



**PERCEPTION OF COMMON CHALLENGES OF LEARNING  
THAI AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE OF MASTER'S DEGREE  
CHINESE STUDENTS' AT A THAI PRIVATE UNIVERSITY**

**BY  
SHUTING YANG**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN  
BILINGUAL EDUCATION  
SURYADHEP TEACHERS COLLEGE**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL, RANGSIT UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2024**

Thesis entitled

**PERCEPTION OF COMMON CHALLENGES OF LEARNING THAI AS A  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE OF MASTER'S DEGREE CHINESE STUDENTS'  
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was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Education in Bilingual Education

Rangsit University  
Academic Year 2024

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September 20, 2024

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all those who kindly provided me support for the achievement of my research and paper writing. My sincerest gratitude firstly and foremost goes to my thesis advisor, Assistant Professor Dr. Anchalee Chayanuvat, who has always been with me with patience and consistent encouragement as well as given me the inspiration, and also meaningful suggestion.

Secondly, I would like to thank the thesis committee, Associate Professor Dr. Pragasit Sitthitikul, Chair of the Committee and Associate Professor Dr. Sumalee Chinokul, member of the Committee, who kindly gave me valuable advice and feedback to help me complete my thesis. At the same time, I would like to thank Assistant Professor Dr. Pairin Srisintorn, Dr. Mongkol Sodachan and Dr. Pawares Funoi who contributed to the IOC questionnaires and interview data. I would also like to thank all the teachers who taught me at the Suryadhep Teacher College, Rangsit University. During my postgraduate studies, I benefited greatly from their professional teaching and knowledge.

Thirdly, I would like to thank my friends for accompanied me through the difficult journey of my dissertation and moment in my life. Besides, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all my classmates, who always helped me when I needed them.

Fourthly, I would like to express my gratitude to my beloved family. Behind my growth, it is the expectation and care of my parents.

Finally, thank all those who directly or indirectly supported me in completing the thesis. Thank you!

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6205023 : Shuting Yang  
 Thesis Title : Perception of Common Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Master's Degree Chinese Students' at a Thai Private University  
 Program : Master of Education in Bilingual Education  
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### Abstract

This study aimed to 1) identify the common challenges Chinese students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language and 2) explore how students can overcome these challenges. A mixed methods approach was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data using a 48-item questionnaire and seven interview questions. Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, a private university in Thailand, was chosen as a case study. A total of 56 master's students from the school participated in the questionnaire survey, and 10 volunteers with more than two years of Thai learning experience were interviewed. The questionnaire data analysis showed that the challenges students encountered when learning Thai as a foreign language were the challenges of vocabulary and expressions ( $\bar{x}=4.13$ ,  $SD=0.814$ ), the challenges of grammar structure ( $\bar{x}=4.07$ ,  $SD=0.839$ ), the challenges of pronunciation and phonetics ( $\bar{x}=4.04$ ,  $SD=0.90$ ), the challenges of cultural background and language environment ( $\bar{x}=4.06$ ,  $SD=0.815$ ), and the challenges of listening and reading comprehension ( $\bar{x}=4.14$ ,  $SD=0.923$ ). In addition, the interview data analysis showed that students could increase their Thai vocabulary and overcome vocabulary challenges by making word cards, watching Thai movies and TV series, choosing topics of interest, and reading Thai books, newspapers, and magazines. Also, students could overcome their challenges in pronunciation, grammar and other areas by increasing their grammar knowledge, learning Thai culture, and following podcasts and audio materials.

(Total 158 pages)

Keywords: Thai language learning, Thai private university, Master's Degree Chinese student, Challenges

Student's Signature..... Thesis Advisor's Signature.....

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

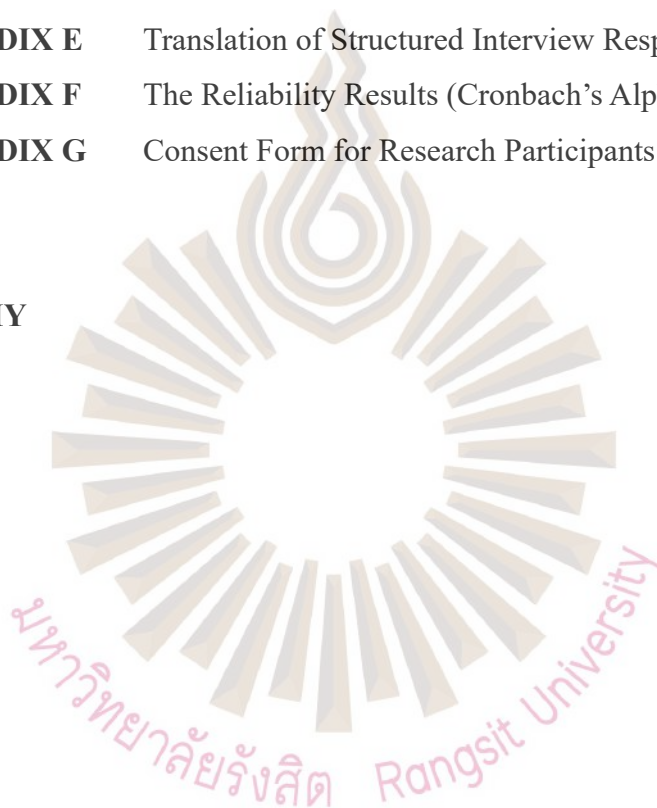
	<b>Page</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRACTS</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study	2
1.2 Problem Statement	7
1.3 Research Objectives	12
1.4 Research Questions	12
1.5 Research Scope	12
1.6 Definition of Terms	14
1.7 Limitations of the Study	17
1.8 Significance of the Research	17
<b>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1 Thai Language is the Official Language of Thailand	20
2.2 Thai Language Teaching and Learning in China	22
2.3 Language System Between Chinese and Thai	26
2.4 Foreign Language Acquisition Theories	28
2.5 Challenges of Chinese International Students	33
Learning Thai	
2.6 Related Previous Studies	40
2.7 Conclusion	43

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>45</b>
3.1 Research Design	45
3.2 Research Site	46
3.3 Population and Sample	47
3.4 Research Instruments	48
3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments	51
3.6 Data Collection	54
3.7 Data Analysis	55
3.8 Ethical Consideration	56
<b>CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>58</b>
4.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire Data	58
4.2 Analysis of the Structured Interview Data	69
4.3 Conclusion	83
<b>CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>84</b>
5.1 Conclusion	85
5.2 Discussion	91
5.3 Recommendations	94
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>115</b>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

	<b>Page</b>
<b>APPENDIX A</b> Questionnaire	116
<b>APPENDIX B</b> IOC for the Questionnaire	124
<b>APPENDIX C</b> Structured Interview	134
<b>APPENDIX D</b> IOC for the Structured Interview	136
<b>APPENDIX E</b> Translation of Structured Interview Responses	139
<b>APPENDIX F</b> The Reliability Results (Cronbach's Alpha)	152
<b>APPENDIX G</b> Consent Form for Research Participants	156
 <b>BIOGRAPHY</b>	 <b>158</b>

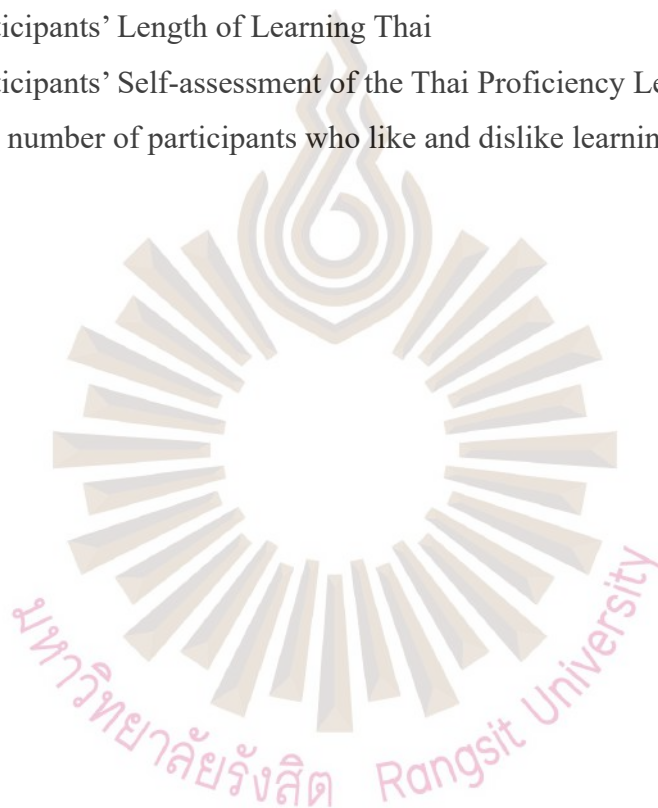


## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Tables</b>	<b>Page</b>
3.1 The 5-point Likert Scale	49
3.2 The Structure of the Questionnaire	50
4.1 Quantitative data on The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items	62
4.2 Quantitative data on The Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items	64
4.3 Quantitative data on The Challenges of Pronunciation Phonetics encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items	65
4.4 Quantitative data on The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items	67
4.5 Quantitative data on The Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items	68

**LIST OF FIGURE**

<b>Figures</b>		<b>Page</b>
1.1	Conceptual Framework	14
4.1	Participants' Gender	59
4.2	Participants' Age	59
4.3	Participants' Length of Learning Thai	60
4.4	Participants' Self-assessment of the Thai Proficiency Level	61
4.5	The number of participants who like and dislike learning Thai	61



## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
FLA	Foreign Language Acquisition
HCU	Huachiew Chalermprakiet University
TFL	Thai as a Foreign Language
IOC	Item Objective Congruence
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

With the rise of China's economy and the continuous advancement of its internationalization process, the number of Chinese students studying abroad is increasing (Wang, 2017). Thailand, as an emerging study abroad destination attracting international students, has become an international educational exchange platform that has received widespread attention at the beginning of this century. Thailand is one of the most popular study abroad destinations for Chinese students, attracting a large number of students to come to study (Liu, 2018).

However, once international students set foot in Thailand, they face a significant and complex challenge: learning Thai as a foreign language in Thailand. Learning Thai as a foreign language for Chinese students in Thailand is a comprehensive issue involving language, culture, social and academic aspects (Guo, 2020). Studying Thai as a foreign language among Chinese students has received increasing attention, especially in Thailand, a country full of cultural and linguistic diversity. In the process of learning Thai language in Thailand, Chinese students face a series of challenges related to oral expression, which not only affects their academic performance, but also has a profound impact on their integration into Thai society (Draper, 2019). This paper aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the difficulties and challenges faced by Chinese students studying Thai in Thailand, and to propose effective solutions.

However, a series of problems has often emerged during this learning process,

including language difficulties, cultural differences, and social barriers (Gong, 2021). These problems are believed to directly affected students' academic performance and ability to integrate into the local society. This article will conduct an in-depth study of common challenges faced by Chinese students learning Thai as a foreign language in Thailand, aiming to fully understand the background, causes and impact of this phenomenon. Nonetheless, learning Thai and applying it to practical communication is a key task that Chinese students face in Thailand (Chaiyasat, 2020).

The multifaceted journey of learning Thai presents a plethora of challenges for Chinese students, encompassing pronunciation intricacies, grammatical complexities, and the rich tapestry of cultural nuances intertwined within the language (Song, 2023). Of these challenges, mastering oral expression emerges as a formidable task, requiring Chinese learners to navigate through pronunciation subtleties, adjust speaking speed, and navigate cultural variations. Pronunciation, with its tonal system and unique phonetic sounds, demands meticulous attention to detail and consistent practice to achieve accuracy (Baran, 2012). Moreover, adapting to the rapid pace of Thai speech poses a challenge for Chinese learners accustomed to a different rhythm. Cultural differences further complicate oral expression, as learners must grasp the nuances of politeness, indirect communication, and social etiquette to effectively engage in Thai discourse (Wutthisarnwattana, 2022). In essence, mastering oral expression in Thai involves not only linguistic proficiency but also cultural understanding and adaptability, making it one of the most significant challenges faced by Chinese students in their language learning journey (Fang, 2019).

## **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

With the rapid development of the global economy, international exchanges and cooperation have become increasingly frequent, and interpersonal interactions have

become increasingly close (Storper, 1997). The economic cooperation between China and Thailand is becoming increasingly frequent, and the educational cooperation between China and Thailand is also booming (Wang, 2017). The craze for Chinese students studying abroad has intensified in recent years. As a high-profile study abroad destination, Thailand has attracted a large number of Chinese students to study. This trend of studying abroad reflects Chinese students' pursuit of international education and their desire for multicultural experiences. However, what comes with it is the challenges of learning Thai in Thailand, which is not only a language issue, but also a comprehensive cultural adaptation process (Chaiyasat, 2020).

First, language differences are one of the main challenges for Chinese students learning Thai (Xu, 2022). Thai and Chinese belong to completely different language systems, including huge differences in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary. For example, Thai uses alphabet spelling, while Chinese uses Chinese characters, which is a completely new challenge for Chinese students (Ramsey, 1987). In addition, the grammatical structure of Thai is different from that of Chinese, such as the word order of sentences, changes in nouns, which requires students to spend more time and energy to adapt and master.

Secondly, cultural differences also bring challenges to Chinese students learning Thai (Teng, 2020). Thailand has a unique and rich cultural tradition, including religion, etiquette, dietary habits, etc., which are obviously different from Chinese culture. While learning Thai, Chinese students also need to understand and adapt to the Thai cultural background in order to better integrate into the local living and learning environment (Chaiyasat, 2020). For example, in Thailand, respecting elders and maintaining humility are very important values, which are similar to Chinese cultural traditions, but have subtle differences that require Chinese students to adjust and understand.

Although Thailand and China maintain close cultural, economic and political ties, language differences are still an obstacle that cannot be ignored for learners (Zhen, 2020). The problems Chinese students encounter in mastering spoken Thai reflect the complexity of the language learning process and the challenges of understanding and applying language in cross-cultural communication (Chaiyasat, 2020). Understanding the nature of these issues will help develop more effective language education strategies and improve students' chances of academic and social success in Thailand.

Since Yunnan Province and Guangxi Province are adjacent to Southeast Asia, they have superior geographical locations, coupled with the government's policy support, and the Chinese people's love for Thailand (Fang, 2019). In recent years, universities in Yunnan and Guangxi provinces in China have also established study abroad exchange and cooperation projects with many universities in Thailand (Lu, 2022). More and more Chinese students choose to study in Thailand, and the number of Chinese students in Thai universities is also increasing. For example: Huachiew Chalermprakiet University Thailand has more than 550 Chinese students in 2023. However, Chinese students also face difficulties such as language proficiency and unsuitable learning styles when studying in Thailand (Strangio, 2020). Therefore, Chinese students should improve their learning styles, self-management and personality cultivation in order to maximize the benefits of studying abroad.

As the official language of Thailand, learning Thai is of extremely important significance to Chinese students (Guo, 2020). First of all, mastering Thai is the key for students to better integrate into the local society and help establish good social relationships. Secondly, the learning of Thai language is also a necessary condition for students to find employment in Thailand and participate in local economic activities (Vandeweyer, 2020). Therefore, learning Thai is not only an improvement in language skills, but also a foundation for future career and life. The Kingdom of Thailand has a population of 65.49 million and is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country on the

Indochina Peninsula (Shotivaranon, 2009). According to SIL International statistics in 2014, 45,815,000 people, or 93.5% of the population, speak Daic languages, and 1,037,650 people, or 2% of the population, speak Austro-Asiatic languages. ), 1,009,500 people or 2% of the population speak Austronesian languages, 533,500 people or 1% of the population speak Tibeto-Burman languages, 100,000 people Or less than 1% of the population speaks Hmong-Mien languages. Thai is the national and official language, and the national literacy rate reaches 89% (Draper, 2019). Immigrant languages include: Burmese, Japanese, Kayan, Rohingya, Sinhala, Tamil, Urdu and Vietnamese. There are 74 languages in Thailand, all of which are living languages (Siebenhütter, 2021).

The national language of Thailand is Central Thai (Draper, 2019). Thai, formerly known as Siamese, belongs to the Zhuang-Dai branch of the Northern Dong language family of the Sino-Tibetan language family. It has four dialect areas: central, northern, northeastern and southern dialects (Teerarojanarat, 2011). Bangkok is the standard language of Thai. In Thailand, more than 85%, or 50 million people, speak Thai. Thai is also an isolated language. Its basic vocabulary is mostly monosyllabic words, and synthesis and duplication are widely used in word formation. Thai draws heavily on Sanskrit, Pali and Chinese (Haas, 1964). Thai belongs to the Zhuang-Dai branch of the Zhuang-Dong language family of the Sino-Tibetan language family (Xu, 2019). The Thai language plays an important role in maintaining and strengthening social status and social relations among members of the culture. After Thailand's King Rama VI Vacharajon took office, he decreed that Standard Thai should be used for education in schools at all levels across the country (Techawongstien , 2023).

After more than 80 years of continuous efforts to promote national languages, Standard Thai has gradually occupied a prominent and dominant position throughout Thailand (Draper, 2019). Standard Thai is a variety of Central Thai originally spoken

by the court elite and now used by the educated middle and upper classes in Bangkok. It contains many words derived from Pali and Sanskrit and was standardized in grammar books in the 19th century (Draper, 2019). Since the 1930s, with the popularization of public education, it has been rapidly spread and promoted to this day. Today, Standard Thai is well-known in Thailand and occupies all aspects of social life (Diller, 1991). In the field of education, official decrees stipulate that Standard Thai should be used as a teaching medium in schools at all levels across the country, Standard Thai also occupies the media industry, and most of the Television and radio programs are broadcast in Standard Thai to strengthen its status as a national language, it is also the official language for administration, business, and public speeches, and is a language that symbolizes economic development and social prestige (Hesse, 2011).

