, faculty development, and quality assurance mechanisms all have to be in sync. If systemic integration doesn't happen, competency rhetoric could become more of a symbol than a change agent.

1.4 Entrepreneurial University Concept: The Entrepreneurial University concept broadens the conventional teaching-research goal to

encompass economic and innovation-driven roles. The Triple Helix theory (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000) posits that the dynamic interaction among universities, industry, and government serves as a catalyst for innovation ecosystems. Etzkowitz (2017) contends that entrepreneurial universities are pivotal to regional development via knowledge commercialization and venture formation. Empirical research indicates that the partnership between universities and industries improves knowledge transfer and commercialization results (Perkmann et al., 2013). Guerrero and Urbano (2012) also point out that institutional aspects, such as governance frameworks, an entrepreneurial culture, and support infrastructure, are very important for the growth of entrepreneurial universities.

These theoretical perspectives indicate that a successful graduate transition necessitates a cohesive system that amalgamates skill enhancement, institutional collaboration, and ecosystem-wide support systems.

2. International Models of Transition Systems

2.1 Cooperative Education Model: University of Waterloo: The Cooperative Education (Co-op) model, which is used at the University of Waterloo, combines organized work terms with academic programs. Students switch between studying and working in industry placements, which are organized by a central institution. Studies show that work-integrated learning (WIL) helps people develop practical skills, build their professional identity, and signal to employers (Billett, 2009; Fleming et al., 2018).

2.1.1 Strengths: (1) A planned way to combine what you study in school with what you do at work. (2) Strong partnerships between

employers and schools and strong collaboration between institutions. (3) Better job prospects for graduates, among other things.

2.1.2 Limitations: (1) Dependence on the capacity of the labor market, and (2) Quality differences between placements. (3) Costs of administration, coordination, and so on.

2.1.3 Relevance to Thailand: The Co-op model can be used in fields where there is a lot of demand from employers. In Thailand, however, centralized WIL governance mechanisms and standardized competency evaluation systems would be needed to make sure that education is fair.

2.2 Dual Education Model: DHBW: The German Dual Education Model, as shown by DHBW (Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg), integrates academic instruction with employment in partner companies. Employers help create the curriculum and pay for training. Research demonstrates that dual study programs alleviate skill mismatches by promoting continuous employer engagement and aligning training with labor market requirements (Gerloff & Reinhard, 2019; Ertl, 2020).

2.2.1 Strengths: (1) Deep institutionalized employer participation, (2) Less uncertainty about the transition for graduates, and (3) Structured and legally backed partnership

2.2.2 Limitations: (1) Context-dependent (strong vocational tradition), (2) Needs a firm commitment from employers and rules to follow

2.2.3 Relevance to Thailand: Adoption would require incentives at the governmental level, legal structures, and ways for employers to get involved. Adapting to different cultures and institutions is more important than copying them directly.

2.3 Entrepreneurial University Ecosystem: MIT: Many people say that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) is a good example of an entrepreneurial university. Its ecosystem includes offices for transferring technology, incubators for new businesses, networks of alumni, and strong collaboration with businesses. MIT's influence on entrepreneurship goes beyond education to include economic growth in the region and beyond the world (Etzkowitz, 2017; Roberts & Eesley, 2011).

2.3.1 Strengths: (1) A strong ecosystem for innovation, (2) institutionalized ways to help new businesses, and (3) the integration of research, commercialization, and entrepreneurship education

2.3.2 Limitations: (1) Needs a lot of resources, (2) Needs a strong innovation infrastructure and access to financing

2.3.3 Relevance to Thailand: Although complete replication may be impractical, components like incubation centers, startup finance mechanisms, and alumni entrepreneurial networks could be deliberately cultivated within Thai universities, especially in regional innovation areas.

In conclusion, effective transition systems across these international models consist of four structural components: (1) competency-oriented curriculum design, (2) structured work-integrated learning mechanisms, (3) institutionalized university–industry collaboration, and (4) entrepreneurial ecosystem support (Billett, 2009; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000; Perkmann et al., 2013). For Thailand, where skill mismatch continues to be an issue (McGuinness et al., 2018), a hybrid strategy that combines competency-based reform, work-integrated learning infrastructure, and the growth of an entrepreneurial ecosystem seems to be the best option. Instead of separate

projects, it is important to coordinate efforts across macro (policy), meso (institutional), and micro (student-level competencies) levels.

Research Methodology

1. Research Design

This study used a qualitative documentary research design and comparative policy analysis. The study was conceptual and policy-oriented and did not involve primary empirical data collecting through surveys, interviews, or field observations. The use of documentary research was appropriate as the purpose of the research was to investigate policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, evidence on the labor market and academic arguments on the transition system in higher education in Thailand. Comparative policy analysis was also used to discuss selected international models and to find adaptable mechanisms with respect to Thailand's competency-based and entrepreneurial higher education reform.

2. Documentary Source Selection

The documentary sources were purposively selected based on the relevance to graduate employability, skill mismatch, outcome-based education, competency-based education, work-integrated learning, university–industry partnership and entrepreneurial university development. The review was mostly based on documents and studies from 2009 to 2025, although previous basic works were also considered if they served as a theoretical framework, e.g. Human Capital Theory and the Triple Helix Model.

The inclusion criteria were: (1) policy documents or reports concerning Thai higher education reform, workforce development, OBE, TQF,

WIL or graduate employability; (2) peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus or other recognized academic databases; (3) international reports from organizations such as the OECD, World Bank or national higher education agencies; and (4) studies directly related to competency-based education, university-industry collaboration, work-integrated learning or entrepreneurial universities.

The exclusion criteria were: (1) documents not directly related to higher education transition, employability or entrepreneurship; (2) non-academic opinion pieces with no methodological or policy relevance; (3) sources with insufficient bibliographic information; (4) studies focusing solely on general education with no implications for higher education or labor market transition.

3. Summary of Key Literature and Documentary Sources

Table 1

Summary of Key Literature and Documentary Sources

Authors / Organization	Year	Title / Source	Main Focus	Contribution to This Study
Becker	1964	Human Capital	Human capital theory	Provides the foundational explanation of education as investment in productivity and economic development.

Authors / Organization	Year	Title / Source	Main Focus	Contribution to This Study
Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff	2000	Triple Helix model	University–industry–government relations	Supports the analysis of systemic collaboration among universities, industries, and government.
Billett	2009	Work experience in higher education	Work-integrated learning	Explains the educational value of structured workplace learning.
Holmes	2013	Graduate employability perspectives	Employability theory	Frames employability as possession, position, and process rather than only individual skills.
Perkmann et al.	2013	University–industry relations	Academic engagement and commercialization	Supports the role of institutionalized university–industry collaboration.
Guerrero & Urbano	2012	Entrepreneurial university	Entrepreneurial university development	Explains institutional conditions required for entrepreneurial universities.
Pholphirul	2017	Educational mismatches in Thailand	Vertical and horizontal mismatch	Provides Thailand-specific evidence on

Authors / Organization	Year	Title / Source	Main Focus	Contribution to This Study
				education–labor market mismatch.
Clarke	2018	Rethinking graduate employability	Employability capital and context	Strengthens the conceptual link between skills, context, and labor market outcomes.
Fleming et al.	2018	WIL stakeholder engagement	Work-integrated learning relationships	Informs the analysis of employer engagement in WIL.
Gerloff & Reinhard	2019	DHBW dual study programs	Dual education model	Provides evidence for structured university–employer partnership.
Brauer et al.	2021	Competence- oriented higher education	Competency-based education	Supports the competency-based curriculum reform component.
Vivatsurakit	2021	Education– occupation mismatch in Thailand	Informal employment and wage penalties	Provides Thailand- specific evidence on mismatch and labor market outcomes.
Eimer & Bohndick	2023	Employability models	Systematic review of employability models	Updates the employability framework with recent literature.

Authors / Organization	Year	Title / Source	Main Focus	Contribution to This Study
Ferns et al.	2025	WIL curriculum design	Designing WIL curriculum	Strengthens the recent basis for WIL integration.

4. Comparative Case Selection

Three foreign examples were selected for comparison: the cooperative education model of the University of Waterloo, the dual education model of the DHBW in Germany, and the entrepreneurial university ecosystem of MIT. The scenarios were chosen as they show three complementing transition mechanisms relevant for Thailand.

The University of Waterloo was chosen as it showcases a robust co-operative education approach that integrates academic studies and structured job rotations in an organized manner. DHBW was chosen because it shows how the employer's involvement may be institutionalized through dual study programs and joint responsibility for training. MIT was picked due to its entrepreneurial university environment that includes research, commercialization, incubation, alumni networks, and venture formation. The stories were not meant to be models to be replicated, but rather reference points to discover concepts that may be transferred and adapted to the Thai higher education context.

5. Data Analysis

The study used a three-phase thematic content analysis. The documents were then examined and tagged based on important themes

including competency development, OBE implementation, TQF alignment, work-integrated learning, university–industry partnership, entrepreneurial assistance, graduate employability, and policy coordination. Second, repeating patterns and gaps were categorized into higher order analytical categories. These categories were curriculum-labor market mismatch, insufficient industry-university ties, limited support to entrepreneurship, and lack of integrated transition mechanism. Thirdly, the themes discovered were merged with literature insights from foreign experiences to produce the Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework. Analytical consistency was further improved by triangulation across four types of sources: Thai policy papers, labour market reports, international comparative models and peer-reviewed scholarly literature. This triangulation reduced dependence on one type of data and allowed the study to compare policy aims, theoretical insights and labour market reality.

6. Methodological Limitations

The study is of the nature of documentary and conceptual and has some limitations. First, it lacks primary empirical data from students, graduates, companies, policy makers or university officials. The results should therefore be seen as a policy-oriented synthesis and not direct evidence of stakeholder experience. Second, documentation sources may be more indicative of the policy goals of officials than of actual practices of execution. Third, the foreign models, e.g. Waterloo, DHBW, and MIT, are context-specific and cannot be immediately transplanted to Thailand without institutional and policy adaption. Future studies should empirically validate the suggested framework using surveys, interviews, case studies, or

mixed-methods approaches, and explore its practicality in various types of Thai higher education institutions.