There are 13 main foreign languages that influence Thai: Sanskrit-Pali, Mon, Khmer, Chinese, Javanese-Malay, Tamil, Persian, Arabic, Portuguese, French, Japanese and English (Pei, 2004). The large number of foreign words in Thai shows the openness and compatibility of Thai culture. Thailand is a famous Theravada Buddhist country in Southeast Asia (Swearer, 2010). Not only are Buddhist scriptures written in Sanskrit-Pali, but the names of kings and royal families, palaces, temples and other place names are also in Sanskrit-Pali. The hierarchical concepts of Buddhism and Sanskrit-Pali have also had a profound and profound impact on Thai (Holt, 2009). In Thailand, different classes use different pronouns, nouns and verbs to express levels and degrees of intimacy. Thai language is also divided into four types: royal language, religious language, popular language and slang (Sun , 2008).

Studying the problems faced by Chinese students learning Thai in Thailand requires an in-depth understanding of the interaction of various factors (Chaiyasat, 2020). Factors such as individual differences, academic motivation, and social support will all have an impact on students' Thai language learning. In addition, background

factors such as the impact of globalization and cultural conflicts also play an important role in this process. A comprehensive examination of these factors will help to gain a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the background and problems of students learning Thai in Thailand (Kwangmuang, 2021). Therefore, the researcher wants to study the problems encountered by Chinese students studying in Thailand when they learn Thai and use Thai as a foreign language.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the process of studying Thai language learners' learning to use Thai language as a foreign language, it was found that in order for learners to adapt to Thailand's social, cultural and environmental conditions, many Chinese students who had not been exposed to Thai began to learning Thai (Chaiyasat, 2020). Learning Thai, starting from the basic knowledge of Thai language Start learning and improve your knowledge base of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in Thai. This is the reason why so many Chinese students to learn Thai in the first place (Potter, 1991).

The issue of Chinese students learning Thai as a foreign language in Thailand is a complex and rich area of research. Chinese students face many difficulties when learning Thai as a foreign language in Thailand, including pronunciation, grammar, culture, and curriculum (Poomcharean, 2020). First of all, Thai pronunciation is very different from Chinese, including the tone system and specific pronunciation. Chinese is a non-tonal language, while Thai is a in-tonal language. Secondly, the grammatical structure of Thai is also very different from Chinese (Lwasaki, 2005). Thai grammar includes differences in word order, tense, mood, grammatical markers. In addition, learning Thai also requires understanding and integrating into the Thai cultural background (Scovel, 1970). Language and culture are closely related, and Chinese students may encounter different polite terms, social habits, and cultural traditions in

Thai culture. understanding and analyzing the challenges faced by Chinese students in Thai private universities when learning Thai as a foreign language is of great significance for improving teaching methods, optimizing teaching resources, and promoting cross-cultural exchanges (Preez, 2021). This study aims to explore these challenges in depth and put forward targeted suggestions to help Chinese students better adapt to the learning environment in Thailand and improve their language skills and intercultural communication skills (Rattanaphumma, 2022).

Thailand's general conditions for teaching Thai language to Chinese students, whether it is higher education institutions or universities, provide two types of courses, divided into short-term courses and long-term courses (Nelles, 2022). Short-term courses; study in Thailand for 4-6 weeks and 8-16 weeks (one semester), are training courses to provide students with basic language skills. Let Chinese students use Thai to communicate, listen, speak, read and write in daily life. Long-term courses: Studying in Thailand for 1-2 years (2-4 semesters) is the same as undergraduate courses for Thai students studying at university (Poomcharean, 2020). The purpose is to provide students with effective platforms and abilities. Thai can be used in daily life to communicate, listen, speak, read and write. It can also be used as a course study tool for studying various subjects (Poomcharean, 2020).

Learning Thai is not difficult. It is normal to encounter various problems in the introductory stage of every language. When learning Thai, Thai pronunciation has something in common with Chinese Pinyin, and the grammar is basically the same as Chinese (Liang, 2020). Therefore, learning Thai can actually be very easy. as long as you try very hard, you can achieve anything.

As a Thai learner who is not a native Thai speaker, learning Thai are divided into the following areas:

1) Pronunciation stage. Thai has a total of 5 tones and 4 tone symbols (Hudak, 2018). Their timbres are similar to the pronunciation of Chinese Pinyin, which can be compared and studied to help memory. The first tone in Thai, which is exactly the same as the first tone in Chinese Pinyin. The second tone in Thai is similar to the third tone in Pinyin. The third tone of Thai is consistent with the fourth tone of Pinyin. The fifth tone in Thai is similar to the second tone in Pinyin. Only the fourth tone in Thai is not found in Chinese Pinyin (Kasa, 2023). However, this pronunciation can be mastered with practice.

2) Literacy stage. The basic vocabulary of Thai is mostly monosyllabic words (Paripremkul, 2021). The vocabulary is composed of consonants, vowels and tone symbols. Just like the Chinese pinyin is composed of initial consonants, finals and tone symbols. Therefore, if you learn the consonants, vowels, tone symbols and their combined pronunciation rules in Thai, you can easily learn to read.

3) Grammar stage. The word order of Thai is very similar to the word order of Chinese (Mark, 2007). They are both "subject, predicate, object" and "subject system". There are only a few differences, for example: the adjective in Thai is placed after the modified word (beautiful girl, the word order in Thai is "girl" + "beautiful"); verbs in Thai can often be used as adverbs or even adjectives (He, 2021). In addition, something to pay attention to is the conjunctions in Thai. Because the parts of speech between verbs, adverbs, and adjectives can often be mixed, conjunctions used to connect sentences are particularly important. Sentences in Thai sometimes have very long modifiers (Cooke, 1989). In this case, you need to use conjunctions to connect the modifiers and the modifiers. If you find the correct conjunctions, you can clearly understand the meaning of the long and difficult sentences.

4) Writing state. The Thai alphabet consists of 44 consonant letters, 15

vowel symbols and several tone symbols (Winskel, 2013). For Chinese students who are used to Chinese characters, this is a completely new writing system that needs to be learned and memorized from scratch. Thai has five tones, each with a different symbol. The position and use rules of tone symbols are complex, and beginners can easily confuse or forget the correct tone markers. Thai words are often written together without spaces, which makes it difficult to distinguish the boundaries of words (Usaha, 2013). The sentence segmentation and punctuation rules are also different from those in Chinese and need to be adapted. The position of Thai vowels can be above, below, left or right of the consonants, which is different from the writing habit of Chinese where each word occupies a fixed space (Kitikanan, 2022). Students need to remember the correct position and combination of different vowel symbols. Although Thai letters do not have strict stroke order regulations like Chinese characters, it is still necessary to master the correct stroke order in order to write neatly and beautifully. There are many specific spelling rules and exceptions in Thai (Winskel, 2023). For example, some consonant letters are written differently but have the same or similar pronunciations, and students need to remember these subtle differences.

Learners should pay attention to the changes in long and short sounds when learning Thai (Tran, 2024). Only after learning the Thai alphabet will you understand why a longer sound is one word and a shorter sound is another word. For learners, it is the most It is easy to overlook and is also the most common place to make mistakes. See the difference in high and low sounds. For the same spelling, as long as the tone is different, the meaning is different. This is understandable to us, because Chinese also has many clear requirements for these. In Thai, the words he, rice, and enter are all pronounced kao (Tran, 2024). However, due to the different length of pronunciation and the difference in high and low pitch, there have been corresponding changes. Pay attention to the special pronunciation of letters in Thai (Tran, 2021).

When learning Thai, as a new language, you must use new ways and methods to

learn it (Ulla,2017). You cannot just use the rigid annotation of a transliteration in the past. When we learn English in China, I found that it is very difficult to use Chinese pronunciation to annotate English pronunciation, especially compared to Thai. For example, the pronunciation of two words in Thai is somewhat similar, and they both sound R, but in Thai ears it can It is not difficult for us to hear the difference. What we need is more listening and discernment (Usaha, 2013). The spelling of Thai words changes a lot. One of the benefits of learning Thai and English is that it doesn't matter if you don't recognize some words. As long as you understand the phonetic symbols and letters, you can spell them out smoothly, which is different from Chinese characters (Zhang, 2021). Please, Qing, Qing, Qing and Qian, the last one has a completely different pronunciation than the first four. There are some special pronunciations in Thai that you should also pay attention to.

The most obvious thing is that they have a special mark. It can remind you that the letter has no pronunciation, but some are different and need to be listened to and remembered more in life (Palmer, 2024). For example, the word for accident is hued according to the spelling rules, but the actual pronunciation is het. For these reasons, our language cannot be used behind closed doors. We have to go out and talk to them to know it. Thai words have silent endings (Abramson, 1999). This is quite difficult for us, because we are used to the correct pronunciation of words and have learned to speak loudly. It is very difficult to suddenly speak to you a language with silent endings (Norden, 1968).

In fact, it is not only Thai, but also English. The same is true. A word without vowels is also unpronounceable. It's just that our education tells us to pronounce it, which is a big failure (Ronnie, 2021). I would also like to remind you that the silent pronunciation here does not mean that there is no sound, but that the sound is very soft and does not require throat pronunciation. It is a slight pronunciation of the touch of

the tip of the tongue and the teeth (Yao, 2020). There are male and female differences in Thai terms. This is relatively simple. It's just that the ending of the sentence is different. It's different from what you call yourself. For the same word, men and women should pay attention. Note that boys end with klap and girls end with ka. If you don't pay attention to these, Thai people will be very suspicious of it (Ronnie, 2021). Looking at you with eyes, I am considering whether you are a shemale, because the end of the self-address here is very important, and it is also a polite expression and a pause in the sentence. For us, we should pay more attention to these.

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1.3.1 To explore the challenges of Chinese students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language.

1.3.2 To explore Chinese students' suggestions about how they can overcome challenges in learning Thai.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1.4.1 What challenges do Chinese students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language?

1.4.2 What are Chinese students' suggestions about how they can overcome challenges in learning Thai ?

### **1.5 RESEARCH SCOPE**

#### **1.5.1 Research location**

This study was conducted at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, Thailand. It was established in Samut Prakan Province, Thailand, in 1992. After years of

development, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University now has 14 colleges, approximately 12,000 students, and more than 800 teachers and staff.

### **1.5.2 Research Population and Sample**

**Population:** The population of this study was 65 Chinese students who had enrolled in a Thai as a second language communication program in the 2023 academic year of Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand.

**sample:** 56 students in the Huachiew Chalermprakiet University were selected as the research sample.

The researcher used a cluster sampling method to study 56 students in the first semester of the 2023 academic year at the Huachiew Chalermprakiet University Thailand, and selected 56 students to express their challenges on the grammar, pronunciation ,vocabulary Expression and spoken language encountered when learning Thai as a foreign language.

### **1.5.3 Conceptual Framework**

For this study, there were consisted of Two variables: independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variables is Chinese students' who study in Huachiew Chalermprakiet University Thailand , and the dependent variables is Chinese students' challenges of learning Thai as a foreign language in Huachiew Chalermprakiet University Thailand.

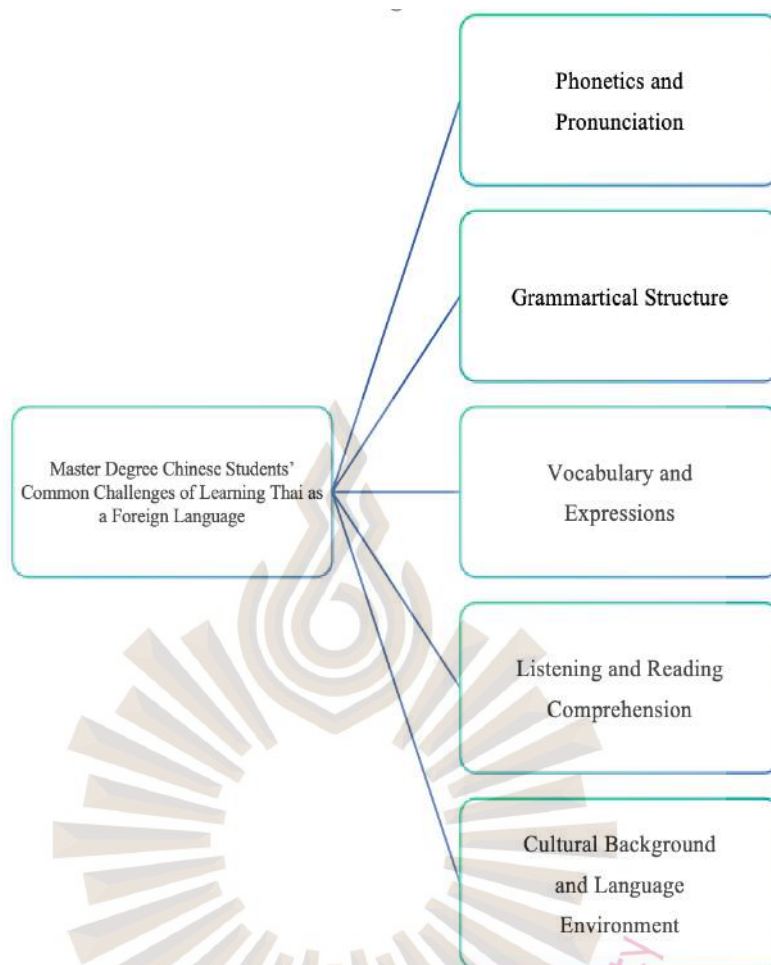


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

## 1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language

Challenges of learning Thai as a foreign language refer to the challenges and difficulties encountered by individuals who are learning Thai as a non-native language after acquiring proficiency in their first language (Tang, 2020). These obstacles typically encompass various aspects of language acquisition, including phonetics and pronunciation, grammatical structure, vocabulary and expressions, cultural background and language environment, and cultural nuances specific to the Thai language. Foreign learners often face hurdles in articulating Thai sounds accurately, understanding grammatical structures, expanding vocabulary, and navigating cultural

differences, all of which can impede their ability to communicate effectively in Thai-speaking environments (Onthong, 2024). These problems may arise due to differences in linguistic structures between Thai and the learners' native languages, as well as the complexities inherent in mastering a new language system. Addressing these challenges requires targeted instructional strategies, linguistic support, and cultural immersion to facilitate the development of proficiency and fluency in speaking Thai as a second language (Wiboolyasarin, 2023).

In the process of Chinese students learning Thai as a foreign language, they often face various language difficulties involving phonetics and pronunciation, grammatical structure, vocabulary and expressions, listening and reading comprehension, cultural background and language environment. Here are some possible common challenges:

#### **Phonetics and Pronunciation:**

Thai has a different phonetic and pronunciation system than Chinese, and students may need time to adapt to the new phonemes and pronunciation rules (Cai, 2015). Certain Thai pronunciations may be difficult for Chinese students, such as the five tones in Thai.

#### **Grammatical Structure:**

The grammatical structure of Thai is very different from Chinese, including sentence patterns, verb tenses, noun properties (Rimmington, 2021). Chinese students may need some time to understand and master the grammatical rules of Thai.

#### **Vocabulary and Expressions:**

The vocabulary systems of Thai and Chinese are also different, and students need to learn new vocabulary and understand their usage and collocations (Chen, 2020). At the same time, expressions and idioms in Thai may be different from Chinese, and

students need to gradually become familiar with and master them.

### **Listening and Reading Comprehension:**

Thai listening and reading comprehension can be challenging for Chinese students, especially at the beginning of learning (Harnkaew, 2020). The speaking speed and oral expression of Thai may be different from the Chinese that students are familiar with, and it will take some time to adapt.

### **Cultural Background and Language Environment:**

Thai is the official language of Thailand, and students may need immersive learning and practice to better understand the culture and context behind the language. Adapting to the Thai language environment and language usage in daily life was also a challenge (Chaiyasat, 2020).

To address these challenges, both educators and students themselves can adopt effective strategies, such as increasing language practice opportunities, providing professional grammar guidance, strengthening pronunciation training, and promoting students' deeper understanding of Thai culture through cross-cultural exchanges (Chaiyasat, 2020).

### **Chinese Students**

Refers to Chinese students studying at Thai universities. The students are Chinese students in the second year of graduate school who will enroll in 2023. They study and live in Thailand and learning Thai as a foreign language.

### **Thai Private University**

Refers to Huachiew Chalermprakiet University Thailand, a higher education institution operated and managed by private individuals or private institutions in

Thailand. The university provides a variety of academic courses, including undergraduate, postgraduate and professional courses, covering liberal arts, science, engineering, business, art and other fields.

## **1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1.7.1 This survey is only aimed at Chinese students studying at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University In Thailand and does not include all Chinese students in Thailand.

1.7.2 This is a small-scale study on the problems encountered by Chinese students studying at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University In Thailand when learning and using Thai as a second language. The research findings may not be applicable to all overseas Chinese students.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The idea that language learning strategies are teachable and that learners can benefit from instruction in learning strategies has been the basis of several studies in this area. Furthermore, research on language learning strategies shows that learners' use of appropriate language learning strategies affects their language learning responsibility and progress. Therefore, both teachers and students benefit from it.

1.8.1 Thai language learners can compare the problems encountered in their own Thai learning with the results of this study to make up for their own shortcomings, find Thai learning methods that suit them, and improve the efficiency and level of Thai language learning.

1.8.2 For Thai language teachers, the results of this study will help them better understand the problems and difficulties students encounter when learning to use Thai, and then adjust teaching methods to help students master Thai language skills better and faster .