Research Results

1. Structural Challenges in Thailand

The documentary and comparative studies identify four interconnected structural obstacles that impede the efficacy of Thailand's higher education transition system. These issues indicate a fundamental misalignment among educational frameworks, labor market requirements, institutional collaborative processes, and the growth of entrepreneurial ecosystems.

1.1 Curriculum–Labor Market Mismatch

One of the most important structural problems is that the curriculum and the job market don't always match up. While the growth of higher education has led to more graduates, research from throughout the world shows that growth without structural alignment typically leads to vertical and horizontal mismatch (McGuinness et al., 2018). When a graduate's skills don't match what an employer expects, this is called skill mismatch. This can lead to underemployment or inefficient use of skills.

In Thailand, the situation is similar to what is often described in the literature: curricula are mostly based on theory and time, not on skills. Competency-Based Education (CBE) focuses on showing that students have learned something and that they have skills that are useful in the workplace (Brauer et al., 2021). However, when curricula are designed around content coverage instead of applied competency frameworks, graduates may be

deficient in transferable and professional skills necessary for dynamic labor markets.

Research on employability indicates that an exclusive emphasis on academic knowledge neglects essential aspects of employability, such as social capital, the development of professional identity, and adaptation to various contexts (Clarke, 2018; Holmes, 2013; Tomlinson, 2012). The results show that Thai higher education reform has not yet fully institutionalized competency mapping, assessment design based on industry needs, and integrated work-based learning frameworks. This has led to ongoing problems with transitions.

1.2 Weak University–Industry Linkages

A second structural limitation is the insufficient institutionalization of university–industry partnership. Studies on university–industry collaboration indicate that structured interaction improves knowledge transfer, fosters creativity, and increases graduate employment rates (Perkmann et al., 2013). According to the Triple Helix model, long-term cooperation between universities, businesses, and the government is necessary for economic growth based on innovation (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000).

There are some collaboration efforts in Thailand; the analysis shows that most partnerships are focused on projects, are not very strong, and rely on interpersonal networks instead of built-in governance systems. In contrast, effective cooperative and dual education models formalize employer involvement in curriculum development, evaluation, and enduring training collaborations (Gerloff & Reinhard, 2019; Ertl, 2020).

Research on Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) indicates that structured employer engagement, when integrated at the institutional level, enhances skill relevance and professional preparedness (Billett, 2009; Fleming et al., 2018). Thailand's ability to put methodical transition paths into action is weakened by the lack of centralized coordinating units, standardized cooperation agreements, and shared responsibility frameworks.

1.3 Limited Entrepreneurial Support

The third structural obstacle pertains to the insufficient development of entrepreneurial ecosystems within universities. The literature on the Entrepreneurial University stresses that universities help the economy change not just by giving graduates jobs, but also by starting new businesses and coming up with new ideas (Etzkowitz, 2017; Guerrero & Urbano, 2012). Entrepreneurial universities combine incubation facilities, technology transfer offices, mentorship networks, and financial sources to help new businesses get started.

Evidence from institutions like MIT shows that an ingrained entrepreneurial culture and infrastructure can have a long-term effect on the economy (Roberts & Eesley, 2011). But for an entrepreneurial ecosystem to grow, there needs to be reform in institutional governance, resource allocation, and integration with the national innovation strategy.

The results show that entrepreneurship education programs are becoming more common in Thailand, but they are usually not part of the school's main strategies. Universities can't be centers for creating new businesses because there aren't any long-term financing sources, organized mentorship programs, or connections between regions for innovation. Without systemic congruence between university governance and national

innovation policy, entrepreneurship remains peripheral rather than structural.

1.4 Absence of an Integrated Transition Mechanism

The most important structural flaw found is the lack of a transition mechanism that works across the whole system. Most of the reforms that are already in place focus on separate parts, like changing the curriculum, promoting internships, or running campaigns for entrepreneurship. They don't create a coordinated structure that connects education, the job market, and innovation ecosystems.

The employability scholarship stresses that the results of graduates depend on how well educational systems, labor market institutions, and individuals work together (Holmes, 2013; Tomlinson, 2012). Research on skills mismatch also shows that there needs to be coordination at the policy level to balance supply and demand (McGuinness et al., 2018).

International models illustrate that efficient transition systems necessitate institutionalized coordination at macro (policy incentives and regulatory frameworks), meso (university governance and partnership structures), and micro (student competency development) levels (Etzkowit & Leydesdorff, 2000; Perkmann et al., 2013). The Thai system presently lacks a national graduate tracking infrastructure, coordinated employer engagement procedures, and integrated accountability indicators linked to employment or venture outcomes.

This structural fragmentation makes it impossible for graduation to work as a planned transition. Instead, students frequently traverse the labor market autonomously, devoid of systemic support. The results show that we need a comprehensive framework for transitioning to competency-based

and entrepreneurial education that includes changes to the curriculum, making partnerships with employers a permanent part of the school system, building an entrepreneurial environment, and coordinating policies at the highest levels.

2. The Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework

Based on the structural gaps found in the last section, this study suggests the Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF) as a complete model that will turn graduation from a final academic goal into a structured path to getting a job and starting a business. The framework combines ideas from competency-based education, work-integrated learning, university–industry partnership, and entrepreneurial university theory into a multi-level governance structure.

The suggested model is not a copy of any one worldwide system; instead, it is a hybrid approach that takes into account Thailand's institutional and economic situation.

2.1 Core Components

2.1.1. Competency-Based Curriculum Reform: The model is built on changing the curriculum from teaching content to teaching skills that can be shown. This reform requires: (1) Clear articulation of graduate competency frameworks aligned with sectoral workforce needs. (2) Combining learning through problem-solving and learning across disciplines. (3) Assessment methods based on competencies that are connected to tasks in the actual world. Instead of just changing the course syllabi, curriculum reform needs to make competence mapping a part of all programs and make sure that the assessment criteria match what employers want. This

makes sure that there is a clear link between what students learn and what employers want.

2.1.2. Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Mechanisms: The second part adds organized Work-Integrated Learning to all academic programs. (1) Cooperative education routes should be part of WIL. (2) Paid internships in the industry. (3) Working with companies on projects. (4) Supervised hands-on research experiences. A single institutional unit should handle partnerships with employers, making sure that placements are of high quality, and testing people's skills. WIL serves as the link between what you learn in school and how you use it in your job, making the transition easier and increasing your experience capital.

2.1.3. University–Industry Strategic Partnerships: The approach goes beyond short-term collaborations and makes long-term strategic relationships between institutions and businesses the norm. Key techniques include: (1) co-designing curricula, (2) joint advisory boards, (3) shared research and innovation projects, and (4) talent pipelines for specialized sectors. Governance systems should include partnerships instead of relying on informal networks. Strategic agreements should have performance criteria that measure how well graduates do and how well new ideas are put into action.

2.1.4. Entrepreneurial Incubation and Funding Support: The concept includes entrepreneurship as an alternate and supplementary path because not all graduates go on to work. Universities ought to create: (1) Startup incubation facilities, (2) Seed funding programs, (3) Mentorship networks, (4) Technology transfer offices, and (5) Platforms for alumni entrepreneurs to connect. Institutionalize entrepreneurial development

instead of treating it as an extra-curricular activity. This part helps start new businesses and makes the economy in the area more diverse.

2.1.5. National Policy Alignment and Incentive Structures: For systemic reform to work, policies at the macro level need to be in sync. The framework suggests: (1) Performance indicators related to graduate employment and venture creation, (2) Financial incentives for employers to participate in WIL, (3) Regulatory support for dual or cooperative education structures, (4) National systems for tracking graduates, and (5) Development of regional innovation clusters. Institutional reforms are likely to fail if they aren't coordinated at the policy level. Government incentives and ways to hold people accountable guarantee that something will last and grow.

2.2 Multi-Level Framework

The CBETF operates across three interconnected governance levels:

2.2.1 Macro Level: Government Policy and Regulatory Reform:

At the macro level, the state sets up rules, gives money to businesses, makes sure that quality standards are met, and makes sure that the national labor market has good information systems. Policy alignment ensures that changes to higher education fit with the country's economic plan and the priorities for regional development. Some important macro instruments are: (1) funding for higher education based on how well students do in their transitions, (2) legal frameworks for structured employer engagement, (3) national competency standards, and (4) the integration of entrepreneurship and innovation policies.

2.2.2 Meso Level: University Governance and Curriculum

Redesign: The meso level is about changing institutions. Universities need to change their governance systems to include: (1) dedicated WIL coordination

offices, (2) industry advisory councils, (3) entrepreneurship support units, and (4) outcome-based curriculum committees. Institutional leadership is very important for making sure that transition mechanisms are built into the processes of strategic planning and budgeting.

2.2.3 Micro Level: Student Competency Development and Career Pathways: At the micro level, the framework concentrates on enhancing individual student capabilities. This includes: (1) Building technical and cross-cutting skills, (2) Building a career identity, (3) Getting organized through experiential learning, and (4) Getting used to thinking like an entrepreneur. Students are not just passive recipients of education; they are also active participants in structured transition routes.

2.3 Explanation of the Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF)

2.3.1 Macro Level: Government Policy and Regulatory Incentives

The Macro Level is the national policy context that makes systemic transition reform possible and keeps it going. At this level, government agencies set up rules, funding methods, quality standards, and accountability systems that affect how universities act and how employers interact with them. Policies like performance-based funding linked to job placement rates for graduates, tax breaks for businesses that offer organized work-integrated learning opportunities, and national competency standards help make sure that what colleges and universities teach is what employers want. A centralized graduate tracking system also gives evidence-based input that may be used to make institutions better and plan for the future workforce. Without coordination at the macro level, transformation

mechanisms stay broken and rely on individual institutional efforts. This level, then, serves as the structural base that makes sure the transition ecosystem is consistent, scalable, and long-lasting.

2.3.2 Meso Level: Education – Competency-Based Reform

Universities change their curricula at the meso level by making them more focused on skills. This means moving away from teaching that is centered on content and time and toward learning goals that are clearly defined and can be measured, and that fit the needs of the workforce in each area. Competency mapping makes sure that programs find the technical, cross-functional, and professional abilities that employers want. Assessment techniques are revamped to assess applied problem-solving, teamwork, and performance on real-world tasks, rather than solely theoretical recall. This change makes it easier for higher education institutions and people in the job market to see what graduates can do and how useful they are. Universities shift from producing degrees to validating skills by incorporating competency frameworks across programs. This helps to close the gap between what schools teach and what employers require.

2.3.3 Meso Level: Industry – Strategic Partnerships

The second pillar of the meso level is participation from the industry. Instead of depending on short-term internships or informal networking, the framework makes long-term strategic collaborations between schools and employers official. People who work in the industry help create the curriculum, serve on advisory boards, work together on research projects, and set up structured work placements. Employers use these methods to check that competency criteria are being met and give students real-world situations where they may practice and improve their

abilities. By making sure that training matches the real needs of the workforce, these kinds of collaborations increase mutual accountability and lower the risk of transition. Institutionalized collaboration also helps spread new ideas and makes regional economies stronger. This structured interaction changes the way the sector works with graduates from being a passive recipient to being an active co-producer of human capital.

2.3.4 Meso Level: Entrepreneurship – Incubation and Venture Support

The third pillar at the meso level sees entrepreneurship as a real and organized way to move from one thing to another. Universities set up incubation facilities, seed funding programs, mentorship networks, technology transfer offices, and alumni entrepreneur platforms to help people start businesses. Instead of being seen as a separate activity, entrepreneurship education is built into the curriculum. The framework broadens transition alternatives beyond conventional employment by cultivating innovation skills, opportunity recognition, and venture management competencies. This aspect also helps the region grow by creating new businesses and knowledge-based jobs. Integrating entrepreneurial infrastructure into university governance guarantees that the establishment of ventures is enduring, expandable, and in accordance with national innovation policy.

2.3.5 Micro Level: Student Competencies and Career/Venture Outcomes

The framework concentrates on the growth and transition outcomes of individual students at the micro level. Students are seen as active participants who are following organized paths that are supported by

institutional and policy tools. Students gain technical knowledge, transferable skills, a professional identity, and the ability to adapt to new jobs through competency-based courses, hands-on learning, and exposure to entrepreneurship. These skills make it easier to get a job and also provide them with the potential to start their own businesses. By bringing together education, business, and entrepreneurship, students are not alone when they enter the workforce; they are supported by coordinated scaffolding. Graduation is no longer a sudden and unknown change; instead, it is a planned and goal-oriented process.

2.3.6 System Logic and Integration

The CBETF works using a system logic that connects different parts. Education yields validated competencies that correspond with labor market demands; industry implements and enhances these competencies through organized engagement; entrepreneurship converts competencies into innovation and venture establishment; and government policy aligns incentives to maintain coordination among all stakeholders. This integration connects the development of human capital, the structuring of employability, the emergence of innovation, and the alignment of governance within a single transition architecture. The approach redefines higher education as a coordinated ecosystem for workforce and economic growth rather than a solitary academic enterprise by integrating macro policy frameworks, meso institutional mechanisms, and micro student results.

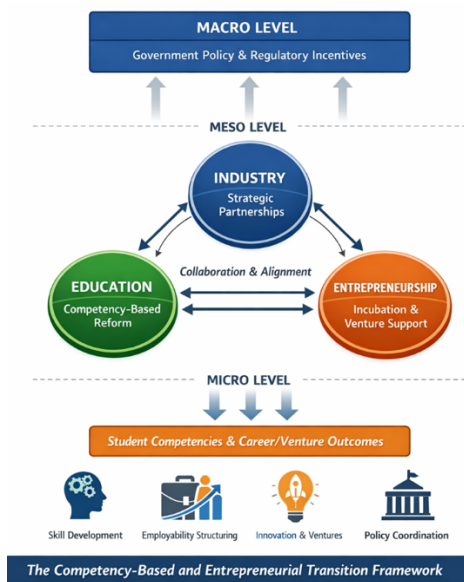


Figure 1

*The Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF):
A Multi-Level University-to-Work Ecosystem Model*

3. The Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF)

Based on the structural results reported in the previous section, this study offers the Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF) as a conceptual and policy-oriented model for strengthening Thailand's higher education transition system.

Past reforms have either addressed curriculum revision or employability as distinct issues, but the CBETF integrates competency-based education, work-integrated learning, university-industry collaboration, and

entrepreneurial ecosystem development into a coherent multi-level governance framework. The paradigm does not treat graduate transfer as an individual obligation but rather as a systemic process that requires the synchronization of government policy, institutional governance, labor market engagement, and student competency development.

The framework works at three interrelated levels: macro, meso and micro. At the macro level, government policies provide regulatory frameworks, financing incentives, graduate tracking systems and national competency requirements to support workforce development objectives. At the meso level, universities institutionalize competency-based curricula, structured WIL procedures, strategic industry relationships, and entrepreneurial support systems. At the micro level, students build technical competences, transferable skills, professional identity and entrepreneurial capacities via integrated transition routes.

The proposed framework is of special importance for Thailand, as it tackles the structural fragmentation described in the findings section. CBETF does not replicate international models such as Waterloo, DHBW or MIT but borrows some concepts from these models and adapts them to the institutional and policy context of Thailand. This leads to the framework's emphasis on contextual adaptation, policy coordination and institutional reform at scale.

Potential implementation obstacles identified by the CBETF include institutional preparation, varying regional capacities, funding constraints, employer engagement and policy stability. Thus, successful implementation requires a phased approach to policy integration, long-term stakeholder engagement and sustained government support for embedding

competency-based reform, work-integrated learning and entrepreneurial development into the Thai higher education system, rather than treating them as stand-alone initiatives.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results of this study suggest that the graduate transition issues in Thailand should not be regarded as isolated problems of curriculum quality or individual employability insufficiency. Rather, they are indicative of a deeper structural fragmentation in the nexus of higher education institutions, labor market systems, industrial participation and entrepreneurial ecosystems. The analysis shows that the mutually reinforcing structural conditions of curriculum–labour market mismatch, weak university–industry collaboration, limited entrepreneurial support and lack of an integrated transition mechanism jointly diminish graduate transition outcomes in Thailand.

The continuance of educational mismatch in Thailand highlights the limits of expanding higher education without the systemic alignment required to reform the job market. Thai universities have gradually adopted Outcome-Based Education (OBE), competency frameworks and Thailand Qualifications Framework (TQF) requirements, but these reforms have generally been limited to curriculum documentation, rather than institutionally embedded transition systems. Many programs still focus on content delivery and theoretical evaluation rather than on measurable workplace competencies, interdisciplinary problem solving, and professional adaptability. This finding aligns with worldwide study that argues that competency-based education cannot improve employability outcomes

without linking curriculum change, assessment systems, workplace learning, and employer engagement (Brauer et al., 2021).

The findings further suggest that structural mismatch in Thailand is intensified by weak institutionalized collaboration between universities and industries. Employer participation is often project-based, informal and administratively peripheral rather than strategically embedded in curriculum design and graduate development. Hence, colleges and industries tend to work with different institutional logics: universities are concerned with academic outputs and regulatory compliance, while companies are focused on practical competencies and workforce adaptability. The divide leads to chronic skill deficits, especially in communication, digital competence, problem-solving and applied professional experience. International evidence from cooperative education and dual study systems shows that transition efficiency is enhanced when employers are active co-producers of competency development (rather than passive users of graduates) (Billett, 2009; Gerloff & Reinhard, 2019). However, the lack of centralised governance structures for employer engagement in Thailand restricts the institutional durability of work-integrated learning initiatives.

The study also finds that entrepreneurial development is still insufficiently institutionalized in the higher education system of Thailand. The encouragement of entrepreneurship is increasingly present in higher education policy discourses. However, entrepreneurial support structures are often implemented as discrete projects or extracurricular activities, and not as integrated institutional ecosystems. This limits the role of universities as engines of innovation, enterprise formation and regional economic development. The absence of integrated incubation systems, mentorship

networks, startup financing and technology transfer channels has a specific impact on regional universities outside large urban centres, therefore perpetuating the geographical inequity in terms of innovation potential. Consequently, entrepreneurship in Thailand is more symbolic and policy driven than structurally rooted in the university governance and graduate transfer institutions.

Importantly, the results indicate that these structural issues are tightly connected and not separate concerns. Curriculum improvement alone is not enough to solve the problem of graduate mismatch if employers are passive. Similarly, competency-based evaluation and institutional governance support are crucial for the proper functioning of work-integrated learning. Entrepreneurial education also cannot provide sustainable venture outcomes without wider innovation ecosystems, financial infrastructure, and policy coordination. Therefore, the lack of an integrated transition mechanism is the main systemic weakness of the transition system of Thailand's higher education. Reforms to date have often addressed employability, curriculum reform, internships, entrepreneurship and innovation policy as separate projects, rather than creating integrated paths that connect education, labour market involvement and entrepreneurial development.

Theoretically, this study adds by integrating Human Capital Theory, Employability Theory, and Entrepreneurial University Theory into a coherent transition framework. Human Capital Theory provides the economic rationale for investment in higher education and competency development (Becker, 1964), but the findings suggest that human capital accumulation alone is not sufficient for successful labor market transition when

institutional coordination mechanisms are weak. Employability Theory builds on this knowledge to suggest that graduation outcomes are influenced by structural positioning, the construction of professional identity, social capital and labor market processes, as well as skills possession (Holmes, 2013; Clarke, 2018). This study's findings lend support to this perspective, by showing that graduate transfer outcomes in Thailand mostly depend on institutional arrangements and transition infrastructure rather than curricular content alone.

Simultaneously, Entrepreneurial University Theory and the Triple Helix view offer an important macro-level explanation for the role of universities in innovation ecosystems and economic transformation (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000; Etzkowitz, 2017). This paper expands these views by conceptualizing universities as transition intermediaries and not just as teaching and research institutions but also as transition intermediaries between competency development, labor market entry, innovation systems and venture creation. Hence, the proposed Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework (CBETF) synthesizes these theoretical traditions into a multi-level governance model that considers the graduate transition as a systemic process characterized by a coordinated interaction among policy structures, institutional mechanisms, industries and students.