1.8.3 For Thai language courses designer for Chinese students learning Thai, the results of this study can help improve the rationality of Thai language courses and the systematic Ness of teaching. Thus providing better services for Thai language learning and teaching.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

As the number of Chinese students studying in Thailand increases, their problem of learning Thai as a foreign language has attracted much attention. This chapter reviews the current status of the Thai language and the theories and related literature on second language acquisition.

It is divided into the following parts:

- 2.1 Thai Language as the official language of Thailand
- 2.2 Thai Language teaching and learning in China
- 2.3 Language System Between Chinese and Thai
  - 2.3.1 Chinese Language System
  - 2.3.2 Thai Language System
- 2.4 Foreign Language Acquisition Theories
  - 2.4.1 Stephen Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory
  - 2.4.2 Cognitive Theory
  - 2.4.3 Social and Cultural Theory
  - 2.4.4 Humanistic Learning Theory
  - 2.4.5 Speech Act Theory
  - 2.4.6 Cross cultural Communication Theory
- 2.5 Challenges of Master Degree Chinese Students in Learning Thai
- 2.6 Related Previous Studies
- 2.7 Conclusion

## 2.1 THAI LANGUAGES IS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THAILAND

Thai, or more specifically Siamese, is Thailand's only official language and is spoken by more than 80 percent of the country's 60 million people (Joll,2021). Thai is closely related to Laos, the official language of Laos; Bur, a Burmese language; and many minor languages related to southern China and northern Vietnam (Kutanan, 2021). Thai is used in all official positions in Thailand, including education, government and media. Its standard is based on the Bangkok dialect and is written in the Thai alphabet, which is an anonymous descendant of the Khmer script (Bradley,1985).

Spoken Thai is considered according to different ages, genders, classes, and spatial orientations (Suebkinnon, 2021). It can be partially interoperable with other southwestern Taiwanese languages such as Lao and Isan. Although the characters used are different, in these languages, in the language They are academically similar and together form a dialect continuum. The standard Thai language is based on the spoken and written language of the educated class in central Thailand represented by Bangkok (Siebenhütter,2021). Some other Zhuang-Dai languages in Thailand are also called "Thai dialects" and "different types of Thai". But in linguistics they can also be considered to be similar but independent languages. Central Thai is the only lingua franca in Thailand's education sector and media, so residents in other parts of Thailand mostly speak both local dialects and standard Thai (Keyuravong,2010).

According to linguists, Thai is an "inflected, mainly monosyllabic tonal language" in the Tai-Kadai language family. The spoken Thai language is considered to have originated in this area, which currently includes the border between Viet Nam

and China (Bradley, 2007). This idea provides clues for the origin of the Thai people, which is an area of constant debate in academic circles. From the linguistic point of view, Thai and the languages of Myanmar and Laos are closely related to the languages of Vietnam and Yunnan (Sagar,2022).

In Thailand, there are four main regional dialects, including the southern Thai dialect used in southern provinces, Northern Thailand or "Yuan" is used in the northern provinces that used to belong to the independent Kingdom of Lanatai, Northeastern Thai is very similar in nature to Laotian, And Siamese Thai, the national language of the country, also known as Central Thai or Bangkok Thai (Hudak, 2018). Siamese Thai has been used in most schools across Thailand for media and entertainment broadcasting, and is widely understood by a considerable majority of the population. In addition to the four major regional dialects, there are also some minor dialects in Thailand, such as the changes in the language of uan and Luat, which only a few people can speak (Moonsarn,2020).

It is important to remember that the four main dialects of Thai are different from the different language "registered language", which is the language form used in various social occasions and different situations in Thailand (Lin, 2020). For example, some words are only used by the Thai royal family, thus creating an independent but mutually understood "royal language" (Baker,2022). The following briefly introduces the registers of different languages in Siamese Thai and the usage of each language:

Royal Thai, Influenced by Khmer, Royal Thai is used to address members of the royal family or discuss their activities (Zarchi, 2001).

Religious Thai, Based on Sanskrit and Pali, Thai is used when discussing Buddhism (the official national religion of Thailand) and speeches by monks and other

religious leaders (Schedneck,2021).

Formal Thai, The official Thai language is also called "elegant Thai language", and its official written form includes respectful language, which is used by many newspapers and other media publications in the country (Alexander, 2014). Rhetorical Thai. Rhetoric Thai is most commonly used in public speaking.

Ordinary Thai, Ordinary Thai, that is, street Thai, is an informal registered language of Thai (Diller, 1993). It is used in daily conversations between friends, family and colleagues, which is the most commonly used form of Thai in this country.

The five different languages of Thai are mutually understandable to most residents in the country. Street communication and elegant Thai are the basis of all dialogues, while rhetoric, religion and royal Thai are taught in schools as part of the national curriculum (Smalley,1994).

## **2.2 THAI LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN CHINA**

China and Thailand are friendly neighbors, and their relations have maintained healthy and stable development (Zhang, 2011). The leaders of both sides have frequent exchanges and cooperation in various fields are extensive and in-depth, and there is a deep friendship between the people. On July 1, 1975, China and Thailand officially established diplomatic relations (Xu,1999). After the establishment of diplomatic relations, friendly cooperation in various fields between the two countries developed comprehensively and smoothly.

In April 2012, China and Thailand established a comprehensive strategic

partnership, becoming the first ASEAN member country to establish a strategic cooperation relationship with China (Guo, 2018).

The Thai people have been warm and friendly to the Chinese people since ancient times (Chambers, 2005). With the deepening of China's reform and opening up and the proposal of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, Thailand has become an important country along the route for Chinese enterprises to "go out" and implement the "the Belt and Road" initiative (Kosaikanont, 2019). China and Thailand have increasingly frequent and in-depth exchanges and cooperation in education and other areas will also achieve greater development and achievements, and Thai language will become the key to opening the door to the Thai speaking world. Thai language learners will become those who hold the key and become ambassadors of Sino Thai friendship (Kuik,2021).

Within the five languages of Thai, Lao, Burmese, Cambodian, and Vietnamese. Thai is the foreign language that most Chinese students choose to learn and is very popular among Chinese students (Xu, 2022). I have been teaching Thai at Peking University in China for over 40-50 years. Including at Guangxi National University and Honghe University, Thai language is also taught. Especially Yunnan National University, where Thai language teaching is open, is the best university in Yunnan. Both high school and university teach Thai, with over 2000 Chinese students learning Thai in China (Fang,2019).

In addition, the Chinese government has policies to provide Thai language majors in universities across the country, and higher education institutions in Yunnan offer Thai as an elective course for students (Lu,2022). But these universities can accommodate a limited number of students, allowing more Chinese students to come to Thailand to study Thai. At present, Chinese students tend to learn Thai, and Chinese

parents are also interested in sending their children to study in Thailand. They believe that if they have knowledge of Thai after graduation, they will have the opportunity to find job advantages (Tran, 2020), such as working in Thai companies, tourism companies, or various educational institutions related to Thailand.

After reaching an agreement and discussion with the Chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, the Minister of Education held the Thailand Education Exhibition in Nanning, saying that the reason why he chose to hold the Thailand Education Exhibition this time was that there were the largest number of students in Guangxi who chose to study in Thailand (Sucharitkul, 2020). So far, learning Thai is more popular among students in China, and at least 5,000 students in Guangxi speak Thai (Lu, 2022).

The Minister of Education mentioned the reason for holding the Thailand Education Exhibition, saying that this event is one of the regional education policies (Arphattananon, 2018). In Thailand, the goal is to turn Thailand into a regional education center. In 2014, public relations are needed to increase the number of international students studying in Thailand from each country to 100,000 (Mangmeechai and Jirapornvaree, 2019). Thailand plans to develop schools under the Ministry of Education, so as to make all vocational schools and higher education institutions in the country strong in all aspects. The purpose of holding the Thailand Education Exhibition this time is to make China students believe in studying in Thailand. This year, the university opened 38 exhibitions, which attracted a large number of China students. It is considered that there will be opportunities to hold such activities in other cities in China to expand Thai education in the future, which is another goal of Thailand, in order to select foreign students to study in Thailand (Snodin, 2019). Through negotiations with the chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in China, China asked Thailand to support the exchange of

students and teachers between the two countries, and to expand China's education for Thai students to have more job opportunities (Tran, 2020).

The Thai Ministry of Education is prepared to support the development of Thai language courses and provide learning opportunities for students from China and Thailand (Keyuravong,2010). In addition, cooperation between Thailand and China in the field of education research is increasing, including the use of Thai and Chinese standards. At present, Chulalongkorn University has established a standard Thai language proficiency test center for Chinese students in Beijing and Guangxi (Fang, 2019).

There are over 100 colleges in Asia, Europe, the United States, and Australia that offer Thai language courses, such as Asian Studies or Southeast Asian Studies. More than 25 countries and private higher education institutions in Thailand offer Thai language courses to foreigners (Pongsin,2023). In the case of teaching Thai to foreigners in Thailand, Thai teaching has been provided to foreigners in various parts of Thailand, which is the main responsibility of state and private educational institutions (Lavankura, 2013). Because in the economic system, Countries are increasingly aware of the language and culture of their trading partners. Knowing the Thai teaching situation of foreigners will help the relevant teaching staff get proper management and get the most effective results (Hallinger, 2000).

At present, China students come to universities all over Thailand to study (Chaiyasat, 2020). This popularity is driven by the China government's open policy. As the Thai Ministry of Education recognizes the importance of teaching Thai in foreign language teaching, it will provide and support scholarships for Chiang Mai University to produce basic Thai courses. In Thailand, Thai education as a foreign language teaching has gradually developed. The Faculty of Education of Chiang Mai University

opened the Thai teaching specialty to meet the needs of knowledge talents (Lu, 2022). Have the skills to teach Thai as a second language. Since then, teaching Thai as a foreign language has become more and more popular (Fry,2018).

There are students from China coming to Thailand to study Thai and English courses at higher education institutions across the country. Approximately 1,000 people are distributed in different parts of the country each year (Snodin,2019). Most Chinese students choose to study in Thai language courses in Thailand, whether they are Thai language majors, tourism business, Thai economics majors, etc. Courses of study can be divided into 1-year short courses (2 semesters), 2-year courses and 4-year courses (Zhen, 2020). When you come to Thailand to study, some teaching institutions may test your Thai language proficiency in order to classify as appropriate, but most universities will arrange for Chinese students to start learning from the basics of Thai language and improve the knowledge base of Thai listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities, also allows you to adapt to Thai social, cultural and environmental conditions (Sukjairungwattana, 2024).

## **2.3 LANGUAGE SYSTEM BETWEEN CHINESE AND THAI**

The Chinese-Thai language system refers to the phonetic, grammatical and lexical systems of the two languages, Chinese and Thai (Zhang, 2020). The language systems of these two languages will be introduced in detail below.

### **2.3.1 Chinese Language System**

Voice System: The phonetic system of Chinese is syllable-based, and each syllable has a tone (Qu, 2020). There are four tones in Mandarin Chinese, namely flat tone, rising tone, falling tone and entering tone. Different tone can change the meaning of a word. In addition, there are combinations of initial consonants and finals in

Chinese that together form syllables.

**Grammar System:** Chinese is a subject-predicate-object language, and the basic word order is usually subject-predicate-object (Brahmana, 2023). There are no changes in part of speech in Chinese, but grammatical information such as tense and voice is expressed through word order and grammatical particles. Chinese grammar is relatively concise and clear.

**Vocabulary System:** The Chinese vocabulary system uses Chinese characters as the basic unit, and each Chinese character usually has an independent meaning (Li, 2022). Chinese vocabulary also includes different types such as monosyllabic words, bisyllabic words and multi-syllabled words.

### **2.3.2 Thai Language System**

**Voice System:** Thai is also a syllable-based language, with each syllable having a tone. The tone system of Thai is more complex than Chinese (Chormai, 2022). There are five tones, namely high flat tone, rising tone, low tone, falling tone and low rising tone. Differences in tone can also change the meaning of a word.

**Grammar System:** Thai is an inflectional language with rich inflections. The basic word order of Thai is also subject, predicate and object, but it is relatively more flexible and can emphasize different components through changes in word order. In addition, Thai also has grammatical structures such as sentences and passive voice (Ursic, 2020).

**Vocabulary System:** The vocabulary system of Thai is composed of words, some of which are loanwords from ancient Sanskrit or Pali. Thai vocabulary is also affected by tones, and the same words may have different meanings under different tones.

To sum up, Chinese and Thai have some similarities in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary system, but there are also obvious differences (Tiranant, 2022). Learners need to fully understand these differences to gain a better command of both languages.

## **2.4 FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THEORIES**

Language is unique to human beings, Language is the core of human life (Pereltsvaig, 2020). We use it to express our love or hate, achieve our goals, develop our career, get artistic satisfaction or simple happiness, pray or be desecrated. We plan our lives and recall our past, We share ideas and experiences, We form our own social and personal identities. However, some people can do some or all things in more than one language. Mastering another language may mean: finding a job, Access to education, Be able to participate more fully in the life of your own country or have the opportunity to immigrate to another country, The expansion of literary and cultural horizons, Express one's political or religious views, Opportunities to talk to people while on holiday abroad. A second language will affect people's career, future, life and identity (Teimouri, 2022). Therefore, learning and using a second language is very important to people's daily life. Helping people learn a second language more effectively is an important task in the 21st century. English is the main language in the study of second language acquisition. It is usually the only language used by non-native speakers anywhere in the world (Cook, 2013).

Foreign language learning is a conscious process of learning a language other than the first language (Rubio, 2021). This process is often confused with bilingualism and multilingualism. It must happen after the acquisition of the first language. Foreign language learning can also refer to the third, fourth or fifth language that learners are learning (Zhang, 2022). Language acquisition is very similar to the process of children

acquiring the first language and the second language. It requires meaningful communication in the target language-natural communication-in which the speakers are not concerned with what they say, but with the information they convey and understand. Error correction and explicit rule teaching have nothing to do with language acquisition. However, conscious language learning is believed to help correct mistakes and put forward clear rules (Krashen, 1981).

#### **2.4.1 Stephen Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory**

Krashen's theory of second language acquisition consists of five main hypotheses:

- 1)the Acquisition-Learning hypothesis,
- 2)the Monitor hypothesis,
- 3)the Natural Order hypothesis,
- 4)the Input hypothesis, and
- 5)the Affective Filter hypothesis.

The acquisition learning hypothesis is the core theory of modern language acquisition theory and the most fundamental theory in Krashen's theory. There are two independent methods to develop our language skills: acquisition and learning. Language acquisition is a natural, intuitive, and subconscious process that individuals do not need to know (Hussain, 2017). Language learning is a conscious process, just like what people experience in school.

The monitoring hypothesis explains the relationship between acquisition and learning, and defines the impact of the latter on the former. The monitoring function is the actual result of grammar learning. Krashen (1981) believes that the acquisition system is the initiator of discourse, and the learning system plays the role of a "monitor" or "editor". When three specific conditions are met, the "monitor" plays a

role in planning, editing, and correcting: the second language learner has enough time at their disposal, cares about the correctness of form or thinking, and knows the rules.

The natural order hypothesis assumes that all learners acquire language in roughly the same order. This order does not depend on the difficulty of teaching a certain feature of a language. Krashen (1987) believes that the acquisition of grammatical structures follows a predictable "natural order". For a given language, some grammatical structures are acquired early, while others are acquired later. This order seems to be independent of the learner's age, mother tongue background, and contact conditions. Although the consistency among individual learners in the study is not 100%, there is significant statistical similarity, which enhances the natural order of language acquisition.

The Input Hypothesis is Krashen's attempt to explain how learners acquire a second language, and Krashen's explanation of second language acquisition. Therefore, the input hypothesis only focuses on "acquisition" rather than "learning". According to this assumption, when a learner receives input from a second language, they progress and develop along a natural sequence, which goes beyond one step of their current language ability. For example, if a learner is in the "I" stage, acquisition occurs when they are exposed to "understandable input" at the "I+1" level. Knowledge beyond language includes our knowledge of the world and context, namely context. Therefore, +1 represents the "next increment" of new knowledge or language structures that learners can acquire.

The influential filtering hypothesis suggests that many emotional variables play a promoting role in second language acquisition, but not a causal relationship (Kiruthiga, 2022). These variables include motivation, confidence, and anxiety. According to Krashen's viewpoint, positive and confident learners with good self-image and low

levels of anxiety are more likely to acquire a second language. On the contrary, low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety "enhance" emotional filters and create "psychological barriers" that prevent understandable input from being used for acquisition.

#### **2.4.2 Cognitive Theory**

Cognitive theory is a psychological method, which tries to explain human behavior by understanding human thinking process (Bandura,1999). From the cognitive point of view, learning a language is not just a problem formed by behaviorists' habits. Like any other kind of learning, learning a language requires receiving information, processing it and acting on it. In addition, learners can generate rules, learn from mistakes, develop interlanguage, establish a psychological framework called schema, and use metacognition to manage their learning, thus making order a complex and chaotic system (Griffiths and Oxford, 2014).

The study of language learning strategies originates from cognitive theory, which explores second language acquisition from psychological process and measures it by understanding and production (Alharbi, 2017).

#### **2.4.3 Social and Cultural Theory**

One of the main concepts of social and cultural theory is that it claims that human thought is intermediary. In sociocultural learning theory, scaffolding supports learners to self-regulate their language learning process (Lantolf, 2004). According to social and cultural theory, social interaction and cultural institutions play a vital role in the cognitive growth and development of individuals (Donato and MacCormick, 1994). Social and cultural theories include communicative competence, cultural adaptation model, zone of proximal development and activity theory. In strategic theory, social culture is obvious, such as looking for dialogue partners, learning culture or asking for

help. Activity selection is a tool to achieve language learning goals in the social and cultural context (Griffiths, 2020). Learning is a social process, in which cognitive development occurs through interaction with others and affects individual culture. From the social and cultural point of view, learning environment and situation affect individuals' language learning strategy orientation (Nguyen and Terry, 2017).

#### **2.4.4 Humanistic Learning Theory**

Humanism focuses on the potential of each individual and emphasizes the importance of growth and self actualization (Khatib, 2013). Driven by personal factors such as gender, age, motivation, beliefs, ethnic perspectives, personality, style, aptitude, identity, and emotions, learners are different individuals, even within the same social and cultural background. Therefore, learners as individuals are also steadily growing (Pawlak, 2012). Humanism may be the most obvious emotional strategy in strategy theory, such as maintaining motivation, engaging in positive self dialogue, or cultivating confidence (Griffiths, 2020).

#### **2.4.5 Speech Act Theory**

Speech act theory is a philosophical theory of language. Austin from the UK proposed and Searle and others from the United States developed it (Austin, 1962). Austin believed that language is a unique way of human behavior, and people cannot do without speech and writing in actual communication. The central topic of language analysis philosophy should be to study the essence and internal logical structure of such speech acts. Speech acts are the smallest units of meaning and human communication, with three types: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts (Austin, 1962).

Locutionary acts involve the utterance of words to convey a certain idea or meaning (Kissine, 2008). Illocutionary acts refer to the communicative force or

intention behind the utterance, such as making a request, giving a command, or expressing a promise. Perlocutionary acts, on the other hand, focus on the effect or impact of the utterance on the listener, such as persuading, convincing, or influencing them (Searle, 1969).

To complete a discourse action, it is necessary to complete an illocutionary act. Therefore, discourse action and illocutionary act are intertwined and have boundaries, as many illocutionary acts do not simultaneously play a role in discourse action (Bierwisch, 1980). There is also a clear difference between illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts. The former aims to produce persuasive effects, while the latter aims to produce mandatory effects (Searle, 1969). Searle further developed the theory of speech acts based on Austin's framework, expanding its application and refining its concepts.

#### **2.4.6 Cross-Cultural Communication Theory**

Cross-cultural communication theory is a theoretical framework for studying communication and interaction between different cultures (Hall, 1959). These theories aim to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of cultural differences on interpersonal communication, in order to help people communicate more effectively in cross-cultural environments.

## **2.5 CHALLENGES OF MASTER DEGREE CHINESE STUDENTS IN LEARNING THAI**

In the research on Thai language learning, it was found that when a large number of Chinese students learning Thai as a foreign language, the main challenges lie in involving phonetics and pronunciation, grammatical structure, vocabulary and

expressions, listening and reading comprehension, cultural background and language environment (Zhao, 2022). Here are some possible common challenges:

### **2.5.1 Thai Phonetics and Pronunciation**

In learning Thai, many Chinese students struggle with unclear pronunciation and encounter challenges in pronouncing two-syllable words. These pronunciation difficulties stem from the vast disparities between the Thai and Chinese pronunciation systems (Stasiewski, 2000). Consequently, Chinese learners often mispronounce certain consonants, vowels, or syllables unique to Thai, leading to confusion or ambiguity for listeners.

Thai is a tonal language with five basic tones. China students may be confused because they are not used to the use of tones, because in Thai, different tones may correspond to different lexical meanings (Chen, 2020). As well as consonants and disyllables, there are some consonants and vowels in Thai, and their pronunciation is very different from that in Chinese. Students may need to spend time adapting to these new phonemes to ensure correct pronunciation. Chen and Wang (2021) find that most students in China can't pronounce Thai clearly and can't read disyllabic words, which makes them find mistakes when they say it.

The phonetic rhythm of Thai may be different from that of Chinese, and it may be faster or slower. Students need to adapt to the fluency of Thai pronunciation in order to better integrate into the local spoken environment (Huang,2021).

Scholarly literature, such as "Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching" (Richards and Rodgers, 1986), "Pronunciation and Second Language Acquisition" (Levis and LeVelle, 2010), and "Accent, Attitudes and Identity in Second Language Learning" (Adrian, 2005), delves into various aspects of pronunciation in

second language acquisition. Teaching resources like "Teaching Pronunciation: A Course Book and Reference Guide" (Brinton and Janet, 1996) offer practical guidance for addressing common pronunciation difficulties in language classrooms. Similarly, "Pronunciation Teaching and Research: A Selected Bibliography" (Tracey and Murray, 2005) provides a comprehensive list of research articles and books on pronunciation teaching and research.

Chinese learners face specific challenges with Thai consonant and vowel pronunciation due to differences between the two languages' systems. Moreover, mastering Thai's special phonemes, such as "ฉ", "ณ", "ศ", "ษ", and "ฬ", presents additional hurdles. Additionally, Thai's tonal nature poses difficulties in accurately reproducing its five intonations (high, low, rising, falling, and flat), affecting speech accuracy (Chen, 2020). Understanding Thai's serial pronunciation and syllable structure also proves challenging for Chinese learners, leading to unnatural speech patterns. Furthermore, discriminating between similar phonemes in Thai poses difficulties, as subtle differences may alter word meanings.

### **2.5.2 Thai Vocabulary and Speaking Expressions**

Learning Thai vocabulary poses significant difficulties for Chinese students, who may struggle with the language's larger and more complex lexicon compared to Chinese. Insufficient vocabulary often leads to unclear expression and inaccurate word usage, hindering effective communication (Musheke, 2021). The most common challenges that Chinese students encounter in Thai learning is spoken Thai, followed by Thai reading and writing, with listening skills being the least encountered problem (Li , 2019). This pattern of difficulties aligns with findings from other studies on second language acquisition, indicating the challenges learners face in acquiring proficiency in oral communication and written expression in a new language (Liu, 2018).

This fear of speaking among Chinese students learning Thai has been identified as one of the most common challenges (Wu and Chen, 2023). Students are often hesitant to engage in oral communication in Thai due to their fear of making mistakes and feeling inadequate in their language skills. They perceive themselves as lacking fluency and clarity in speaking, leading to embarrassment when communicating with native Thai speakers. Consequently, Chinese students' oral proficiency in Thai progresses slowly, as they may avoid opportunities for practice and interaction. Overcoming this fear and building confidence in speaking Thai are crucial aspects of language acquisition and require supportive learning environments and targeted interventions (Huang, 2021). Efforts to address students' apprehensions and provide opportunities for meaningful communication can facilitate their progress in developing oral proficiency in Thai.

There are differences between Thai and Chinese, and students may be confused in choosing appropriate words and expressions (Phonphanich, 2021). Students don't know how to use this word, which makes them use wrong words, and they don't know how to say it, including using appropriate words. This may lead to inaccurate or inappropriate expression in actual communication.

Scholarly works such as "Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Second Language Acquisition" (Schmitt, 1997) and "Vocabulary in Language Teaching" (Norbert, 2000) explore strategies and factors influencing vocabulary acquisition, including memory skills, word frequency, and contextual learning. Similarly, "Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition" (James and Thomas, 1997) delves into the process of vocabulary acquisition, emphasizing exposure, frequency, and incidental learning. Understanding the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language proficiency is crucial, as discussed in "Vocabulary and Second Language Success" (Stuart, 2015).

Practical guidance for teaching vocabulary is provided in "Vocabulary Teaching in Second Language Acquisition: An Integrated Approach" (I.S.P. Nation, 2013), which covers instructional strategies, assessment methods, and vocabulary development techniques.

Part-of-speech confusion and the misuse of words with similar meanings are common challenges faced by Chinese learners, leading to unclear language expression and grammatical errors. Moreover, navigating Thai slang and colloquial expressions presents difficulties, as these are often absent from formal language materials. Additionally, differences in language habits between Thai and Chinese, such as euphemisms and polite expressions, further complicate communication for Chinese learners unfamiliar with Thai language customs (Wu and Chen, 2023).

### **2.5.3. Thai Grammatical Structure**

Studies such as Kiyoko's (2014) analysis of Thai grammar for developing freshman textbooks reveal a curriculum focus on speaking skills in Thai language programs for foreigners, neglecting grammar and syntax, which are crucial for understanding Thai expressions. Elly (2017) explores diverse approaches to grammar teaching, while Lourdes (2009) delves into theoretical perspectives on second language acquisition, emphasizing the role of grammar in language development.

The grammatical structure of Thai is quite different from that of Chinese, so students may need to adapt to the new grammatical rules. For example, the word order of subject-predicate object in Thai may be different from that in Chinese.

Scholarly works like "Grammar Acquisition and Processing Instructions" (Alessandro and James, 2008) investigate the effectiveness of grammar teaching methods and their long-term impacts, while Keith (2016) discusses blended course

designs for grammar instruction in second language acquisition. Marianne and Diane (2019) offer practical guidance for teaching grammar in ESL/EFL settings, covering verb tenses, sentence structure, and word order.

Chinese students encounter difficulties with word order, verb morphology, and the use of grammatical particles in Thai. Compound sentence and clause structures, as well as noun and adjective usage, differ between Thai and Chinese, leading to confusion and grammatical errors. Moreover, expressing tenses and moods in Thai presents challenges for Chinese learners, affecting the accuracy of their grammar and communication.

#### **2.5.4 Listening and Reading Comprehension**

The challenges of reading vocabulary is that students know a small number of vocabulary and don't understand the meaning of vocabulary. It is very common that students have problems in reading sentences (Irkinovich, 2022). This problem is a continuous unity of misunderstanding of vocabulary, which makes China students read sentences slowly without understanding the meaning of sentences. Or because Thai and Chinese sentences are not in the same order. Students in China will find it difficult to read.

It is difficult for students to read the paragraph (Irkinovich, 2022). The problem is that students don't understand the order of sentences, which makes them unable to understand the meaning of this paragraph. When reading this paragraph, if the paragraph is difficult to use and the content is very delicate, students can't grasp the content of this paragraph.

The problem is that students know a small number of words, but they don't understand the meaning of words. Difficult words and unfamiliar words make it

difficult for China students to listen. Chinese students do not understand the content in the sentence. If the Thai people speak very fast, they will not be able to understand what the Thai people say, especially if the word is a synonym, the word is written and the meaning is Different, sometimes it just sounds wrong.

### **2.5.5 Cultural Background and Language Environment**

Thai is the official language of Thailand, and students may need immersive learning and practice to better understand the culture and context behind the language. Adapting to the Thai language environment and language usage in daily life was also a challenge.

when learning Thai, some of which mainly involve pronunciation, pronunciation, intonation and actual communication. Oral communication maintains people's normal lives and promotes the normal operation of society. Xiong Yu and Gu Shenghua talked about the importance of listening and speaking ability in their book "Self-Training of Listening and Listening Ability" and said: In real social life, listening and speaking maintain people's normal life and promote the normal operation of society (Xiong and Gu, 2000). It has an ordinary but great role! Because the environment we live in is a social collective, and every normal member of this social collective (except the deaf-mute) either communicates ideas, understands the situation, or solves problems. , all of which require oral communication. This is because speaking is a moderate process that conveys the communicator's thoughts and helps the communicator understand the meaning of the communication (Xiong, 2000).

However, the vocabulary chosen for daily communication in Thai should be appropriate to the level of the language and context (Xu and Li, 2024). The main problem in students' oral communication is vocabulary. They know a small number of vocabulary words, do not know the meaning of the vocabulary, and do not know how

to use the vocabulary, which makes Chinese students make mistakes when using vocabulary . Recognizing the small number of vocabulary is an important issue in learning Thai because vocabulary is the basis of all language learning (Zhang and Wang, 2022). Therefore, if students know that the vocabulary is small, no matter how good the teacher is, it will be difficult to teach learners to achieve higher development. Efforts to expand learners' vocabulary knowledge and usage are crucial for improving their oral communication skills in Thai.

## **2.6 RELATED PREVIOUS STUDIES**

The complexities of teaching and learning Thai as a foreign language have been a subject of extensive research, particularly within multicultural contexts. Usaha (2019) delves into the challenges and strategies associated with teaching Thai in such settings, with a specific focus on a case study conducted in Malaysia. The study underscores the necessity of considering students' diverse linguistic backgrounds and cultural differences to effectively impart Thai language skills, providing invaluable insights for educators navigating multicultural classrooms.

In parallel, Sakulwichien and Poedpong (2018) have contributed to the field by developing a robust assessment model tailored to evaluate the proficiency of non-native Thai speakers accurately. Their comprehensive framework offers a standardized approach for gauging language competence, aiding educators and policymakers in assessing learners' progress effectively.

Chaemsawang and Pitukthamrong (2018) used in-depth interviews and questionnaires to study the challenges and difficulties that foreign students may face when learning Thai in Thailand. The study found that the main problems encountered by foreign students when learning Thai include pronunciation, grammar, and

vocabulary difficulties and cultural differences, etc.

Tiraskul and Sudchanam (2019) studied the obstacles and challenges foreign students face when learning Thai through interviews and questionnaires, and explored their views and suggestions. Research results show that the main obstacles for international students to learn Thai include pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, cultural differences and language environment.

Saengthong and Surinrum (2020) used survey research methods to explore the challenges and difficulties faced by foreign students when learning Thai. The research results show that the most common problems faced by foreign students when learning Thai include pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and reading ability.

In the study of Klinprathum (2018) and Phothika (2019), they used questionnaires and interviews to study the challenges and difficulties of foreign students face when learning Thai as a second language. Research has found that the biggest obstacles for foreign students when learning Thai include pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural differences.

In the study of Makawan Poomcharean (2020) conducted a survey on the use of Thai language among 15 Chinese students who enrolled in Chiang Mai University in Thailand in 2018 and participated in the Thai language program of Chiang Mai University. In the first semester of the 2018 academic year, Chiang Mai University provided them with specific courses so they could adjust themselves and study courses taught in Thai by Thai professors. However, these students differed in terms of Thai ambiguity, for example, some students learned Thai during high school and took additional courses in Thailand for 1 year or 6 months, while some students did not know any Thai words but were Some tutoring schools in Thailand study Thai language

with Chinese teachers for 1 year, 9 months or 6 months respectively. As a professor who teaches Thai language to Chinese students, the researcher became interested in the use of Thai language by Chinese students at Chiang Mai University in order to improve the efficiency of education and better arrange courses that are more suitable for students' language backgrounds. The findings underscore the critical role of regular practice and immersion in fostering fluency and proficiency in Thai language acquisition.

The results show that Chinese students do not use Thai in their daily lives, which results in them being unable to speak or pronounce, and they are also embarrassed to speak because they are worried that they cannot speak clearly. They cannot speak Thai fluently when they do not have the opportunity to practice regularly.

In the study of Dudsadee Kongsombut (2006), he Through research on foreigners' Thai language teaching experience, it was found that the problems and solutions for foreigners using Thai are: unclear pronunciation of consonants, long pronunciation of vowels, and uncommonly used polite ending particles such as "kha" ” or “khrap”, and the use of greetings, teachers address these issues by having them practice each item repeatedly, which learners can imitate successfully.

Jaroungsirawat (1993) in a study of Thai language and culture teaching in Australia found that writing the Thai alphabet was a challenge for learners and Thai grammar was an important issue for them because of the transfer and use of tones 44. The spelling of words with Chinese characters and 32 vowels also has a great impact on learning Thai. This is similar to Rahim and Ha mzah (2009). Clarify that problems in learning Thai as a foreign language are entirely due to language differences in phonetics, morphology, and syntax. Furthermore, Wei and Suthummarangsi (2010) revealed that the most challenging part for Taiwanese people to learn Thai is the tones

and letter writing, which is due to learners feeling confused and bored in tone switching and letter writing.

In conclusion, for Chinese students using Thai as a foreign language, the most critical issues are their pronunciation, grammar, and knowledge of Thai vocabulary, including insufficient understanding of Thai vocabulary, spelling errors, lack of understanding of word meanings, lack of knowledge of how to use words, and word structure leading to their misuse of vocabulary, especially difficult words or unfamiliar special words. The problems related to insufficient vocabulary seriously affect foreign language learning performance and may lead to ongoing learning problems. This is because vocabulary is the foundation for learning any language. Therefore, no matter how smart the teacher is, if learners only know a small amount of vocabulary, it is difficult for them to acquire Greater achievements. Using words with incorrect meanings due to incorrect spelling is also a problem and challenge for them, as Thai has more tonal patterns than Chinese, combined with 44 consonant letters and 32 vowel characters, all of which are confusing and become future writing problems; This is consistent with the research of Jaroungsirawat (1999) and Rahim and Hamzah (2009).

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

The literature shows that Thai language skills are one of the most important factors influencing the social and academic experiences of Chinese international students in environments where Thai is used as a foreign language. Therefore, overcoming Thai language barriers can accelerate Chinese students' adaptation to potential social and cultural issues that may arise in the host country context in Thailand (Alharbi, 2017). With the cooperation in higher education between Thailand and China, more and more Chinese students are entering Thailand to study and live.

When Chinese students learn Thai as a foreign language, they face many challenges, mainly focusing on vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and cultural differences. In order to better understand the learning situation of Chinese students, it is necessary to understand the Thai language learning situation of Chinese students in the context of Thai language and the problems that arise when learning to use Thai as a foreign language. Therefore, this study will use Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory (SLA) to explore the problems Chinese students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language in a Thai environment through questionnaires and interviews.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes the research methodology, including the research design, context of the study, population and sample, research instrument, Validity and reliability of research instrument, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

In this study, researchers used a mixed methods to investigate the challenges encountered by Master Degree Chinese students studying at the Graduate School of Huachiew Chalermprakiet University of Overseas Chinese in Thailand in learning Thai as a foreign language, and found differences in their oral skills in learning Thai as a foreign language at different levels of Thai proficiency.