The study also contributes to higher education policy debates by re-framing graduate employability from an individual to a systemic governance issue. The current higher education reform in Thailand has been mostly directed at quality assurance, curriculum revision or graduate qualities without sufficiently considering the institutional mechanisms needed to promote transition pathways. By contrast, the CBETF focuses on

the confluence of competency-based curriculum reform, work-integrated learning, strategic university-industry collaborations, entrepreneurial incubation platforms, and national policy incentives in one transition architecture . This method changes higher education reform from degree generation to the synchronized advancement of the workforce and innovation ecosystem.

The study nonetheless recognizes that institutional and policy constraints may be considerable in implementing the recommended approach. The results of implementation may vary depending on the type of university due to institutional preparation, regional differences, the capacity of employers to participate, the availability of funds and policy continuity. Moreover, severe bureaucratic and regulatory constraints might also hinder higher education institutions from reforming governance structures for flexible competency-based and entrepreneurial systems. Effective implementation needs progressive institutional transformation, long-term stakeholder cooperation and ongoing governmental backing.

Finally, this analysis suggests that increasing graduate transition results in Thailand will need structural transformation, not merely gradual tweaking of the curriculum. We must see the transition from higher education to employment or entrepreneurship as a coordinated ecosystem of competency development, workplace integration, innovation assistance, and policy coherence. In the absence of systematic integration across these dimensions, the reforms in higher education are likely to be fragmented and unable to meet the long-term issues of graduate employability, workforce competitiveness and entrepreneurial development in Thailand.

Recommendations

This section offers recommendations for policy, practice, and future research to enhance systemic reform in Thailand's higher education transition system, based on the structural findings and the suggested Competency-Based and Entrepreneurial Transition Framework.

1. Policy Recommendations

1.1. Transforming University Key Performance Indicators to Focus on Employment and Entrepreneurial Outcomes.

Contemporary higher education success metrics in numerous systems prioritize enrollment figures, research productivity, and graduation rates. International literature underscores the necessity of linking university performance indicators with employment and innovation results (Etzkowitz, 2017; Perkmann et al., 2013). Thailand is advised to amend university Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to incorporate:

- 1) Employment rates of graduates within 6 to 12 months post-completion
- 2) Indicators of field-of-study alignment
- 3) Median income growth for graduates
- 4) Formation and survival rates of startups
- 5) Intensity of industry partnerships

Outcome-oriented KPIs can motivate universities to emphasize structured transition mechanisms instead of concentrating exclusively on academic throughput.

1.2 Fiscal Incentives for Industrial Collaborations

Sustainable partnership between universities and industries necessitates employer engagement that extends beyond corporate social responsibility efforts. Comparative research from dual education and cooperative systems indicates that employer engagement is enhanced when bolstered by financial or regulatory incentives (Ertl, 2020; Perkmann et al., 2013). Policy instruments may encompass:

- 1) Tax incentives for companies providing organized work-integrated learning opportunities
- 2) Complementary funding for joint research and training initiatives
- 3) Stimuli for small and medium-sized enterprises engaging in university talent streams

These techniques mitigate employer risk and foster enduring strategic collaborations.

1.3 National Graduate Monitoring System

A robust graduate tracking system is crucial for evidence-based transformation. Studies on employability and skills mismatch highlight the necessity for comprehensive labor market data to synchronize educational supply with demand (McGuinness et al., 2018). Thailand ought to establish a centralized graduate tracking system that incorporates:

- Employment status

- 1) Classification of sectors and occupations
- 2) Income trajectories
- 3) Entrepreneurial endeavors

Data transparency would facilitate policy enhancement, institutional comparison, and focused intervention.

1.4 Development of Regional Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

The literature on entrepreneurial universities emphasizes the significance of localized innovation ecosystems that link universities, governmental bodies, and industry stakeholders (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000; Guerrero & Urbano, 2012). To avert the excessive concentration of opportunities in urban centers, policy should endorse:

- 1) Regional incubation centers
- 2) Initial capital for university-affiliated startups
- 3) Innovation clusters, including public and private sectors
- 4) Localized entrepreneurial mentorship networks

The emergence of a decentralized ecosystem ties higher education reform with plans for regional economic diversification.

2. Practice Recommendations

At the institutional level, universities should undertake structural and cultural reforms to operationalize the proposed framework:

2.1 Establish centralized Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) coordination units responsible for employer engagement and competency evaluation.

2.2 Embed competency mapping within curriculum review cycles to ensure measurable skill outcomes.

2.3 Create interdisciplinary entrepreneurship platforms accessible to students across faculties.

2.4 Institutionalize industry advisory boards that participate in curriculum design and program review.

2.5 Develop structured career pathway services integrating mentoring, networking, and experiential learning guidance.

2.6 Universities must move from fragmented initiatives toward integrated governance structures that embed transition mechanisms within core strategy.

3. Further Research Recommendations

This study offers a conceptual and policy-oriented framework, suggesting multiple avenues for future research.

3.1 Empirical Validation of the Framework: Future research should utilize mixed-methods or quantitative designs to examine the correlation between competency-based changes and graduation outcomes.

3.2 Longitudinal Graduate Outcome Studies: Prolonged monitoring of graduate employment and entrepreneurial pathways would yield enhanced understanding of transition efficacy.

3.3 Comparative ASEAN Studies: Cross-national comparative research within Southeast Asia may elucidate regionally suitable transformation mechanisms.

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Development of Policy Proposals for Economic, Social, and Environmental Development in Thailand: A Case Study of the Provincial Economic Development Zone in Maha Sarakham

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Abstract

This article examines the spatial development process of Maha Sarakham Province through the analysis of policy integration, spatial governance, and the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of provincial development. The article argues that the development of provincial economic development zones in Maha Sarakham can be sustained effectively only through collaborative governance mechanisms that integrate universities, public agencies, local communities, and place-based development strategies within the context of a knowledge-based economy. The analysis demonstrates that Maha Sarakham has evolved into an “Education City” that functions as a regional hub for human capital, knowledge production, and service-sector expansion. In the policy

dimension, provincial development has increasingly emphasized integrated area-based governance and cross-sector collaboration. In the economic dimension, the concentration of educational institutions has stimulated service industries, creative economies, local enterprises, and OTOP-related activities. In the social dimension, cooperation among universities, government agencies, and community networks has strengthened community participation, local capacity-building, and knowledge transfer processes. In the environmental dimension, spatial development initiatives have promoted sustainable agricultural practices, cultural tourism, and greater awareness of resource management at the local level. Nevertheless, the analysis also identifies several structural constraints, including fragmented coordination mechanisms, budget limitations, uneven spatial development, and the continued dependence of the provincial economy on the student population and public-sector activities. These conditions indicate the need for a more adaptive and collaborative provincial governance model capable of balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. The article contributes to the literature on area-based development and provincial economic governance by proposing a contextualized framework for knowledge-based provincial development in Thailand.

Keywords: Policy, Development, Economic, Social, Environmental

Introduction

Contemporary national development is increasingly shaped by complex interactions among economic transformation, social inequality, environmental degradation, and rapid technological change (Adanma &

Ogunbiyi, 2024). Under the conditions of globalization and intensifying international competition, many countries face mounting pressures to enhance economic competitiveness while simultaneously addressing social disparities and ecological sustainability (Worapongpat, 2026d). In response to these challenges, development paradigms have gradually shifted from centralized growth-oriented models toward area-based development approaches that emphasize spatial integration, local capacities, and collaborative governance mechanisms linking national policy frameworks with local realities.

Within this context, provincial economic development zones have emerged as an important policy instrument for strengthening place-based competitiveness and promoting sustainable regional development (Basheer et al., 2022). Such an approach highlights the significance of cooperation among government agencies, academic institutions, private-sector actors, and civil society organizations through participatory governance structures and integrated policy coordination. In Thailand, these issues have become increasingly significant due to persistent structural challenges, including regional inequality, dependence on resource-based economic activities, environmental pressures, and uneven access to technological and educational opportunities. These conditions have reinforced the need for provincial-level development strategies capable of balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability within specific spatial contexts.

Despite the growing policy emphasis on area-based development in Thailand, existing studies have predominantly focused on industrial development zones, special economic zones, or macroeconomic policy

frameworks, while comparatively limited attention has been paid to provincial economic development zones rooted in knowledge-based and education-centered local economies. (Basiago, 1998). Furthermore, previous studies often prioritize descriptive policy analysis without sufficiently examining the governance mechanisms, structural constraints, and collaborative processes that shape provincial development outcomes. This gap is particularly evident in provinces characterized by hybrid economic structures that combine service-based, educational, agricultural, and community economies.

Maha Sarakham Province represents a distinctive and academically significant case within this context. The province functions as an Education City due to the concentration of higher education institutions, research centers, and human capital networks that play a major role in shaping local economic and social dynamics. Simultaneously, the province remains dependent on agriculture, small-scale enterprises, and community-based economic activities (Worapongpat, 2026c). This coexistence of a knowledge-based economy and a resource-based local economy creates both opportunities and structural limitations for long-term provincial development. While the educational sector contributes to the expansion of service industries, creative economic activities, and local innovation systems the province continues to face challenges related to rural–urban disparities, unstable agricultural incomes, demographic change, dependence on student populations, and unequal access to infrastructure and technological resources.

This article argues that the governance of provincial economic development zones in Maha Sarakham can achieve long-term sustainability

only through collaborative and area-based governance mechanisms that integrate educational institutions, local communities, public agencies, and development networks within a knowledge-based economic framework. (Burbridge et al., 2001). This position differs from conventional development approaches that primarily emphasize infrastructure investment or industrial expansion as the principal drivers of provincial competitiveness. Instead, the article contends that the distinctive spatial identity of Maha Sarakham as an education-centered province requires a governance model that prioritizes knowledge integration, participatory policy coordination, and socially inclusive development strategies.

Accordingly, this article has three principal objectives: (1) to analyze the governance processes and institutional arrangements associated with provincial economic development zones in the context of Maha Sarakham Province; (2) to examine the structural problems, operational limitations, and spatial inequalities affecting provincial development management; and (3) to propose policy recommendations aimed at strengthening competitiveness, social sustainability, and environmental security through collaborative area-based governance mechanisms.