Mixed method research stands out from the paradigm war between qualitative and quantitative research methods and becomes a widely used research model (Terrell, 2012). Qualitative method aims to understand the complex reality and the significance of action in a specific background. In addition, quantitative methods seek to obtain accurate and reliable measurement results for statistical analysis (Queirós, Faria and Almeida, 2017).

The instruments used in this study were questionnaires and structured interviews. The quantitative data from the questionnaires were then analyzed using the calculation

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 29.0) of mean, variance, and standard deviation, and the qualitative data from the structured interviews were analyzed using content analysis. Finally, the research questions of this study were answered through the analysis and comparison of the two sets of data.

### **3.2 RESEARCH SITE**

This research was conducted at the Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand. The Huachiew Chalermprakiet University was founded in 1941 and was named the Huachiew Chalermprakiet University on May 11, 1992 by King Rama IX of Thailand. Currently, there are more than 550 Chinese students studying at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand.

Huachiew Chalermprakiet University (HCU) is located 18 kilometers away from the Bang Nada Highway in Bang Chalong District, Bang Phli District, Samut Prakan Province, Thailand, covering an area of approximately More than 140 hectares. It is a four-year non-profit private university operated by the "Overseas Chinese Bao De Shan Tang", a charity organization run by overseas Chinese in Thailand. The school gate is a Chinese-style archway with five entrances. The horizontal plaque reads: "Huachiew Chalermprakiet University" in traditional Chinese, English and Thai. In the early days of the university, there were only five colleges. Now it has developed into 11 colleges and about 30 departments (majors) that are qualified to award bachelor's and master's degrees. It has also added an "Yushe Branch" in the center of Bangkok to hold further training and academic seminars. On campus There are about 9,000 students and about 800 faculty and staff.

### 3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

#### 3.3.1 The Research Population

The population of this study were 65 second-year master degree Chinese students who are studying in learning Thai as a second language communication program at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand in the 2023 academic year. Students were with mixed gender and mixed abilities.

#### 3.3.2 The Research Sample

This study used a simple random sampling method and purposive sampling method to select sample. The simple random sampling method was used to select the sample of a questionnaire survey, and the purposive sampling method was used to select the sample of the Structured Interview.

This research sample calculated used Taro Yamane's formula with a 95% confidence level (Yamane, 1967). The calculation formula of Taro Yamane presents as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \quad (3-1)$$

Where, n = The sample size

N = The size of the population

e = The error of 5 percentage points (0.05)

The calculation is shown as follows:

$$\frac{65}{1 + 65 * 0.05^2} = 56$$

According to Taro Yamane's formula, 56 students were calculated as the sample size for this questionnaire survey. After getting the questionnaire results, the 7 Structured Interview questions were formulated in line with the findings from the questionnaire. After that, the researcher selected ten volunteers with more than two years of Thai language learning experiences Structured Interviews through the purposive sampling method.

### **3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

The research tools used in this study include questionnaires and structured interviews. The questionnaire and structured interview questions were written by the researcher after reading a large amount of literature on second language learning. Questionnaires are quantitative research tools, and Structured Interviews are qualitative research tools.

#### **3.4.1 The Questionnaire**

This questionnaire survey aims to investigate the challenges and difficulties Master Degree Chinese international students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language. Based on the difficulties students encounter in learning and using Thai and their opinions on learning Thai. Various kind of rating scales have been developed to measure attitudes directly. The most widely used is the Likert Scale (1932). Each question was represented by 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, and 5-strongly agree. As show in Appendix A, This research design will design 48 questions and divide them into 6 parts. After IOC experts, total of 48 questionnaire questions will be distributed to participants.

Table 3.1 The 5-point Likert Scale

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

1) The first part is the student's basic personal information, with 7 items. For example : student's gender, age.

2) The second part investigates the Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning speaking Thai, with 9 items. For example: Do you have difficulty learning professional terms (such as scientific terms, and medical terms.) in Thai? Have you ever been unable to express yourself accurately because you don' t know the correct vocabulary?

3) The third Part investigates the Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning speaking Thai, with 10 items. For example: Are the grammatical challenges in learning to speak Thai as a second language related to Thai nouns, adjectives, and grammatical structures?

4) The fourth part investigates the Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics encountered by Chinese students when they learning speaking Thai, with 12 items. For example: Can Chinese students accurately pronounce the correct tone of each syllable? Can Chinese students accurately identify compound consonants in words and pronounce them correctly?

5) The fifth part investigates the Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment when Chinese students learning speaking Thai, with 4 items. For example: Do cultural differences have a big impact on the way Thai is expressed? When communicating with Thai people, have you ever had communication

difficulties because you were not familiar with local customs?

6) The last part investigates the Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension when Chinese students learning Thai, with 6 items. For example: Do you have problems reading in Thai because you don't understand the meaning of Thai words? Can you understand when communicating with native Thai speakers?

Table 3.2 The Structure of the Questionnaire

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Location</b>
General Information	Q1-Q7
The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai	Q8-Q16
The Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai	Q17-Q26
The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics faced by Chinese students when learning Thai	Q27-Q38
The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment when Chinese students learning Thai	Q39-Q42
The Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension	Q43-Q48

### **3.4.2 The Structured Interview**

The qualitative structured interview is one of the most important and widely used data collection methods in the social sciences (Bradford and Cullen, 2013).

The Structured Interview in this study is intended to support and supplement the results of the questionnaire survey. According to the questionnaire results, the researcher will select ten voluntary students with different Thai Language proficiency levels to do a face-to-face Structured Interview, respectively, with purposive sampling.

There are 7 questions in this Structured Interview:

- 1) Why do you want to learn Thai as a foreign language?
- 2) What do you think is the most troublesome challenges for you when learning to speak Thai?
- 3) Do you have a favorite way to practice speaking Thai?
- 4) Do you think Thai grammar is difficult for you?
- 5) Do you think building up your vocabulary will help you speak Thai?
- 6) How would you increase your vocabulary?
- 7) Do you think learning to speak Thai as your foreign language will help you find a job in the future?

### **3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENTS**

Validity and reliability are essential elements in developing instrument measures (Sharma, 2016). Validity checks how well an instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure. Reliability is the ability of an examination instrument to make consistent measurements (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011).

#### **3.5.1 Validity of Research Instruments**

The Project Objective Consistency Index (IOC) developed by Rovinelli and Hambleton is used for testing development to evaluate the effectiveness of content

during the project development phase (Rovinelli and Hambleton, 1977).

In this study, three experts will be invited to validate the tool using the Project Objective Consistency Index (IOC) to calculate whether the tool matches the learning objectives. The validation expert will be composed of three experts from Rangsit University in Thailand. Three experts need to choose one of the three options according to the score of -1 to 1. Evaluate the suitability between the measurement content and the measurement target. In order to ensure the validity of the data, the researchers applied (IOC) to the validity evaluation of the questionnaire, organized an expert group to evaluate all the items in the questionnaire according to the scoring range standard of -1 to +1, and gave a score of 1 (conforming to the measurement), -1 (not conforming to the measurement) or 0 (suspicious). The item with the highest score of 1 in the questionnaire was determined as an exception item agreed by all experts.

According to Rovinelli and Hambleton (1977), IOC scoring scales from -1 to 1. Following are the details:

+1: The experts are sure that the items match the learning objectives.

0: The experts are uncertain whether the item can match the learning objectives.

-1: The experts consider that the items are not matching the learning objectives.

Total points for each item must have a consistency value equal to or above 0.67 to +1 (Rovinelli and Hambleton, 1977).

The formula for calculating the IOC is as follows:

$$IOC = \sum \frac{r}{n} \quad (3-2)$$

Where; IOC = Item-Objective Congruence

R = Sum of the scores of experts

n = Number of experts

It stands for the scores of individual experts, and 'n' stands for the number of three experts. Three experts scored each item in the questionnaire. For one of the projects, if three experts point 1, the result is  $1+1+1=3$  points, then the 3 points should be divided by three experts, and the result is  $3/3=1$ . If two experts point 1 and one another expert score 0, the result is:  $1 + 1 + 0 = 2$  points, and the result is  $2 / 3 = 0.67$ . If one expert gets 1 point and the other two experts get 0 point, the result will be  $1 + 0 + 0 = 1$ , then  $IOC = 1 / 3 = 0.33$ . To make the rating simple, if an item's value falls between 0.67 to +1, the item would be considered valid and accepted. However, if the value falls between 0.67 to -1, it means that the item needs to be altered.

### 3.5.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

Lee Cronbach developed alpha in 1951 to measure the internal consistency of a test or scale. Reliability can be calculated in various ways, but Cronbach's alpha value is widely used to measure internal survey tools or reliability (Sharma, 2016).

In order to ensure the practicality of the questionnaire, the researcher conducted a questionnaire survey on students who were not within the scope of this study. The researchers used Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) formula to ensure the reliability of the 56 questionnaires.

Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{N\bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1)\bar{c}} \quad (3-3)$$

Where; N = the Number of items

$\bar{c}$  = average covariance between item-pairs

$\bar{v}$  = average variance

George and Mallery (2010) explained that the values of Cronbach's coefficient are as follows:

$\geq 0.9$  = excellent

$\geq 0.8$  = good

$\geq 0.7$  = acceptable

$\geq 0.6$  = problematic

$\geq 0.5$  = poor

$\leq 0.5$  = unacceptable

According to this evaluation index, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha value is set at least  $\geq 0.7$ , the questionnaire with score value  $\geq 0.7$  include in the effective questionnaire of this study, and the questionnaire with score value  $\leq 0.5$  is eliminated as an invalid questionnaire to ensure the reliability of the research questionnaire.

### 3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Firstly, the questionnaire data will be collected through online applications, there are a total of 48 questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed within 20 minutes and all participants participated, a total of 56 people. After students complete the questionnaire, the researcher will analyze the problems encountered by

Chinese students in Thailand speaking Thai as a foreign language. Researcher will analyze vocabulary problems, grammar problems, pronunciation problems, and The communication problems caused by culture differences when Chinese students speaking Thai.

Secondly, in order to obtain more intuitive information and enhance the authenticity of the data, the researcher will take a sample and select 10 ten volunteers with more than two years of Thai language learning experiences to conduct face-to-face structured interviews of 20 to 30 minutes. After the interview, the researcher will sort out the information provided by the interviewee students and conduct data analysis with their consent.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

This study will use quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis. This study used the SPSS 29.0 (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) calculation of mean, variance, and standard deviation to analyze the questionnaire data. In addition, the researcher also used content analysis as an analysis method for structured interview data.

#### **3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

For the quantitative study, the researcher of this study will use the SPSS 29.0 (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) calculation of mean, variance and standard deviation to analyze the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire sent to the respondents. The questionnaire responses will be analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean and standard deviation. Then they will be interpreted using the Likert 5-point method, ranging from 1 to 5.

The score range interpretation (Degang (2010) is as follows:

- 4.50 - 5.00 = Highest (Strongly agree),
- 3.50 - 4.49 = High (Agree),
- 2.50 - 3.49 = Medium (Moderate),
- 1.50 - 2.49 = Low (Disagree),
- 1.00 - 1.49 = Lowest (Strongly disagree),

### **3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Content analysis is considered the most appropriate method for secondary analysis of interview transcripts (Douglas, Hamilton and Grubs, 2009). In this study, the researcher used content analysis as an analysis method for structured interview data. First, the researcher conducted a detailed analysis of the text by looking at the opinions expressed by the interviewees. Ideas are then grouped into topics, which means the same topics are grouped together. In addition, the researcher compiled information from participants' interviews to understand the problems they encountered while learning Thai and collected detailed information about their learning to use Thai as a second language to report the results.

## **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Ethics is the study of philosophical ideas of right and wrong actions. Ethics is the study of good behavior, character, and motivation. The researcher will strictly maintain the anonymity of all participants and the confidentiality of their opinions. Participant responses and information are used for research purposes only, they are reported as complete results and were not published individually.

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the method which was adopted for the

study. It has described the research design; research instruments, the reliability and validity used for study instrument as well as the data collection procedures and statistics data that were used for data analysis.

In the next chapter, Chapter 4, all the results from the data analysis will be reported accordingly.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

This chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative results of the data collected via the instruments described in Chapter 3. It also provides the data analysis and the interpretation of the participants' questionnaire responses, and Structured Interview. The findings are described in accordance with the research objectives and the tables as well as the diagrams are illustrated for more vivid presentation of the findings.

#### **4.1 ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA**

This questionnaire survey was targeted at the students of learning in a Thai as a second language communication program in the 2023 academic year of Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand. In this study, 56 students completed the questionnaire, which contained six sections: personal information, the challenges of vocabulary and expressions, the challenges of grammar structure, the challenges of pronunciation and phonetics, the challenges of cultural background and language environment, and the challenges of listening and reading comprehension. A total 56 questionnaire were distributed and 56 were returned, with a 100% return rate.

##### **4.1.1 Part I: Personal Information of the Participants**

The researcher developed a questionnaire with the personal information at the beginning. The information collected includes gender, age, time of learning Thai, and Thai language proficiency.

#### 4.1.1.1 Gender of Participants

The Figure 4.1 shows the participants' gender.

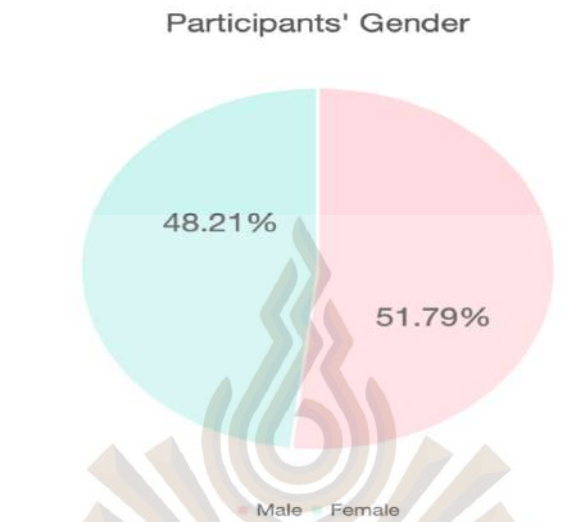


Figure 4.1 Participants' Gender

The survey involved 56 students, including 29 male students and 27 female students. Boys accounted for 51.79% and girls accounted for 48.21%.

#### 4.1.1.2 Age of Participants

The Figure 4.2 shows the participants' age.

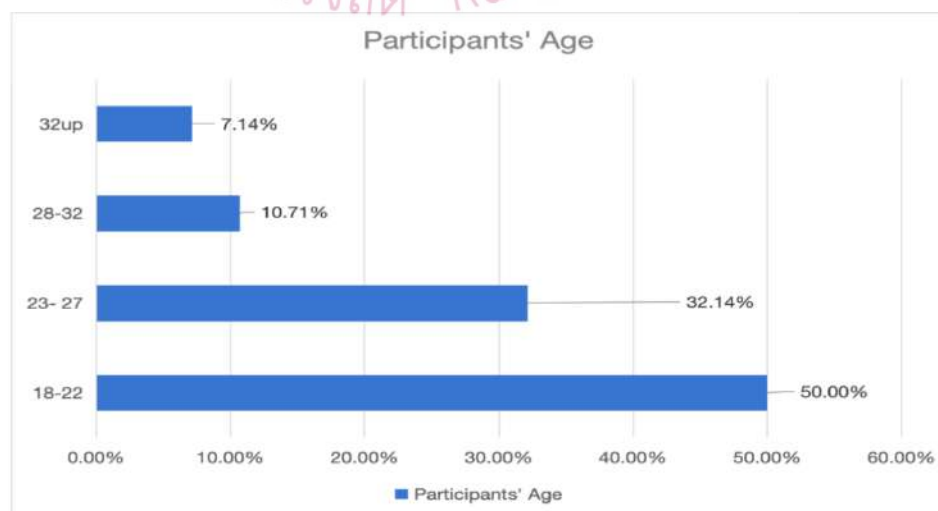


Figure 4.2 Participants' Age

Based on Figure 4.2, the participants' ages breakdowns were: 18-22 (n = 28; 50%), 23-27 (n = 18; 32.14%), 28-32 (n = 6; 10.71%), and 32 up (n = 4; 7.14%).

#### 4.1.1.3 Participants' Length of Learning Thai

The Figure 4.3 shows the participants' Length of Learning Thai

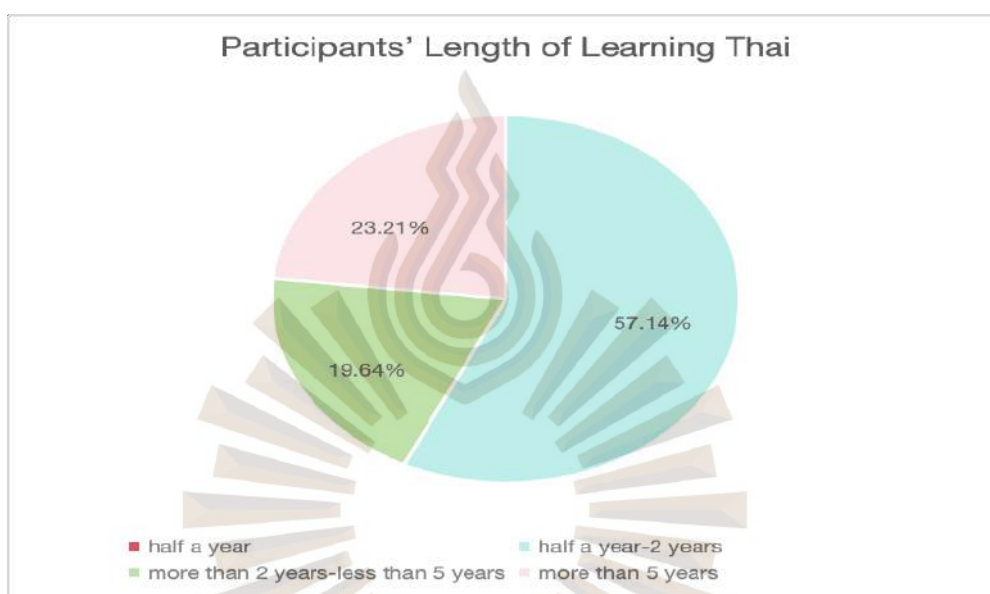


Figure 4.3 Participants' Length of Learning Thai

According to Figure 4.4, 57.14% of the 56 students had studied Thai half a year-2 years, 19.64% students had studied Thai more than 2 years-less than 5 years, 23.21% students had studied Thai more than 5 years.

#### 4.1.1.4 Participants' Self-assessment of the Thai Proficiency Level

The Figure 4.4 shows the Participants' Self-assessment of the Thai proficiency level.

participants' Self-assessment of the Thai proficiency level

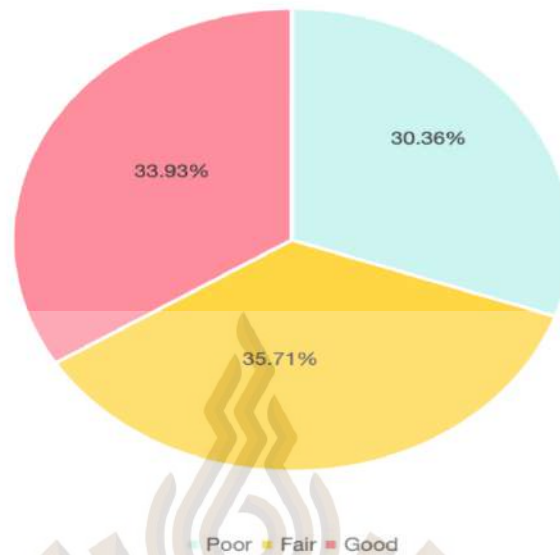


Figure 4.4 Participants' Self-assessment of the Thai Proficiency Levels

Based on Figure 4.4, we could see the participants' Self-assessment of the Thai proficiency level were Poor (n=17;30.36%), Fair (n=20; 35.71%), Good (n=19; 33.93%).

#### 4.1.1.5 The Participants' Opinions about Learning Thai

The Figure 4.5 shows The number of participants who like and dislike learning Thai

The number of participants who like and dislike learning Thai

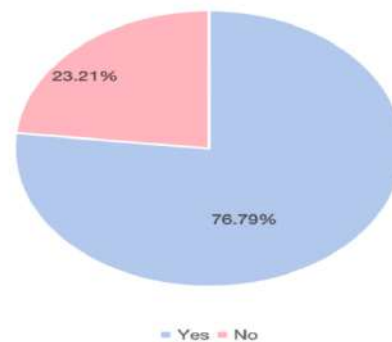


Figure 4.5 The number of participants who like and dislike learning Thai

Based on Figure 4.5, we could see that 76.79% students like learning Thai, and 23.21% of students dislike learning Thai.

#### 4.1.2 Part II: Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language

A total of 41 perception items were surveyed in this questionnaire with five points ranging from, strongly agree to strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = moderate, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

In this part, questionnaire items on the common challenges encountered by Chinese students in learning Thai as a foreign language were divided into five categories: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, listening and reading, and the influence of cultural environment background. The details of the responses are shown below as Table 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5.

Table 4.1 Analysis of Items No.8-16 The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items.

No	Items	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Interpretation
8	I think is difficult to understand the homonyms that appear in Thai.	4.50	.739	Strongly Agree
9	I think it is difficult to master the foreign words in Thai (such as English loan words)	4.13	.764	Agree
10	I think it difficult to learn professional terms in Thai (such as scientific terms and medical terms.)	4.23	.687	Agree
11	I think slang and idioms in Thai difficult to master.	4.09	.769	Agree

Table 4.1 Analysis of Items No.8-16 The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items (Cont.)

12	I think it difficult to use modal particles in Thai.	4.13	.896	Agree
13	I am very satisfied with the vocabulary I have mastered so far.	4.30	.913	Agree
14	I can master numerals and quantifiers in Thai very well.	4.07	.850	Agree
15	I think adverbs and adjectives in Thai are easy to understand.	3.96	.852	Agree
16	I have been unable to express myself accurately because I did not know the correct vocabulary.	3.75	.858	Agree
Total		4.13	.814	Agree

According to the questionnaire items in The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai including Items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, the students' Interpretation of perception in this category was regarded of the agree with the total mean ( $\bar{x}$ )= 4.13, and SD of 0.814. As mentioned previously, only one item was rated in the strongly agree, that was Item 8, ( $\bar{x}$ )= 4.50, "I think it difficult to understand the homonyms that appear in Thai." Eight items ( Item 9 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.13, Item 10 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.23, Item 11 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.09, Item 12 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.13, Item 13 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.30, Item 14 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.07, Item 15 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.96, Item 16 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.75) were rated in the agree.

Table 4.2 Analysis of Items No.17-26 The Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items.

No.	Items	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Interpretation
17	I think the grammatical structure of Thai poses a challenge to my language expression ability.	3.49	.991	Moderate
18	I think the verb forms and tenses of Thai pose great difficulties to my learning.	4.09	.900	Agree
19	I think Thai grammar is easy to master.	3.80	.818	Agree
20	I'm often confused about Thai verb conjugations and tenses.	3.88	.854	Agree
21	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of nouns.	4.16	.826	Agree
22	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of adjectives.	4.14	.724	Agree
23	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of modal particles and auxiliary verbs.	4.27	.981	Agree
24	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the syntactic structure.	4.34	.774	Agree
25	I used to be unable to express myself accurately because I was not familiar with the grammatical rules of Thai.	4.39	.679	Agree
26	I think the hardest part of Thai grammar is the use of pronouns.	4.11	.846	Agree
Total		4.07	.839	Agree

According to the questionnaire items in The Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai including Items 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26 , the students' interpretation of perception in this category was regarded of the agree with the total mean ( $\bar{x}$ )= 4.07, and SD of 0.839. As mentioned previously, only one item was rated in the moderate, that was Item 17, ( $\bar{x}$ )= 3.49, "I think the grammatical structure of Thai poses a challenge to my language expression ability." Nine items ( Item 18 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.09, Item 19 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.80, Item 20 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.88, Item 21 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.16, Item 22 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.14, Item 23 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.27, Item 24 ( $\bar{x}$ ) =4.34, Item 25 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.39, Item 26 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.11, ) were rated in the agree.

Table 4.3 Analysis of Items No.27- 38 The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics faced by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items

No.	Items	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Interpretation
27	I can pronounce the correct tone of each syllable accurately.	4.02	1.000	Agree
28	I think the Thai tone system has a great influence on my pronunciation.	4.30	.829	Agree
29	I can distinguish the pronunciation of long vowels and short vowels.	4.09	.837	Agree
30	I can pronounce some consonants in Thai clearly and accurately, such as $\text{ʃ}$ (s), $\text{tʃ}$ (ch), $\text{f}$ (f), etc.	4.21	.803	Agree
31	I can pronounce some specific consonants and vowels in Thai clearly and accurately, such as "ก" (ch <sup>h</sup> ), "ฟ" (f), "ร" (r).	4.14	.903	Agree

Table 4.3 Analysis of Items No.27- 38 The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics faced by Chinese students when they learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items (Cont.)

32	I can pronounce vowel combinations correctly, such as เ, เ-เ, เอ, etc.	4.07	.970	Agree
33	I can distinguish between tongue and throat sounds very well, such as ร, ฦ, ฦ, อ.	3.43	1.158	Moderate
34	I can pronounce some final consonants accurately, such as ต, ฦ, ฦ, etc.	3.88	.916	Agree
35	I think the guttural sounds in Thai, such as "ก" (k <sup>h</sup> ), "ค" (k <sup>h</sup> ), "ห" (h), are difficult for me to master.	3.93	.912	Agree
36	I can accurately identify compound consonants in words and pronounce them correctly.	3.96	.830	Agree
37	I can master the Thai tone system very well	4.14	.862	Agree
38	I find inflection (rising and falling at the end of sentences) difficult in Thai.	4.30	.784	Agree
Total		4.04	.900	Agree

According to the questionnaire items in Quantitative data on The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics faced by Chinese students when they learning Thai including Items 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, and 38 , the students' interpretation of perception in this category was regarded of the agree with the total mean ( $\bar{x}$ )= 4.04 , and SD of 0.900. As mentioned previously, only one item was rated in the moderate, that was Item 33, ( $\bar{x}$ )= 3.43, "I can distinguish between tongue and throat sounds very well, such as ร, ฦ, ฦ, อ." Eleven items (Item 27 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.02, Item 28 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.30, Item 29 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.09, Item 30 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.21, Item 31 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.14, Item 32 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.07,

Item 34 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.87, Item 35 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.93, Item 36 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.96, Item 37 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.14, Item 38 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.30,) were rated in the agree.

Table 4.4 Analysis of Items No.39- 42 The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment when Chinese students learning Thai and explanation of questionnaire items.

No.	Items	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Interpretation
39	I think cultural differences have a great impact on understanding and using specific vocabulary in Thai.	3.93	.850	Agree
40	I think cultural differences have a great impact on Thai expressions.	4.23	.809	Agree
41	When communicating with Thai people, I once had communication barriers because I was not familiar with local customs.	4.04	.762	Agree
42	When learning Thai, I think it is important to understand and adapt to Thai culture for the use and understanding of vocabulary.	4.05	.840	Agree
Total		4.06	.815	Agree

According to the questionnaire items in The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment when Chinese students learning Thai including Items 39, 40, 41, and 42 , the students' interpretation of perception in this category was regarded of the agree with the total mean ( $\bar{x}$ )= 4.06, and SD of 0.815. All of four items ( Item 39 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.93, Item 40 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.23, Item 41 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.04, Item 42 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.05, ) were rated in agree.

Table 4.5 Analysis of Items No.43- 48 The Challenges of Listening and Reading

Comprehension and explanation of questionnaire items.

No.	Items	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Interpretation
43	Native Thai speakers may speak at a faster speed during oral communication, which may cause difficulty in listening comprehension for beginners.	4.38	.702	Agree
44	Different regions in Thailand have different accents and dialects, and this difference can make it difficult for students to understand Thai spoken by people in different regions.	4.14	.943	Agree
45	When learning Thai, insufficient vocabulary will lead to difficulties in reading comprehension.	3.98	.981	Agree
46	Sometimes there are certain differences between spoken and written Thai, which makes it difficult for me to understand the difference and lead to difficulty in reading comprehension.	4.25	.919	Agree
47	The professional terminology and industry vocabulary in Thai have caused some difficulties for my listening.	4.18	.936	Agree
48	Some words in Thai may have multiple meanings, and I would have difficulty understanding the words because I could not accurately understand the meaning.	3.93	1.059	Agree
Total		4.14	.923	Agree

According to the questionnaire items in The Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension including Items 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, and 48 , the students' interpretation

of perception in this category was regarded of the agree with the total mean ( $\bar{x}$ )= 4.14, and SD of 0.923. All of Six items (Item 43 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.38, Item 44 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.14, Item 45 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.98, Item 46 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.25, Item 47 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.18, Item 48 ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.93) were rated in the agree.

## 4.2 ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW DATA

In order to supplement and extend the questionnaire and explore more details of the survey sample, the researchers used structured interviews as the main tool for qualitative data collection to study the problems encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai as a foreign language.

There were a total of seven interview questions, and a total of ten volunteers participated in the research were interviewed in a native Chinese language. The interview was recorded, then transcribed, translated, analyzed, and summarized by the researcher. The recordings of the interviews were without any alteration of the content, and the researcher translated them from Chinese into English.

The core themes of the interviews so far have been based on Seven questions and examples of student participant responses are also shown below. (See Appendix E)

Q1. Why do you want to learn Thai as a second language?

1.1) To improve language skills -

Some respondents chose to learn Thai as a foreign language because they were very want to improve their language skills.

“ I think learning Thai is a challenge because I had never been exposed to it before studying in Thailand, and overcoming this challenge will help improve my cognitive abilities and language learning skills.”

(Interviewee 6, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“ I believe that learning Thai is not only for a specific purpose but also to enrich one's language skills. Mastering different languages can improve language flexibility and make it easier for me to adapt to diverse language environments.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

1.2 ) Like Thai culture -

Some respondents chose to learn Thai as a foreign language because they like the Thai cultures.

“ I think that by learning Thai, I can better integrate into Thai culture and understand the local habits and traditions. This helps me build deeper relationships and better adapt to the local society.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I know that Thai is the official language of Thailand, and learning Thai can help me better understand Thai literature, movies, music and other art forms, so as to gain a deeper understanding of the local culture.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“ I am someone with a strong interest in Thai culture, history or art, and learning Thai was a natural way for me to pursue these interests. Through language, I can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of various aspects of Thailand.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, April 26, 2024 )

### 1.3) For work -

Some respondents chose to learn Thai as a foreign language because they hoped to have a good work in the future and can speaking Thai also can help them in their works.

“ I think learning Thai can increase your chances of studying and working in Thailand. Mastering the local language can improve the convenience of life and work and increase communication opportunities with local people.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I believe that knowing Thai can play an important role when negotiating with Thai businesses and partners. I want to start a business in Thailand, which will help me build better business relationships and increase my chances of business success.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I am a Chinese teacher. Learning Thai can help me communicate better with students, let my students learn more knowledge, and also improve my teaching experience.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

### 1.4) For travel

“ I loves traveling. I often travel to Thailand. Learning Thai can enhance my travel experience. Traveling became more enriching and interesting when I was able to communicate with locals in Thai.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

Q2. What do you think is the most troublesome problem for you when learning to speak Thai?

2.1) Learning difficulties in Thai pronunciation -

Some respondents think that learning Thai as a foreign language has many difficulties, including the Thai tone system, Thai alphabet, Thai consonants and vowels, and Thai grammatical structure.

“The tone system of Thai is a challenge for me as a non-Thai native speaker, because different tones can change the meaning of words.”

(Interviewee 1, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“Thai uses a special alphabet system, Thai alphabet. I have never been exposed to this alphabet system, so it may take some time to adapt and master it.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“Thai is quite different from English and other Indo-European languages in grammatical structure. It takes me a lot of time to understand and adapt to this different structure.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, April 25, 2024 )

“Some consonants and vowels in Thai are different from those in other languages, especially playing the tongue. There is no such pronunciation in my mother tongue, so I can't pronounce it, so I need to keep practicing.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“There may be different accents and dialects in different parts of Thailand, which makes me need to adapt to a variety of pronunciation

methods. I can't understand the Thai dialect.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

## 2.2) Expression and communication

In addition to learning difficulties, some respondents believe that learning Thai as a foreign language also has difficulties in speaking, accent, and learning resources.

“There are some expressions in Thai that are related to social class and social rank. I don't know Thai culture very well, so sometimes I don't understand what Thai native speakers want to express.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“When I first came into contact with Thai, I was in an epidemic situation. I was in a non-Thai environment and lacked the opportunity to communicate directly with native speakers, which had a great impact on the improvement of my oral English.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“When I first started learning Thai, I didn't have the opportunity to experience the Thai environment personally, so it was difficult to really integrate into the language and understand idioms and oral expressions.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

## Q3. Do you have a favorite way to practice speaking Thai?

### 3.1 ) Online Learning -

“I will use online language learning platforms, such as Duolingo, Babbel, etc., to learn Thai. These platforms usually offer a wealth of

exercises and lessons.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“I will use Thai learning apps, such as HelloTalk, Memrise, etc., to improve my language skills through interactive and game-based learning.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

### 3.2) By watching Thai movies and TV series -

Some respondents said that they learned Thai by watching Thai movies and TV series, listening to Thai songs, reading Thai literary novels, listening to Thai blogs.

“I listen to Thai music, radio, podcasts or TV shows to improve my listening comprehension. Gradually increase the difficulty, from simple conversations to complex news reports.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“I watch Thai movies and TV series to better understand the real usage of the language and improve my listening skills.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“I think learning to sing Thai songs is a fun way to practice and deepen your understanding of the Thai language through lyrics understanding and pronunciation.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“I will read Thai articles, blogs or novels to learn new vocabulary, phrases and grammatical structures and improve my reading

comprehension.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

### 3.3) By communicating with native speakers

“I will look for a native Thai language partner for language exchange. I can help them learn my native language while learning Thai from them.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“I will try my best to communicate with native Thai speakers in my daily life, which will help improve my oral fluency and communication skills.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication April 26, 2024, )

## Q4. Do you think Thai grammar is difficult for you?

### 4.1 ) Think grammar is difficult

Some respondents said that they found Thai grammar difficult to master in their Thai learning.