To achieve these objectives, the article employs an analytical framework integrating three interrelated perspectives: (1) area-based development; (2) collaborative and network governance; and (3) sustainable development within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These perspectives are examined in relation to Thailand's 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan and the 20-Year National Strategy, both of which emphasize balanced development, competitiveness enhancement, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

For conceptual clarity, this article defines a provincial economic development zone as a spatially defined development area designed to promote economic, social, and environmental development through integrated governance mechanisms and multi-stakeholder collaboration among government agencies, academic institutions, private-sector organizations, and civil society networks. This definition is consistent with the principles of collaborative governance and network governance, which emphasize policy integration, participatory management, and inter-organizational coordination (Worapongpat, 2026a).

The article contributes to the literature in three principal ways. First, it advances understanding of area-based development within the provincial context of Thailand, particularly in relation to education-centered economies. (Gale, 1992). Second, it proposes a contextualized governance perspective for provincial economic development zones that differs from industrial-oriented development models commonly discussed in existing scholarship. Third, it provides policy recommendations applicable to provincial and regional planning practices aimed at strengthening sustainable and knowledge-based local development.

1. Spatial Context and Development Potential of Maha Sarakham Province

1.1 General Context of the Province

Maha Sarakham Province is situated in the central part of Northeastern Thailand within the Khorat Plateau region. Its physical geography is characterized predominantly by upland plains consisting of medium-sized urban communities surrounded by extensive rural areas that

remain largely dependent on agriculture as the principal livelihood. (Worapongpat, 2025e). The province occupies an important strategic position within the regional transportation and educational network of Northeastern Thailand and has increasingly developed a distinctive spatial identity as an Education City due to the concentration of higher education institutions, vocational colleges, and research-oriented organizations located within the province. The expansion of educational institutions has significantly contributed to the accumulation of human capital, the growth of knowledge-intensive activities, and the transformation of urban economic structures. (Gallego, 2006).

In particular, the continuous inflow of students, academic personnel, and related service workers has stimulated urban expansion and generated increasing demand for accommodation, transportation, retail trade, food services, and digital-related businesses. (Worapongpat, 2025d). This process has gradually shifted parts of the provincial economy from a predominantly agriculture-based structure toward a mixed economy combining educational services, urban consumption, and local entrepreneurial activities. (Mahasarakham University, 2022).

Nevertheless, despite the province's emerging role as a regional knowledge hub, rural communities in many districts continue to experience structural limitations associated with unstable agricultural incomes, labor migration, demographic aging, and uneven access to infrastructure and technological resources. (Hariram et al., 2023). This coexistence between an expanding knowledge-based urban economy and a traditional rural agricultural economy represents a defining characteristic of Maha Sarakham's spatial development pattern. It also reflects the broader challenge of

balancing economic modernization with socially inclusive and territorially balanced development within provincial governance systems.

From an area-based development perspective, Maha Sarakham demonstrates a distinctive form of provincial development in which educational institutions function not only as centers of learning but also as economic anchors and governance actors within local development networks. (Worapongpat, 2025c). This condition differs from conventional provincial economic zones in Thailand that are primarily driven by industrial manufacturing or border trade activities. Consequently, the spatial development of Maha Sarakham requires governance mechanisms capable of integrating educational institutions, local communities, public agencies, and civil society organizations into collaborative development processes responsive to local socioeconomic conditions. (Maha Sarakham Provincial Office, 2023).

1.2 Economic Potential and Competitiveness

The economic structure of Maha Sarakham Province is primarily based on agriculture, education, wholesale and retail trade, and service-sector activities. In recent years, the provincial economy has demonstrated a gradual increase in the contribution of the service sector to Gross Provincial Product (GPP) largely resulting from the province's role as a regional educational center attracting a substantial student population from surrounding provinces. (Hezri & Nordin Hasan, 2006). Simultaneously, urban areas within the province have experienced the expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), creative economy activities, and digitally connected service businesses, reflecting broader regional transitions toward

a knowledge-based economy. (Maha Sarakham Provincial Statistical Office, 2023).

Table 1

Number of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) by Type of Economic Activity in Maha Sarakham Province, 2022

Type of Economic Activity	Number of Enterprises	Share (%)
Education and Related Services	1,245	38.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade	1,025	31.5
Agro-processing and Food Production	640	19.7
Others	350	10.7
Total	3,260	100.0

Note. Adapted from Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (OSMEP, 2023).

Analysis of Table 1

The data presented in Table 1 indicate that education and related service enterprises account for the largest proportion of SMEs in Maha Sarakham Province, representing 38.2 percent of all registered enterprises. This finding demonstrates that the province's educational function has evolved beyond a purely academic role and has become a major economic driver shaping urban commercial activities and local service-sector expansion. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council [NESDC], 2018). Businesses such as accommodation services, restaurants, bookstores, tutoring centers, transportation services, and digital-related

enterprises have increasingly developed in response to the demands generated by the student population and academic workforce.

This economic structure suggests that Maha Sarakham possesses characteristics of a localized knowledge-based economy in which educational institutions operate as anchor institutions influencing patterns of consumption, employment generation, and urban economic circulation. However, this dependence on the education sector also creates structural vulnerabilities. (Worapongpat, 2025b). Economic activities concentrated around student populations may become highly sensitive to demographic decline, educational policy changes, or shifts toward online learning systems. Consequently, the long-term competitiveness of the province cannot rely solely on educational consumption but must diversify toward innovation-oriented industries, creative economies, and locally embedded entrepreneurship.

Meanwhile, agro-processing and food production enterprises account for 19.7 percent of total SMEs, reflecting the continued importance of agriculture and resource-based economic activities within the province (Islam, 2025). This coexistence between knowledge-based urban services and agricultural production illustrates the province's dual economic structure, which simultaneously creates opportunities and policy challenges for provincial governance. On the one hand, the educational sector can support technological transfer, agricultural innovation, and community-based entrepreneurship. On the other hand, uneven development between urban and rural areas may intensify spatial inequality if development policies remain concentrated primarily in municipal zones.

From a policy perspective, these findings indicate that provincial economic development strategies in Maha Sarakham should emphasize integrated area-based governance capable of linking universities, local communities, SMEs, agricultural networks, and public institutions into collaborative development systems. (Worapongpat, 2025a). Such an approach would enhance the province's adaptive capacity while promoting balanced economic growth, social inclusion, and long-term sustainability within the provincial development framework.

2. Current Conditions and Structural Characteristics of Maha Sarakham Province

2.1 Spatial Context and Physical Geography

The geographical characteristics of Maha Sarakham Province constitute a significant structural foundation influencing its economic activities, settlement patterns, resource management systems, and long-term spatial development dynamics (Jie et al., 2023). The province is located within the central Chi River Basin of Northeastern Thailand and is characterized predominantly by undulating plateau landscapes with average elevations ranging between approximately 130 and 180 meters above mean sea level. These physical conditions have shaped spatial differentiation in agricultural production, settlement distribution, transportation networks, and public infrastructure development across the province.

The province's land-use structure remains heavily associated with agricultural activities, particularly rice cultivation and cash-crop production in rural districts, while urban and semi-urban areas increasingly function as administrative, educational, and commercial centers. (Panayotou, 1993). This

spatial configuration reflects the coexistence of traditional agricultural systems alongside expanding urban service economies. Such a pattern illustrates how geographical conditions continue to influence both the opportunities and limitations of provincial economic development.

From a climatic perspective, Maha Sarakham Province is influenced by the tropical monsoon system and experiences three principal seasons: summer, rainy season, and winter (Runhaar et al., 2006). Average annual rainfall ranges from approximately 1,300 to 1,600 millimeters, although rainfall distribution often remains uneven across seasons and districts. These climatic conditions directly affect agricultural productivity, water availability, and local livelihood stability. Periodic droughts and irregular rainfall patterns have increasingly generated concerns regarding water security, agricultural risk management, and environmental sustainability within the province.

Importantly, the physical and climatic characteristics of Maha Sarakham should not be regarded merely as descriptive geographical background (Singh et al., 2021). Rather, they constitute structural spatial conditions that shape provincial development trajectories and policy choices. The dependence of many rural communities on climate-sensitive agricultural activities increases vulnerability to environmental fluctuations and economic instability. At the same time, the province's relatively centralized settlement structure and expanding urban service sector create opportunities for more integrated spatial planning and area-based development strategies.

From an analytical perspective, these conditions suggest that provincial development policies cannot rely exclusively on conventional economic growth approaches focused solely on urban expansion or

industrial investment. (Stern, 2015). Instead, effective provincial governance in Maha Sarakham requires integrated spatial management capable of balancing agricultural sustainability, urban growth, environmental resilience, and infrastructure development. This need is particularly important in the context of climate uncertainty and increasing socioeconomic disparities between urban and rural areas within the province.

2.2 Demographic Structure, Social Conditions, and Human Capital Development

The demographic structure of Maha Sarakham Province reflects considerable socioeconomic complexity and constitutes a critical factor shaping provincial development capacity and governance challenges. The province has an average population density of approximately 158 persons per square kilometer, which is relatively high compared with many provinces in Northeastern Thailand. Population concentration is especially evident within the central districts, where educational institutions, commercial activities, public services, and administrative functions are heavily clustered.

This concentration of population and services has contributed to the emergence of urban-centered economic activities while simultaneously generating disparities between municipal areas and peripheral rural communities. (Strezov et al., 2017). Urban districts benefit from greater access to education, healthcare services, transportation systems, and digital infrastructure, whereas several rural areas continue to experience limitations in public service accessibility and economic opportunities. Consequently, spatial inequality remains an important structural issue within provincial development planning.

Another major demographic trend is the province's transition toward an aging society. Individuals aged 60 years and above account for approximately 19 percent of the total population, reflecting demographic changes occurring throughout Thailand. (Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (OSMEP), 2023). This transition has substantial implications for provincial governance, particularly in relation to healthcare systems, labor-force sustainability, social welfare provision, and long-term public expenditure planning. The aging population also raises concerns regarding the future productivity of the agricultural sector, labor shortages in rural communities, and increased dependency ratios within local households.