“ Yes, I find Thai grammar difficult, especially the sentence structure and the lack of tenses. This is very different from the English I'm used to and it takes a lot of time to get used to.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I sometimes struggle with Thai grammar, especially with the use of classifiers. This takes a while to get used to, but I'm slowly getting better.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“Yes, Thai grammar is a little difficult for me, especially with the tones and how they affect the meaning of words. This requires a lot of

practice and listening.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I do find some aspects of Thai grammar difficult, such as the use of particles. They add subtle changes in meaning, which are difficult to fully grasp.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“ Yes, Thai grammar is a little difficult for me because it's very different from my native language. However, with constant practice, I feel that it is slowly getting easier.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“Thai grammar does challenge me, especially the context-based meaning. You have to pay attention to the context to get the correct meaning, which is a difficult point for me.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

4.2) Think grammar is not difficult -

Some respondents said that in their Thai learning, Thai grammar is not difficult to understand and master.

“I don't think Thai grammar is difficult. I actually appreciate its simplicity, especially the lack of complex verb conjugations, which makes it easier for me to learn.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“No, I find Thai grammar to be masterable and it's much easier than some other languages I've learned once the basic rules are understood.”

(Interviewee 5, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“No, I actually find Thai grammar to be very logical and systematic. The lack of verb tenses makes the grammar easier in some ways.”

(Interviewee 8, personal communication, April 26, 2024 )

“I don't think Thai grammar is particularly difficult. It's more about getting used to the different structures and vocabulary. Over time, with constant practice, this becomes easier and easier.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

Q5. Do you think building up your vocabulary will help you speaking Thai?

5.1 ) Increasing vocabulary helps in speaking Thai -

All the respondents said that in their Thai learning, they felt that increasing their Thai vocabulary helped them in speaking Thai.

“Yes, I think increasing my vocabulary will definitely help me speak Thai. More vocabulary means I can express more ideas and communicate more flexibly in different situations.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“Of course, increasing my vocabulary is an important step to improve my language skills. It not only helps me understand what others say better, but also allows me to express myself more confidently in conversations.”(Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I believe that increasing my vocabulary will significantly improve my

Thai. A rich vocabulary allows me to describe things and express feelings more accurately, which is very important for fluent communication.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“Yes, increasing my vocabulary is very important for me. Having a larger vocabulary allows me to use more appropriate words in different situations, thereby improving communication effectiveness.”

(Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“I think increasing my vocabulary will definitely help. It not only allows me to understand more Thai content, but also allows me to use more complex and diverse sentences when communicating.”

(Interviewee 5, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“Increasing my vocabulary will help me a lot in learning Thai. More vocabulary means I can perform better in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and it is easier to communicate with native Thai speakers.”

(Interviewee 6, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“Of course, I think increasing my vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. Only when I have mastered enough vocabulary can I really speak Thai fluently, not just simple conversations.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“I think increasing my vocabulary is necessary. It not only helps me understand grammar and sentence structure better, but also makes me more natural and fluent when communicating.” (Interviewee 8, personal

communication, April 26, 2024 )

“Yes, increasing my vocabulary is very important for me to learn Thai. More vocabulary allows me to express myself more delicately, thus being more comfortable and flexible in conversation.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, April 26, 2024 )

“There is no doubt that increasing my vocabulary will help me speak Thai. A rich vocabulary allows me to find the right words to express my meaning in different situations and improve the quality of communication.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

Q6. How would you increase your vocabulary?

6.1 ) By communicating with native speakers -

Some respondents said that in their Thai learning, they would increase their Thai vocabulary by reading some Thai books, watching Thai movies and TV series, and writing diaries in Thai.

“I do a language exchange with a native Thai speaker. I will find a native Thai speaker and we can learn each other's language. I can learn a lot of practical vocabulary through communication.”(Interviewee 6, personal communication, April 26, 2024 )

“I join Thai online forums or social media groups. By interacting with other Thai learners or native speakers, I can learn a lot of spoken vocabulary and daily expressions.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

### 6.2) By watching movies and TV shows

“I like Watch Thai movies and TV series with Thai subtitles. This way, I can learn new vocabulary in context and hear the actual Pronunciation and usage of the vocabulary.” (Interviewee 3, personal Communication, April 25, 2024)

### 6.3) Online learning to increase vocabulary

Some respondents said that in their Thai learning, they would use some learning apps and join social groups to supplement their vocabulary.

“I use language learning apps, such as Duolingo or Memories, which have special vocabulary exercises and memory functions to help me systematically learn new words.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024 )

“I take Thai classes or hire a Thai tutor. Through systematic learning and the guidance of a teacher, I can increase my vocabulary more effectively and correct mistakes in time.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024 )

“ I use vocabulary flashcards for memorization. I make physical flashcards or use electronic vocabulary flashcard apps to reinforce new vocabulary by memorizing and testing it over and over again.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I use language learning websites such as Italki or HelloTalk to communicate and practice online with Thai teachers or learning

partners to continuously increase vocabulary through conversation and feedback.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, April 26, 2024 )

Q7. Do you think learning to speak Thai as your second language will help you find a job in the future?

7.1 ) It will help find a job in the future

Some respondents said that learning Thai as a foreign language will help them find jobs in the future.

“ I think yes, because Thailand is a member of ASEAN, and mastering Thai can help me find a job in international organizations or projects In Southeast Asia and expand my career development space.”  
(Interviewee 1, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I think learning Thai will help me find more opportunities in the education industry, such as working as a Thai teacher, translator, or coordinator of cultural exchange projects.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ Yes, because Thailand's manufacturing and agricultural exports are global, and mastering Thai will help me find jobs related to supply chain management and international trade in these industries.”  
(Interviewee 4, personal communication, April 25, 2024 )

“ I think yes, in the field of healthcare and public health, Thai language skills will enable me to participate in international aid and cooperation projects related to Thailand and increase employment opportunities.”

(Interviewee 5, personal communication, April 25, 2024 )

“ I think yes, learning Thai will help me find a job in the news media and publishing industry, especially positions involving Thai news reporting and cultural communication.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ I think so. Thailand has a very developed tourism industry, and learning Thai will allow me to find more opportunities in the tourism, hotel and service industries, especially those positions that require communication with Thai tourists or partners.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

7.2 ) It will not help find a job in the future -

Some respondents said that learning Thai as a foreign language will not help them find jobs.

“ Probably not, because if my future career plan does not involve Thailand or Thai companies, the practical application scenarios of learning Thai will be very limited and will not help me much in my job search.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, April 25, 2024)

“ Probably not, because many international companies pay more attention to the ability of English or other global common languages.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

“ Probably not, although the Thai economy is growing, the demand for Thai language is relatively small worldwide.” (Interviewee 8, personal

Communication, April 26, 2024)

“Probably not, because the use of Thai is mainly limited to Thailand. If my future career goal is not in Southeast Asia, the practical usefulness of learning Thai may be limited.” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, April 26, 2024)

In conclusion, there are still many problems for learners when learning Thai. Educators need to make corresponding adjustments to the teaching content based on these problems, and learners also need to develop a reasonable and suitable learning plan based on their own situation.

#### **4.3 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this paper analyzed the questionnaire data of 56 students studying Thai Communication as a Second Language program at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, Thailand, and randomly selected 10 students from the 56 students in order of student numbers for structured interviews. Through the analysis of quantitative and qualitative research, questionnaire, and interview data, the challenges encountered by students in learning Thai as a foreign language in terms of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical background were revealed. All demographic information, questionnaire answers, and interview answers were determined through statistical calculations and descriptive statements. The results found will be described in further detail in the conclusion and discussion sections in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reviews the result of the data analysis in Chapter 4 and draw a conclusion. A discussion of the findings and recommendation form this study are also presented. This chapter is separated three mean sections as follows:

Section 5.1 Conclusion

Section 5.2 Discussion

Section 5.3 Recommendation

This study aimed to investigate the common challenges encountered by 56 Chinese students in learning Thai as a foreign language in a cross-cultural context at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University Thailand. using a questionnaire survey.

This study was based on two research questions:

1) What challenges do Chinese students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language?

2) What are Chinese students' suggestions about how they can overcome challenges in learning Thai ?

## 5.1 CONCLUSION

### 5.1.1 Responses to Research Question 1

What challenges do Chinese students encounter when learning Thai as a foreign language?

The main purpose of this study is to explore the common challenges encountered by Chinese students who study Thai as a second language communication at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand. According to the results of Chapter 4. Based on the data analysis of questionnaires of common challenges encountered by Chinese students in learning Thai as a foreign language, from Table 4.1 to Table 4.5, it was found that the challenges encountered by Chinese students were divided into five sections: challenges in vocabulary and expression, challenges in grammatical structure, challenges in pronunciation and phonetics, challenges in cultural background and language environment, and challenges in listening and reading comprehension. The students' scores for all questionnaire items were calculated using a computer program. The results of the results and analysis are stated in the following sections.

As mentioned earlier, the students' general information included seven categories: gender, age, how long they had studied Thai, whether they were a Thai major, whether they liked to study Thai, whether they had studied Thai before, and Thai proficiency. The students who filled out the questionnaire ranged from 18 to 32 up in age, and male were 48.21%, and the female respondents were 51.79%. Among the 56 students participating in the study, 57.14% of the students studied Thai for half a year to 2 years, 19.64% of the students studied Thai for more than 2 years and less than 5 years, and 23.21% of the students studied Thai for more than 5 years. Among the 56 students who participated in the study, 30.36% of the participants had poor Thai proficiency, 35.71% had average Thai proficiency, and 33.93% had good Thai proficiency. Among the 56

students who participated in the study, we can see that 76.79% of the students like to learn Thai, and 23.21% of the students do not like to learn Thai.

After being calculated and analyzed by computer program using descriptive analysis (mean and standard deviation), the results showed that the interpretation of students' overall perception items was considered to be at a agree interpretation, with a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.862. By checking the mean scores of all questionnaire items, the results showed that the interpretation of students' perception items was agree, with mean scores ranging from 3.43 to 4.50. Only one item was rated as the strongly agree, and the highest mean score was item 8, ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 4.50. Thirty-eight items (items 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, and 48) were rated agree. The remaining 2 items were rated as moderate. There were no disagree and strongly disagree items in the questionnaire.

Through the examination of five sections of questionnaire items:

The questionnaire items of vocabulary and expression challenges include items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. The results show that the students' interpretation in this category is considered to be agree, with a total mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.13 and SD of 0.814. In addition to the aforementioned “ I think homophones in Thai are difficult to understand ”, there is another item with a high score, namely “ I am very satisfied with the vocabulary I have mastered so far.” The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score is 4.30 and SD is 0.913. This shows that Thai vocabulary plays a vital role in the common challenges encountered in learning Thai as a foreign language.

The questionnaire items of grammatical structure challenges include items 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26. The results show that the students' interpretation in

this category is considered to be agree, with a total mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.07 and SD of 0.839. In this section the item with the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is “ I used to be unable to express myself accurately because I was not familiar with the grammatical rules of Thai.” The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of this item is 4.39 and SD is 0.679. This shows that in the common challenges encountered in learning Thai as a foreign language, the grammatical structure of Thai will cause some trouble to learners.

The questionnaire items for pronunciation and phonetics challenges include items 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, and 38, The results show that the students' interpretation in this category is considered agree, with a total mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.04 and SD of 0.900. In this section the items with the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) are “ I think the Thai tone system has a great influence on my pronunciation.” The mean( $\bar{x}$ ) of this item is 4.30 and SD is 0.829, and “ I find inflection (rising and falling at the end of sentences) difficult in Thai.” The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of this item is 4.30 and SD is 0.784. This indicates that among the common challenges encountered when learning Thai as a foreign language, the pronunciation of Thai tones and consonants can make learners feel very difficult.

The questionnaire items for cultural background and language environment challenges include items 39, 40, 41, and 42. The results show that the students' interpretation in this category is considered agree, with a total mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.06 and SD of 0.815. In this section the item with the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is “ I think cultural differences have a great impact on Thai expressions.” The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of this item is 4.23 and SD is 0.809. This shows that when non-native Thai speakers learn Thai as a foreign language, if they do not understand the environmental background and cultural differences of the language, they will cause certain misunderstandings when learning.

The questionnaire items for listening and reading comprehension challenges

include items 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, and 48. The results show that the students' interpretation in this category is considered agree, with a total mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 4.14 and SD of 0.923. In this section the item with the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is “ Native Thai speakers may speak at a faster speed during oral communication, which may cause difficulty in listening comprehension for beginners.” The mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of this item is 4.38 and SD is 0.702. This shows that when learners learn Thai as a foreign language, they can only start with simple and slow communication. If they encounter native speakers who speak very fast, learners will not understand.

The above average ( $\bar{x}$ ) score indicates that the overall interpretation of cognition of the common challenges encountered when learning Thai as a foreign language by the Chinese students studying at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand is agree. The conclusion drawn from the questionnaire data analysis and results answered the research question, which is that the overall interpretation of cognition of the common challenges encountered by Chinese students when learning Thai as a foreign language is agree. The above findings would be corresponding to the study by Makawan (2020).

### 5.1.2 Responses to Research Question 2

What are Chinese students' suggestions about how they can overcome challenges in learning Thai ?

In research question 2, based on data analysis of structured interviews and some questionnaire result, the research results show that Chinese students will encounter many challenges when learning Thai as a foreign language and some participants also give some suggestions to overcome the challenges.

According to the thematic content, the results of the structured interviews were conclusion and analyzed as shown below:

1) Suggestions for overcoming difficulties in grammar and pronunciation -

Some respondents said that they could overcome difficulties in grammar and pronunciation in the following ways. For example, learners can systematically learn the basics of Thai grammar by enrolling in Thai language classes or online courses, or they can divide grammatical knowledge into small pieces and learn and master it step by step. First learn simple sentence patterns and tenses, and then gradually learn complex structures in depth, focusing on overcoming difficult points such as word order, verb conjugation, etc., and understand and practice them one by one. And do grammar exercises regularly, especially for strengthening the weak parts. Finally, you can also write short essays or diaries and try to use different grammatical structures. After writing, ask teachers or native speakers for revisions.

Learners can sign up for a special Thai pronunciation course to systematically learn the tones, pitches and pronunciation rules of Thai. Or purchase or download Thai pronunciation teaching materials and audios, listen to Thai audio materials more often, familiarize yourself with different voices and intonations, and learn by following. Find Thai audio materials, such as TV dramas, songs, podcasts, etc., and repeat after and imitate their pronunciation. Use online pronunciation dictionaries and pronunciation videos to learn standard pronunciation, practice reading aloud every day, and improve the accuracy and fluency of pronunciation. And communication with native Thai speakers, imitate their pronunciation and ask them to correct it. Through these methods, you can effectively overcome the difficulties in Thai grammar and phonetics and improve your comprehensive ability to use Thai.

2) Suggestions for practicing Thai and increasing Thai vocabulary -

Some Respondents said there are many ways to increase Thai vocabulary. For example, learners can make or buy Thai vocabulary cards, memorize a few new words every day, and review them regularly. Carry a small notebook with you and write down the words you don't understand in time, and check and learn them. as well as supplementing their vocabulary through learning apps and joining social groups. Or choose a topic that interests you and read Thai books, newspapers, and magazines, which can increase the fun of reading and expand your vocabulary. And learners can also watch Thai TV series, movies, and variety shows to pay attention to common words and expressions in them. Finally, learners can also familiarize themselves with the pronunciation and usage of Thai through music and radio, and learn some authentic expressions.

### 3) Suggestions for overcome Cultural background and language environment challenges -

Some respondents said they could overcome cultural background and language environment challenges in the following ways. For example, read books and articles about Thai history, culture, and customs to enhance their understanding of Thai culture. Watch Thai documentaries, variety shows, traditional performances, etc. to experience Thai culture firsthand. Participate in local or online Thai festivals such as Songkran (Water Splashing Festival) and Loy Krathong Festival to experience Thailand's traditional culture. Participate in Thai cultural clubs or community activities to interact with Thai people and increase your personal experience of the culture.

Learn common polite expressions and expressions in Thai, such as “ thank you ” and “ sorry ” , and master their use in different occasions. Understand Thai social etiquette and behavioral norms, such as how to put your hands together and how to respect elders, to avoid cultural misunderstandings. Communication with Thai friends or language partners to understand each other's cultural background and habits during

communication. Or communicate with Thai people online through social media and language learning platforms to understand their lives and culture.

Through these methods, we can better overcome the difficulties in learning Thai brought about by cultural background and improve our understanding and application of Thai language and Thai culture.

## 5.2 DISCUSSION

Based on quantitative and qualitative data, the main finding of this study is that when learning a language as a foreign language, students will encounter challenges related to grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and expression. This section will discuss the challenges encountered by Chinese students when learning Thai as a foreign language.

- 1) Chinese students think that vocabulary is difficult to understand when learning a foreign language.
- 2) Chinese students think that grammar is difficult when learning a language.
- 3) Chinese students think that pronunciation is difficult when learning a language.

### 5.2.1 Discussion on Homophones in Vocabulary

According to the analysis results of vocabulary and expression challenges, Chinese students have one item in this challenge that many respondents agree with, and this item has the highest average score in this analysis. This item is “ I think it is difficult to understand homophones that appear in Thai.”

There are many words in Thai that have the same or similar pronunciations but

completely different meanings Sudaporn (1998). This situation may cause confusion to learners in the process of listening, speaking, reading and writing. For example, in Thai, “ขาว” (khao) and “ข่าว” (khao) have similar pronunciations, but the former means "white" and the latter means “news”. Many homophones in Thai have specific meanings in specific contexts Schmitt (1997). Chinese students need to learn to understand and distinguish these homophones according to the context. For example, “ไป” can mean “go”, but its specific meaning and usage will be different in different sentences. This requires students to not only learn the language, but also understand the culture and lifestyle of Thailand. For Chinese students, distinguishing these words requires a lot of practice and contextual understanding. Due to the existence of homophones, learners need to master the specific context and usage of vocabulary while memorizing it Norbert (2000). It is difficult to achieve this goal by simply reciting a vocabulary list, and a lot of reading and listening practice is needed to enhance the sense of language.