At the same time, Maha Sarakham Province possesses a distinctive demographic advantage through its role as a regional education hub. The presence of major universities, vocational institutions, and secondary educational facilities continuously attracts student populations from neighboring provinces and other regions of Thailand (Sun & Cui, 2018). This pattern of education-driven migration has significantly influenced local demographic composition and urban economic development.

The influx of students and academic personnel has stimulated the expansion of housing markets, transportation systems, retail trade, food services, digital businesses, and various forms of urban service-sector activities. (Program Management Unit on Area-Based Development (PMU-A), 2022). More importantly, educational institutions have increasingly functioned not only as centers of learning but also as strategic actors within local development networks through research activities, community engagement, and human capital formation. These dynamics have

contributed to the gradual emergence of a localized knowledge-based economy within the province.

However, this development pattern also produces structural vulnerabilities. The provincial economy remains heavily dependent on educational activities and student populations, making local economic circulation potentially sensitive to demographic decline, changing educational policies, or shifts toward online learning systems. Furthermore, while universities contribute significantly to knowledge production and urban economic growth, the benefits of these processes are not always distributed evenly across rural communities. (Vetterlein, 2007). This situation highlights the challenge of ensuring that human capital development contributes to inclusive and territorially balanced provincial development rather than reinforcing existing spatial inequalities.

Based on the foregoing analysis, Maha Sarakham Province demonstrates strengths that extend beyond the conventional agricultural profile commonly associated with many provinces in Northeastern Thailand (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) 2022) The province increasingly functions as a center of human capital development, educational services, and knowledge-based economic activities. These structural characteristics provide important foundations for the development of provincial economic development zone policies grounded in collaborative governance, area-based planning, and sustainable local development.

New Knowledge Contribution

Based on the analysis of provincial economic development zone governance in Maha Sarakham Province across economic, social, and environmental dimensions, this article synthesizes a new body of knowledge through the development of a Causal–Structural–Outcome Model of Provincial Area-Based Governance. The proposed framework explains how spatial development in Maha Sarakham emerges from the interaction between structural drivers, governance arrangements, operational mechanisms, and sustainability-oriented development outcomes. This synthesized framework is presented conceptually in Figure 1.

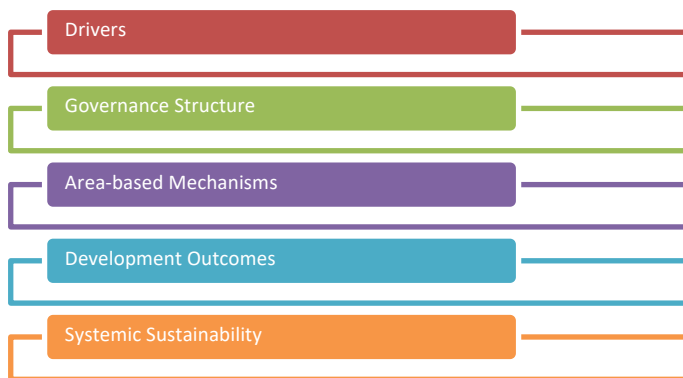


Figure 1 *New Knowledge Framework on the Development Structure of the Provincial Economic Development Zone in Maha Sarakham Province*

Conceptual Explanation and Analytical Synthesis

As illustrated in Figure 1, the development structure of the provincial economic development zone in Maha Sarakham Province can be

conceptualized as an interconnected and dynamic system composed of five interrelated components.

1. Drivers The first component consists of structural drivers that shape the trajectory of provincial development. These include demographic structure, educational concentration, infrastructure systems, national development strategies, and macro-level policy frameworks. In the context of Maha Sarakham Province, the concentration of higher education institutions and the expansion of education-related services function as distinctive drivers differentiating the province from conventional industrial-oriented economic zones. At the same time, agricultural dependency, demographic aging, and spatial inequality continue to operate as structural constraints influencing development capacity and governance priorities.

2. Governance Structure

The second component concerns governance structures involving local administrative organizations, provincial authorities, central government agencies, universities, private-sector actors, and community organizations. The analysis demonstrates that provincial economic development cannot be managed effectively through fragmented administrative mechanisms alone. Rather, governance effectiveness depends on the ability of institutions to coordinate policies, share resources, and establish collaborative decision-making systems across organizational boundaries.

This finding contributes to the literature on collaborative governance by demonstrating that universities in Maha Sarakham function not only as educational institutions but also as strategic governance actors within provincial development networks. Their role extends to knowledge

production, policy support, community engagement, and local economic stimulation.

3. Area-based Mechanisms

The third component comprises area-based operational mechanisms that translate policy objectives into practical development processes. These mechanisms include inter-organizational collaboration, integrated planning systems, resource allocation processes, local data management, and policy coordination instruments. The analysis indicates that successful area-based governance depends not only on policy formulation but also on the operational capacity to connect actors, institutions, and spatial resources within specific local contexts.

Importantly, the study finds that provinces characterized by hybrid economies, such as Maha Sarakham, require adaptive governance mechanisms capable of simultaneously supporting agricultural development, urban services, educational economies, and community enterprises. This condition differs substantially from governance models designed primarily for industrial economic zones.

4. Development Outcomes

The fourth component involves multidimensional development outcomes encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Economically, the development of educational and service sectors contributes to employment generation, SME expansion, and urban economic circulation. Socially, collaboration between universities, communities, and public agencies enhances human capital development, local participation, and knowledge transfer processes. Environmentally, area-based development mechanisms encourage greater attention to sustainable

agriculture, local resource management, and environmentally sensitive tourism activities.

However, the analysis also demonstrates that development outcomes remain unevenly distributed across spatial areas within the province. Urban-centered growth associated with educational institutions tends to generate stronger economic benefits in municipal areas, while several rural communities continue to face structural vulnerabilities related to agricultural instability and limited infrastructure access. This finding highlights the importance of territorially balanced development strategies within provincial governance systems.

5. Systemic Sustainability

The final component concerns systemic sustainability, representing the long-term capacity of provincial governance systems to maintain balance among economic competitiveness, social inclusion, and environmental resilience. The study argues that sustainability at the provincial level cannot be understood solely in terms of economic growth indicators. Instead, sustainable provincial development depends on institutional adaptability, collaborative governance capacity, and the integration of knowledge-based development with local socioeconomic conditions.

In the case of Maha Sarakham Province, sustainability is closely associated with the province's ability to diversify beyond dependence on student populations and public-sector activities while strengthening innovation-oriented local economies and inclusive development networks. This requires governance systems capable of integrating educational institutions, agricultural communities, SMEs, and public agencies into long-term development partnerships.

Theoretical and Policy Contribution

The newly synthesized framework contributes to the literature on area-based development and provincial governance in three important ways.

First, the framework reconceptualizes provincial economic development zones as integrated governance systems rather than merely economic management areas. This perspective expands existing approaches that primarily emphasize infrastructure investment or industrial competitiveness.

Second, the study introduces the concept of an “education-centered provincial development model,” demonstrating how educational institutions can function as anchor institutions shaping economic structures, governance networks, and spatial development trajectories at the provincial level.

Third, the framework highlights the importance of institutional integration, data and knowledge management, and stakeholder participation as core conditions for sustainable area-based governance. These findings provide practical implications for the formulation of provincial development policies in Thailand, particularly for provinces characterized by mixed economies combining agricultural, educational, and service-sector activities.

Accordingly, this newly synthesized body of knowledge offers both a conceptual foundation and a policy-oriented framework applicable not only to Maha Sarakham Province but also to other provincial economic development zones seeking to achieve balanced, inclusive, and sustainable development under conditions of socioeconomic transition and spatial inequality.

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A Study on the Intentional Use of Chinese Idioms in the Historical Drama *Love Like the Galaxy*

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Abstract

This research, entitled A Study on the Intentional Use of Chinese Idioms in the Historical Drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》), aims to examine the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms (成语) appearing in the dialogues of the historical Chinese television drama *Love Like the Galaxy*, which was broadcast in 2022 and gained considerable popularity in Thailand. The study seeks to analyze the contextual meanings and communicative functions conveyed through idiomatic expressions in different conversational situations.

The data were collected from all 56 episodes of the drama streamed on the WeTV application between June and July 2025. A total of 114 Chinese idioms were identified and analyzed based on contextual usage and communicative intentions through a qualitative content analysis approach grounded in pragmatics.

The findings revealed six categories of communicative intentions in the use of Chinese idioms: 1) warning intentions: 20 idioms (17.54%);

2) sarcastic intentions: 16 idioms (14.04%); 3) opinion-expressing intentions: 13 idioms (11.40%); 4) admonishing intentions: 30 idioms (26.32%); 5) appreciative intentions: 12 idioms (10.53%); and 6) other intentions: 23 idioms (20.18%). Among these categories, idioms expressing admonishing intentions appeared most frequently. This finding may be attributed to the dramatic themes of political conflict, interpersonal tension, strategic survival, and criticism of characters' behaviors throughout the series.

The study demonstrates that Chinese idioms function not only as artistic linguistic devices but also as important communicative tools reflecting emotions, attitudes, interpersonal relationships, cultural values, and social perspectives in Chinese society. Understanding the communicative intentions behind idiom usage contributes to deeper knowledge of Chinese language use, intercultural communication, Chinese language learning and teaching, and translation studies.

Keywords: Chinese Idioms, Communicative Intention, Chinese Drama

Introduction

In the contemporary era, entertainment media from China has gained widespread international popularity, particularly in Thailand. The Chinese historical drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》), which was broadcast in 2022, became highly popular and received several prestigious awards, including the Chinese American TV Festival – Golden Angel Award, the Tencent Golden Goose Awards, and the International Summit Award in 2023. The series attracted considerable attention from Thai audiences due to its intense storyline and emotional depth. It portrays the life of the female protagonist, Cheng Shaoshang (程少商), who grows up in a family lacking

love and understanding and who must face numerous hardships from childhood. As a result, she relies on her intelligence and inner strength to survive. Such narrative development reflects social and emotional aspects of human life that are relatable across cultures.

The appeal of this series lies not only in its engaging plot and meticulously designed historical settings, but also in its sophisticated use of language, particularly the use of Chinese idioms (成语) in the dialogues of the characters. These idioms reflect the scriptwriter's intentions in conveying profound meanings, emphasizing character traits, expressing emotions and feelings, as well as creating the atmosphere within the story.

The intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms in the series are diverse. For instance, some idioms are used with admonishing intentions to criticize or reproach characters, while others are employed sarcastically to express dissatisfaction or ridicule. In addition, appreciative idioms are used to praise virtues and honor others, whereas emotional expressions are utilized to emphasize the attitudes and feelings of the characters. These communicative intentions constitute an important literary device employed by the scriptwriter to deepen character development and enhance the progression of the narrative.

Since idioms may convey different intentions depending on the context, certain idioms can be interpreted in multiple ways according to the situational usage at that particular moment. Consequently, many viewers may experience confusion or misuse these idioms in actual communication.

For this reason, studying the intentional use of Chinese idioms in the drama *Love Like the Galaxy* is highly significant in enhancing understanding of communication between characters and the contextual

use of Chinese idioms within the series. Understanding the communicative intentions behind idiom usage is also beneficial for intercultural communication, Chinese language learning and teaching, as well as translation studies.

Research Objectives

To study the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms based on the contexts in which they appear in the historical drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》).

Research Scope

This study focuses on the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms (成语) appearing in the Thai-subtitled version of the historical Chinese drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》). The study examines idiomatic expressions used in the dialogues of the characters throughout all 56 episodes of the series. The analysis emphasizes the contextual meanings and communicative intentions conveyed through idiom usage in different conversational situations.

1. Literature Review

A review of related literature revealed several studies concerning the communicative intentions of Chinese idioms and idiomatic usage in literary and media contexts.

Tangtianchai (2009, p. 1), in her study *Chinese Idioms: Linguistic Structure and Communicative Intentions*, stated that Chinese idioms have long played an important role in spoken and written Chinese. The Chinese language contains numerous idiomatic expressions, including both ancient

and modern idioms. These idioms reflect Chinese linguistic culture, as they enable speakers to convey meanings concisely and effectively without lengthy explanations, allowing listeners to understand the intended meaning immediately.

Tangtanchai (2009, p. 189) further proposed that the communicative intentions of Chinese idioms can be categorized into five types: 1) admonishing intentions, 2) warning intentions, 3) opinion-expressing intentions, 4) appreciative intentions, and 5) sarcastic intentions.

Li et al. (2020, p. 33) studied the communicative intentions of Chinese and Thai idioms related to colors. Their findings indicated that both Chinese and Thai color-related idioms share the same five communicative intentions: 1) admonishing intentions, 2) warning intentions, 3) opinion-expressing intentions, 4) appreciative intentions, and 5) sarcastic intentions.

Loewalanch (2020, p. 97) stated that the communicative intentions found in *Mo Dao Zu Shi* could also be classified into five categories, namely warning intentions, sarcastic intentions, admonishing intentions, appreciative intentions, and opinion-expressing intentions.

Wanichwirit and Thong-em (2020, pp. 232–233) conducted a study by selecting and classifying idioms according to the principles of idiomatic intention classification proposed by Sunan Anchaleenukul (2000), together with the concept of sarcastic language use proposed by Thanya Pichaiphaet (1988). Chinese idioms were categorized into five major types: 1) idioms expressing admonishing intentions, 2) idioms expressing warning intentions, 3) idioms expressing opinions, 4) idioms expressing appreciation, and 5) idioms expressing sarcasm. Categories 1–4 were based on the framework proposed by Sunan Anchaleenukul (2000), whereas the fifth category

applied the theory of sarcastic language use proposed by Thanya Pichaiphaet (1988) in analyzing certain Chinese idioms.

Based on the review of literature and previous studies concerning theories of communicative intentions in idiom usage, it was found that idiomatic intentions can generally be classified into five categories: warning intentions, admonishing intentions, sarcastic intentions, appreciative intentions, and opinion-expressing intentions.

However, the present study identified an additional category of communicative intention that was not explicitly discussed in previous studies.

Nevertheless, a review of related studies revealed that no previous research has specifically examined the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms in the Chinese historical drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》). Therefore, the present study may contribute to expanding the scope of research on the communicative intentions of Chinese idioms and provide a more comprehensive understanding of idiomatic usage in Chinese media.

2. Conceptual framework

The present study is grounded in pragmatic approaches to language use and theories concerning the communicative intentions of Chinese idioms proposed by previous scholars, particularly the framework developed by Tangtianchai (2009). The study adopts five categories of communicative intentions commonly identified in previous studies: warning intentions, admonishing intentions, opinion-expressing intentions, appreciative intentions, and sarcastic intentions.

In addition, the researcher analyzes idiomatic expressions according to their contextual meanings and communicative functions in verbal interaction. The analysis also considers the relationships between speakers and listeners, emotional expressions, and communicative situations appearing in the drama.

Furthermore, the study identifies an additional category of communicative intention beyond those commonly discussed in previous literature.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research approach using content analysis to investigate the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms appearing in the Thai-subtitled version of the Chinese historical drama Love Like the Galaxy (《星汉灿烂》). The analysis focused on understanding the contextual meanings and communicative functions of idiomatic expressions used in various conversational situations throughout the series.

1. Data Collection

The data were collected from all 56 episodes of Love Like the Galaxy, streamed on the WeTV application between June and July 2025. The researcher surveyed and collected Chinese idiomatic expressions appearing in the dialogues of the characters, including Chinese idioms (成语), proverbs (俗语), and common colloquial idiomatic expressions. A total of 114 Chinese idioms were identified for analysis.

In addition, the researcher reviewed related documents, theories, and previous studies concerning communicative intentions and Chinese

idiom usage. Chinese idioms were further examined through reference materials, including *Zhonghua Chengyu Da Cidian* (Zheng & Zhou, 2019) and the Chinese–Thai Idiom Dictionary (Phasupong, 2002). Relevant academic studies were also reviewed through the ThaiJO database.

2. Data Analysis

The present study employed content analysis to examine patterns of idiom usage and communicative intentions reflected in the dialogues of the series. The procedures of data analysis were conducted as follows:

2.1 Transcription of Dialogues

Dialogues containing Chinese idioms were transcribed into written form together with information regarding speakers and communicative situations in order to prepare the data for analysis.

2.2 Determination of the Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study was defined as “each individual Chinese idiom” appearing in the dialogues of each episode. The analysis considered the form, meaning, and contextual usage of each idiom.

2.3 Classification of Communicative Intentions

The researcher classified Chinese idioms according to the communicative intentions conveyed by the speakers. Based on previous studies, communicative intentions were generally categorized into five types. However, the present study identified one additional category. Therefore, the idioms were classified into six categories as follows:

Chinese idioms expressing warning intentions

Chinese idioms expressing sarcastic intentions

Chinese idioms expressing opinions

Chinese idioms expressing admonishing intentions

Chinese idioms expressing appreciative intentions

Chinese idioms expressing other intentions

2.4 Interpretation and Contextual Analysis

The researcher analyzed and interpreted the idioms in order to explain their communicative functions and contextual meanings in different situations. The analysis considered relationships between speakers and listeners, emotional expressions, language levels, and communicative contexts appearing in the drama.

2.5 Frequency Counting and Descriptive Analysis

The frequency of idioms in each communicative intention category was calculated to identify patterns of idiom usage throughout the series. The findings were then described and discussed in relation to communicative intentions, contextual meanings, and cultural perspectives reflected through the use of Chinese idioms.

Research Results

In this chapter, the researcher analyzed the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms appearing in the historical Chinese drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》) in order to demonstrate the characteristics of idiomatic intentions found throughout all 56 episodes of the series streamed on the WeTV application. The data were collected between June and July 2025.

The researcher analyzed the criteria used to classify the communicative intentions of Chinese idioms based on the contexts in which the idioms appeared in the series. A total of 114 Chinese idioms were

identified from all 56 episodes. Previous studies generally categorized communicative intentions into five major types. However, the present study identified one additional category. Therefore, the communicative intentions of Chinese idioms in this study were classified into six categories as follows: 1) warning intentions, 2) sarcastic intentions, 3) opinion-expressing intentions, 4) admonishing intentions, 5) appreciative intentions, and 6) other intentions.

Table 1

Classification of Communicative Intentions in Chinese Idioms

Communicative Intentions	Frequency	Percentage	Examples
1. Warning intentions	20	17.54	天理不容 (“Heaven will not tolerate it”), 忍气吞声 (“to suffer in silence”)
2. Sarcastic intentions	16	14.04	一唱一和 (“to act in collusion”), 明知故犯 (“to knowingly commit an offense”)
3. Opinion-expressing intentions	13	11.40	虎穴龙潭 (“a dangerous place”), 以儆效尤 (“to make an example of someone”)
4. Admonishing intentions	30	26.32	心不在焉 (“absent-minded”), 口无遮拦 (“to speak without restraint”)
5. Appreciative intentions	12	10.53	恩重如山 (“gratitude as heavy as a mountain”), 敢作敢为 (“bold and decisive”)

Communicative Intentions	Frequency	Percentage	Examples
6. Other intentions	23	20.18	死不瞑目 (“to die with unresolved regret”), 逢凶化吉 (“to turn misfortune into good fortune”)

Among these categories, idioms expressing admonishing intentions were found most frequently, accounting for 30 idioms or 26.32 percent of the total data.

1. Chinese Idioms Expressing Warning Intentions

Chinese idioms in this category clearly convey warning intentions, referring to expressions used to advise or caution another person so that they become aware of their behavior or actions (Wanichwirit & Thong-em, 2020, p. 234). A total of 20 idioms were found in this category, accounting for 17.54 percent.

Example: 天理不容 (Source: Zheng & Zhou, 2019, p. 1421) Episode 5, Minute 05:22

Thai subtitle translation: “Heaven and earth will punish.”

Context: This idiom appeared during the housewarming ceremony of the Cheng family, when the family members waited for the eldest elder, Cheng Shaoshang’s grandmother, to arrive before beginning the ritual. When she arrived, she told Cheng Shaoshang’s father that there was no need to be overly strict about auspicious timing. Cheng Shaoshang’s father then replied that the ritual could not begin before the head of the Cheng family

arrived, as failing to respect one's elders and lacking filial piety would be considered morally unacceptable and "Heaven would not tolerate it."

Example sentence: 程家的一家之长不来,我们哪敢祭燎,人不敬不孝,天理不容。

Thai translation: "If the head of the Cheng family has not arrived, how could we dare perform the ritual? Those who are disrespectful and unfilial will surely be punished by heaven."

2. Chinese Idioms Expressing Sarcastic Intentions

Chinese idioms in this category clearly convey sarcastic intentions. The speaker intentionally uses ironic or mocking expressions to criticize, ridicule, or indirectly express dissatisfaction toward another person (Wanichwirit & Thong-em, 2020, p. 238). A total of 16 idioms were found in this category, accounting for 14.04 percent.

Example: 一唱一和 (Source: Zheng & Zhou, 2019, p. 1698) Episode 10, Minute 11:31

Thai subtitle translation: "To act in perfect harmony."

Context: Miss Wang mocked A'Yao for being weak and having his engagement canceled by He Zhaojun. Cheng Shaoshang defended him by saying that failed engagements were common matters. A'Yao thanked Cheng Shaoshang, which angered Miss Wang, who sarcastically accused the two of acting in collusion.

Example sentence: 好, 你个楼垚竟与她一唱一和。

Thai translation: "Well, Lou Yao, you truly act in perfect harmony with her."

3. Chinese Idioms Expressing Opinions

Chinese idioms in this category are used to express opinions, beliefs, or judgments rather than criticism, warnings, or praise (Wanichwirit & Thong-em, 2020, p. 235). A total of 13 idioms were found in this category, accounting for 11.40 percent.

Example: 虎穴龙潭 (Source: Zheng & Zhou, 2019, p. 642) Episode 24, Minute 36:35

Thai subtitle translation: “A tiger’s den and dragon’s pool.”

Context: Cheng Shaoshang’s parents explained why they opposed the marriage granted by the emperor, believing that the Chengyang Marquis residence was an extremely dangerous place.

Example sentence: 我与你阿母都觉得城阳侯府是虎穴龙潭,所以才拼死拒婚。

Thai translation: “Your mother and I both believe that the Chengyang Marquis residence is like a tiger’s den and dragon’s pool, so we risked our lives to refuse the marriage.”

4. Chinese Idioms Expressing Admonishing Intentions

Chinese idioms in this category clearly convey admonishing intentions. The speaker uses idiomatic expressions to criticize, reproach, or indirectly point out another person’s inappropriate behavior (Wanichwirit & Thong-em, 2020, p. 233). A total of 30 idioms were found in this category, accounting for 26.32 percent, which represents the highest frequency among all categories.

Example: 心不在焉 (Source: Zheng & Zhou, 2019, p. 1598) Episode 11, Minute 17:25

Thai subtitle translation: “Absent-minded.”

Context: Huangfu Yi, the teacher of Yuan Shanjian, noticed that Yuan Shanjian broke the string of his guqin while playing. The teacher therefore reproached him for being distracted and inattentive.

Example sentence: 心不在焉，才会伤及自身。

Thai translation: “You are absent-minded; that is why you harmed yourself.”

5. Chinese Idioms Expressing Appreciative Intentions

Chinese idioms in this category clearly convey appreciation or admiration. The speaker expresses praise or satisfaction indirectly through idiomatic expressions rather than through direct compliments (Wanichwirit & Thong-em, 2020, p. 237). A total of 12 idioms were found in this category, accounting for 10.53 percent.

Example: 恩重如山 (Source: Zheng & Zhou, 2019, p. 427) Episode 24, Minute 23:25

Thai subtitle translation: “A favor as heavy as a mountain.”

Context: Cheng Shaoshang expressed her gratitude toward General Ling, who had repeatedly risked his life to save her and suffered injuries as a result. She described his kindness as being as great as a mountain.

Example sentence: 之前在骅县,凌将军为救我 险失一臂,后来在涂高山 又为救我,旧伤复发 他对我恩重如山。

Thai translation: “Previously, in Hua County, General Ling nearly lost an arm while saving me. Later, at Tu Gao Mountain, his old injury relapsed while rescuing me again. His kindness toward me is as great as a mountain.”

6. Chinese Idioms Expressing Other Intentions

This category was additionally identified by the researcher and was not explicitly mentioned in previous studies. Idioms in this category are

primarily used to emphasize emotional states, psychological conditions, attitudes, encouragement, or emotional reassurance in various situations. A total of 23 idioms were found in this category, accounting for 20.18 percent.

Example: 死不瞑目 (Source: Zheng & Zhou, 2019, p. 1371) Episode 13, Minute 40:52

Thai subtitle translation: “To die without closing one’s eyes.”

Context: Huangfu Yi wished to meet Cheng Shaoshang’s third aunt, who had once been his former lover. After encountering bandits on the journey, he expressed his deep regret and emotional burden, saying that if he could not personally apologize to her, he would die without peace.

Example sentence: 我欠她情债太多,若是不能当面与她吐露心中愧疚,为师此生,死不瞑目。

Thai translation: “I owe her too great a debt of love. If I cannot personally express my guilt to her, I will die without peace.”

The researcher selected representative idioms from each category for brief analysis. Each section consists of the communicative intention of the idiom, the contextual usage of the idiom, and example sentences taken directly from the dialogues in the series.

The findings revealed that Chinese idioms expressing admonishing intentions were the most frequently occurring category, accounting for 26.32 percent of the total 114 idioms identified in the historical drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》). This is primarily because the storyline and narrative contexts involve various forms of conflict, including political struggles, strategic survival tactics, and criticism of the characters’ behaviors. These situations often occur within tense interactions between characters.

The use of admonishing idioms effectively conveys dissatisfaction, criticism, and emotional intensity expressed by the speakers. As a result, idioms with admonishing intentions appeared most frequently throughout the series. Such idiomatic expressions emphasize the attitudes and emotions of the characters and clearly communicate the intended meanings and emotional states of the speakers, enabling viewers to perceive the emotional atmosphere of each situation more vividly.

Discussion of Results

The findings revealed that Chinese idioms appearing in the historical drama *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》) serve important communicative functions in conveying emotions, attitudes, interpersonal relationships, and cultural values within the context of ancient Chinese society. A total of 114 Chinese idioms were identified and classified into six categories of communicative intentions, namely warning intentions, sarcastic intentions, opinion-expressing intentions, admonishing intentions, appreciative intentions, and other intentions.

The findings showed that idioms expressing admonishing intentions appeared most frequently, accounting for 26.32 percent of the total data. This may be attributed to the narrative structure and thematic content of the series, which involve political conflict, social hierarchy, strategic survival, and criticism of characters' behaviors. Such situations often create tension among characters, resulting in frequent use of idiomatic expressions conveying criticism and dissatisfaction. The findings suggest that admonishing idioms function as indirect communicative devices that allow speakers to

express disapproval while maintaining linguistic politeness and social decorum.

This finding is consistent with the study of Wanichwirit and Thongem (2020), which proposed that Chinese idioms are commonly used to reflect emotions, communicative intentions, and social relationships, particularly within hierarchical social contexts. In addition, the findings support Tangtianchai's (2009) argument that Chinese idioms serve as concise linguistic devices capable of conveying profound meanings and emotional implications without lengthy explanations.

Idioms expressing warning intentions were also frequently found in the study. Such idioms often appeared in contexts involving close interpersonal relationships, including family members and close companions. The findings indicate that warning idioms are commonly used to express concern, care, and goodwill while simultaneously reducing the harshness of direct admonition. This reflects the indirect communication style frequently found in Chinese linguistic culture.

Furthermore, idioms expressing sarcastic intentions demonstrated that Chinese idiomatic expressions can convey implied meanings beyond their literal interpretations depending on contextual usage. The use of sarcastic idioms enabled characters to criticize or ridicule others indirectly without employing overly confrontational language. This finding reflects pragmatic approaches to language use, in which contextual meaning and speaker intention play significant roles in interpretation.

Idioms expressing opinions and appreciative intentions also revealed important communicative and cultural functions. Opinion-expressing idioms allowed speakers to communicate viewpoints and

persuasive attitudes more vividly through metaphorical language, whereas appreciative idioms reflected cultural values concerning gratitude, respect, and social reciprocity within Chinese society.

Most importantly, the present study identified an additional category referred to as “other intentions,” which was not explicitly discussed in previous studies. Idioms in this category primarily reflected emotional states, psychological conditions, encouragement, hope, regret, and emotional attachment. This finding suggests that the communicative functions of Chinese idioms extend beyond interpersonal communication and also serve as symbolic representations of internal emotional and psychological experiences.

Therefore, the present study expands previous frameworks concerning communicative intentions in Chinese idiom usage and contributes to a broader understanding of contextual Chinese language use in media discourse. The findings also demonstrate that Chinese idioms function not only as artistic linguistic devices but also as important cultural tools reflecting emotions, social relationships, and values within Chinese society.

Recommendations

The present study focused on the communicative intentions behind the use of Chinese idioms in only one historical Chinese drama, namely *Love Like the Galaxy* (《星汉灿烂》). Therefore, the findings primarily reflect idiomatic usage within the contexts of historical, political, romantic, and dramatic narratives. Future studies should expand the scope of data collection by examining Chinese idioms in a wider variety of television

genres, such as contemporary dramas, comedy series, action dramas, fantasy dramas, and historical-fiction series. Comparative analyses across different genres may contribute to a broader understanding of idiomatic usage patterns and communicative behaviors in diverse social and cultural contexts.

In addition, the present study mainly focused on textual and contextual analysis of idiomatic expressions appearing in the series and did not investigate audience perceptions or interpretations. Future research may employ quantitative methods, such as questionnaires or interviews, to examine how audiences understand and interpret Chinese idioms appearing in media. Such studies may provide deeper insights into intercultural communication, audience reception, and the transmission of cultural values through media discourse.

Furthermore, future studies should investigate the use of Chinese idioms in other forms of media, including variety shows, stage dramas, songs, novels, literary works, and online media platforms such as TikTok and Weibo. Since each type of media possesses distinct linguistic characteristics and target audiences, examining idiomatic expressions across diverse media platforms may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary Chinese language use and linguistic changes in modern society.

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