### 5.2.2 Discussion on Grammar

According to the analysis results of the grammatical structure challenge, Chinese students have one item in this challenge that the respondents think is moderate, and this item has the lowest score in this analysis result, that is, “ I think the grammatical structure of Thai poses a challenge to my language expression ability.”

The basic word order of Thai is subject-verb-object (SVO), which is similar to the word order of Chinese Kiyoko (2014). However, in some cases, the word order of Thai changes due to factors such as emphasis and questions Lourdes (2009). For example, in Thai, the attributive is usually placed after the noun, while in Chinese, the attributive is usually placed before the noun. Such differences may make it difficult for Chinese students to express complex sentences.

There are many particles in Thai, which are used to indicate tense, mood,

honorifics, etc. Hudak (2018). Common particles are “จะ” (indicating future tense) , “กำลัง” (indicating ongoing), and “แล้ว” (indicating completion). When Chinese students learn Thai, they use particles improperly, resulting in unclear sentences or misunderstandings. For example, Chinese does not use particles to indicate tense, which requires Chinese students to pay special attention when expressing tense in Thai Jirapas (2019) showed that the Thai negation structure is more complex, and the negation word is usually placed before the verb, such as “ไม่” (not). In addition, Thai has a variety of negation forms, which are used in different contexts and tones, which is different from the negation form of Chinese, and learners are easily confused when using it.

The structure of Thai interrogative sentences is different from that of Chinese, and the interrogative word is usually placed at the end of the sentence Ching (2021). For example, the Thai expression of “Where are you going?” is “คุณไปไหน?” (Where are you going), and the interrogative word “ไหน” (where) is placed at the end of the sentence. This structural difference requires Chinese students to readjust their expressions based on the accustomed Chinese sentence patterns. Thai conjunctions and compound sentence structures are also different from those of Chinese. Conjunctions are used frequently in Thai to connect short and complex sentences Chanyoo (2018). Chinese students need to master how to use these conjunctions correctly to express complex meanings, such as “และ” (and), “แต่” (but), “เพราะว่า” (because). This is similar to the findings of (Xu and Li, 2024).

### **5.2.3 Discussion on Thai Pronunciation and Expression**

According to the analysis results of the grammatical structure challenge, Chinese students have more respondents in this challenge, and this item has the lowest score in this analysis, “I think I can distinguish tongue and throat sounds well, such as ร, ล, ห, อ”.

The tongue and throat sounds of Chinese are similar to those of Thai, but there are also significant differences Whalen (2019). Chinese students may find it difficult to learn Thai because there is no completely corresponding sound in Chinese. Tongue sounds are sounds made with the tongue Wiley (2024). such as ɾ(r) and ɺ(l). When making sounds, the position and movement of the tongue play a key role in the formation of sounds. Glottal sounds are sounds produced by the throat Caffier (2018), such as ɦ(h) and ɔ(o). When making sounds, the vibration and shape changes of the vocal cords and larynx determine the formation of the sound. For example, there is no sound in Chinese that is exactly the same as the Thai ɾ, so special practice is needed to vibrate the tip of the tongue. Although Chinese students think they can distinguish between tongue sounds and glottal sounds, they still confuse them in actual pronunciation. For example, ɾ is pronounced as ɺ and ɦ is pronounced as ɔ. This is similar to the findings of Saengthong and Surinrum (2020). Tiraskul(2019), Sudchanam (2019), and Makawan Poomcharean (2020) also found in their research on Chinese students that Chinese students' consonant pronunciation is unclear and vowel pronunciation is too long.

## 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.3.1 Recommendations for Further Studies

5.3.1.1 This study only investigated the common challenges encountered by Chinese students in learning Thai as a foreign language at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University in Thailand, and further research should be conducted with other nationalities and universities. In addition, the relationship between the common challenges encountered in learning Thai in English and factors such as nationality,

learning style, and learning machine needs further research.

5.3.1.2 This study is limited to the common challenges encountered by Chinese students in learning Thai as a second language in terms of vocabulary and expression, grammatical structure, pronunciation and phonetics, cultural background and language environment, and listening and reading comprehension. Future research can focus on other aspects, such as the common challenges encountered by Thai students in listening, speaking, reading, writing and other aspects when learning Thai as a second language.

In conclusion, this chapter summarizes the research findings and explores the common challenges encountered by Chinese students learning Thai as a foreign language, and provides suggestions for future research.



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**APPENDICES**





## Questionnaire

**Research title: Perception of Common Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Master's Degree Chinese Students at a Thai Private University**

Dear students:

This questionnaire is part of graduate research conducted at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University. The purpose is to determine the Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Master's Degree Chinese Student at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University In Thailand.

Your answers are anonymous, which means that no one can link your answers to you. The data collected will be used to contribute to the field of education. Please fill in truthfully. Thank you very much for your participation.

Yours sincerely,

Shuting Yang



## Part II: Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language items

Directions: please tick “√” at the number that correctly reflects your opinion about the statement. Rate your response to each item on the scores of 1-5. The rating scores are as follows:

**Interpretation:** 1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions						
9	I think it difficult to understand the homonyms that appear in Thai.					
10	I think it is difficult to master the foreign words in Thai (such as English loan words)					
11	I think it difficult to learn professional terms in Thai (such as scientific terms, medical terms, etc.)					
12	I think slang and idioms in Thai difficult to master.					
13	I think it difficult to use modal particles in Thai.					
14	I am very satisfied with the vocabulary I have mastered so far.					
15	I can master numerals and quantifiers in Thai very well.					
16	I think adverbs and adjectives in Thai are easy to understand.					
17	I have been unable to express myself accurately because I did not know the correct vocabulary.					
18	I think it difficult to distinguish between synonyms					

	and synonyms in Thai.					
The Challenges of Grammar Structure						
19	I think the grammatical structure of Thai poses a challenge to my language expression ability.					
20	I think the verb forms and tenses of Thai pose great difficulties to my learning.					
21	I think Thai grammar is easy to master.					
22	I'm often confused about Thai verb conjugations and tenses.					
23	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of nouns.					
24	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of adjectives.					
25	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of modal particles and auxiliary verbs.					
26	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the syntactic structure.					
27	I used to be unable to express myself accurately because I was not familiar with the grammatical rules of Thai.					
28	I think the hardest part of Thai grammar is the use of pronouns.					
The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics						
29	I can pronounce the correct tone of each syllable accurately.					
30	I think the Thai tone system has a great influence on my pronunciation.					
31	I can distinguish the pronunciation of long vowels					

	and short vowels.					
32	I can pronounce some consonants in Thai clearly and accurately, such as ส(s), ช(ch), ฟ(f), etc.					
33	I can pronounce some specific consonants and vowels in Thai clearly and accurately, such as "ฦ" (ch <sup>h</sup> ), "ฝ" (f), "ร" (r).					
34	I can pronounce vowel combinations correctly, such as เ, เ-ว, เอ, etc.					
35	I can distinguish between tongue and throat sounds very well, such as ร, ฦ, ห, อ, etc.					
36	I can pronounce some final consonants accurately, such as ต, พ, ฦ, etc.					
37	I think the guttural sounds in Thai, such as "ก" (k <sup>h</sup> ), "ข" (k <sup>h</sup> ), "ห" (h), are difficult for me to master.					
38	I can accurately identify compound consonants in words and pronounce them correctly.					
39	I can master the Thai tone system very well					
40	I find inflection (rising and falling at the end of sentences) difficult in Thai.					
The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment						
41	I think cultural differences have a great impact on understanding and using specific vocabulary in Thai.					
42	I think cultural differences have a great impact on					

	Thai expressions.					
43	When communicating with Thai people, I once had communication barriers because I was not familiar with local customs.					
44	When learning Thai, I think it is important to understand and adapt to Thai culture for the use and understanding of vocabulary.					
The Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension						
45	Native Thai speakers may speak at a faster speed during oral communication, which may cause difficulty in listening comprehension for beginners.					
46	Different regions in Thailand have different accents and dialects, and this difference can make it difficult for students to understand Thai spoken by people in different regions.					
47	When learning Thai, insufficient vocabulary will lead to difficulties in reading comprehension.					
48	Sometimes there are certain differences between spoken and written Thai, which makes it difficult for me to understand the difference and lead to difficulty in reading comprehension.					
49	The professional terminology and industry vocabulary in Thai have caused some difficulties for my listening.					
50	Some words in Thai may have multiple meanings, and I would have difficulty understanding the words because I could not accurately understand the meaning.					

### Part III: Open-ended Question

Are there any other language leaning challenges that in your Thai Language speaking, which are not mentioned above? Please explain.

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**APPENDIX B**

**IOC FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University

## The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) Form for the Questionnaire by Experts

Objectives: Questionnaire for Chinese students' Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Chinese students at a Thai Private University.

<p>Directions:</p> <p>Please tick only <math>\surd</math> one in the appropriate blank according to your consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The score = +1: If experts definitely have the feeling that an item is a measure of an objective.</li> <li>● The score = 0: If experts are not sure whether the item is a measure of an objective.</li> <li>● The score = -1: If experts definitely have the feeling that an item is not a measure of an objective.</li> </ul>				
Part I : Personal Information			Score	
No.	Items	+1	0	-1
Personal Information				
1	What is your gender ?			
2	How old are you ?			
3	Are you majoring in Thai language ?			
4	Do you like learning Thai language ?			
5	Have you ever learn Thai Language ?			
6	How long have you been learning Thai Language ?			
7	What is your Thai Language proficiency level ?			
8	Do you often communicate in Thai language? What topics do you like to talk about ?			
Part II: Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language			Score	

items				
No.	Items	+1	0	-1
The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai				
9	I think it difficult to understand the homonyms that appear in Thai.			
10	I think it is difficult to master the foreign words in Thai (such as English loan words)			
11	I think it difficult to learn professional terms in Thai (such as scientific terms and medical terms.)			
12	I think slang and idioms in Thai difficult to master.			
13	I think it difficult to use modal particles in Thai.			
14	I am very satisfied with the vocabulary I have mastered so far.			
15	I can master numerals and quantifiers in Thai very well.			
16	I think adverbs and adjectives in Thai are easy to understand.			
17	I have been unable to express myself accurately because I did not know the correct vocabulary.			
18	I think it difficult to distinguish between synonyms and synonyms in Thai.			
The Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai				
19	I think the grammatical structure of Thai poses a challenge to my language expression ability.			
20	I think the verb forms and tenses of Thai pose great difficulties to my learning.			
21	I think Thai grammar is easy to master.			
22	I'm often confused about Thai verb conjugations and tenses.			

23	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of nouns.			
24	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of adjectives.			
25	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the use of modal particles and auxiliary verbs.			
26	I think the most difficult part of Thai grammar is the syntactic structure.			
27	I used to be unable to express myself accurately because I was not familiar with the grammatical rules of Thai.			
28	I think the hardest part of Thai grammar is the use of pronouns.			
The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics faced by Chinese students when learning Thai				
29	I can pronounce the correct tone of each syllable accurately.			
30	I think the Thai tone system has a great influence on my pronunciation.			
31	I can distinguish the pronunciation of long vowels and short vowels.			
32	I can pronounce some consonants in Thai clearly and accurately, such as ส(s), ช(ch), ฟ(f), etc.			
33	I can pronounce some specific consonants and vowels in Thai clearly and accurately, such as "ฌ" (ch <sup>h</sup> ), "ฝ" (f), "ร" (r).			
34	I can pronounce vowel combinations correctly, such as ใ, ใ-ใ, ใ๑, etc.			
35	I can distinguish between tongue and throat sounds very			

	well, such as ร, ล, ห, อ.			
36	I can pronounce some final consonants accurately, such as ต, พ, ด, etc.			
37	I think the guttural sounds in Thai, such as "ก" (k <sup>h</sup> ), "ข" (k <sup>h</sup> ), "ห" (h), are difficult for me to master.			
38	I can accurately identify compound consonants in words and pronounce them correctly.			
39	I can master the Thai tone system very well			
40	I find inflection (rising and falling at the end of sentences) difficult in Thai.			
The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment when Chinese students learning Thai				
41	I think cultural differences have a great impact on understanding and using specific vocabulary in Thai.			
42	I think cultural differences have a great impact on Thai expressions.			
43	When communicating with Thai people, I once had communication barriers because I was not familiar with local customs.			
44	When learning Thai, I think it is important to understand and adapt to Thai culture for the use and understanding of vocabulary.			
The Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension				
45	Native Thai speakers may speak at a faster speed during oral communication, which may cause difficulty in listening comprehension for beginners.			

46	Different regions in Thailand have different accents and dialects, and this difference can make it difficult for students to understand Thai spoken by people in different regions.			
47	When learning Thai, insufficient vocabulary will lead to difficulties in reading comprehension.			
48	Sometimes there are certain differences between spoken and written Thai, which makes it difficult for me to understand the difference and lead to difficulty in reading comprehension.			
49	The professional terminology and industry vocabulary in Thai have caused some difficulties for my listening.			
50	Some words in Thai may have multiple meanings, and I would have difficulty understanding the words because I could not accurately understand the meaning.			
<b>Part III: Open-ended Question</b>		Score		
No.	Items	+1	0	-1
1	Are there any other language learning challenges that in your Thai Language speaking, which are not mentioned above? Please explain.			

### IOC Result of the Questionnaire

Items	Rating by Experts			IOC Average	Remarks
	Experts 1	Experts 2	Experts 3		
<b>Part I: Personal Information</b>					
1	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
3	+1	0	+1	0.67	Accepted
4	+1	0	+1	0.67	Accepted
5	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
6	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
7	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
8	0	-1	+1	0	Unaccepted
<b>Part II: Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language items</b>					
The Challenges of Vocabulary and Expressions encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai					
9	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
10	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
11	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
12	+1	0	+1	0.67	Accepted
13	+1	0	+1	0.67	Accepted

14	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
15	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
16	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
17	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
18	+1	-1	+1	0.33	Unaccepted
The Challenges of Grammar Structure encountered by Chinese students when they learning Thai					
19	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
20	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
21	0	+1	+1	0.67	Accepted
22	+1	+1	0	0.67	Accepted
23	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
24	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
25	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
26	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
27	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
28	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
The Challenges of Pronunciation and Phonetics faced by Chinese students when learning Thai					
29	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
30	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted

31	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
32	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
33	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
34	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
35	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
36	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
37	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
38	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
39	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
40	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
The Challenges of Cultural Background and Language Environment when Chinese students learning Thai					
41	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
42	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
43	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
44	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
The Challenges of Listening and Reading Comprehension					
45	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
46	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
47	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
48	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted

49	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
50	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
<b>Part III: Open-ended Question</b>					
1	+1	0	+1	0.67	Accepted





**APPENDIX C**

**STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University

## Structured Interview

### **Research title: Perception of Common Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Master's Degree Chinese Students at a Thai Private University**

There are 7 questions in this interview. Your answer is neither correct nor correct. Wrong, as long as it can truly reflect your situation, we can achieve our purpose investigation. Your suggestions will be an important reference for challenges encountered when learning Thai as a foreign language.

1. Why do you want to learn Thai as a second language?
2. What do you think is the most troublesome problem for you when learning to speak Thai?
3. Do you have a favorite way to practice speaking Thai?
4. Do you think Thai grammar is difficult for you?
5. Do you think building up your vocabulary will help you speak Thai?
6. How would you increase your vocabulary?
7. Do you think learning to speak Thai as your second language will help you find a job in the future?



**APPENDIX D**

**IOC FOR THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW**

มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต Rangsit University

## The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) form for the Structured Interview by Experts

Objectives: This form is used to conduct interviews on the challenges of learning Thai as a foreign language of Chinese students at a Thai Private University.

<p>Directions:</p> <p>Please tick only <math>\surd</math> one in the appropriate blank according to your consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The score = +1: If experts definitely have the feeling that an item is a measure of an objective.</li> <li>● The score = 0: If experts are not sure whether the item is a measure of an objective.</li> <li>● The score = -1: If experts definitely have the feeling that an item is not a measure of an objective.</li> </ul>				
<b>Structured Interview</b>			<b>Score</b>	
No.	Item Statements	+1	0	-1
1	Why do you want to learn Thai as a second language?			
2	What do you think is the most troublesome problem for you when learning to speak Thai?			
3	Do you have a favorite way to practice speaking Thai?			
4	Do you think Thai grammar is difficult for you?			
5	Do you think building up your vocabulary will help you speak Thai?			
6	How would you increase your vocabulary?			
7	Do you think learning to speak Thai as your second language will help you find a job in the future?			

### IOC Result of the Structured Interview

Items	Rating by Experts			IOC Average	Remarks
	Experts 1	Experts 2	Experts 3		
1	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
3	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
4	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
5	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
6	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted
7	+1	+1	+1	+1	Accepted

The image features a large, faint watermark of the Rangsit University logo in the background. The logo is circular, with a stylized flame or sunburst design at the top. Below the design, the text "มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต" is written in Thai script, and "Rangsit University" is written in English. The watermark is centered on the page.

**APPENDIX E**

**TRANSLATION OF STRUCTURED INTERVIEW RESPONSES**

<b>Question 1. Why do you want to learn Thai as a second language?</b>	
Student 1	I think learning Thai can increase your chances of studying and working in Thailand. Mastering the local language can improve the convenience of life and work and increase communication opportunities with local people.
Student 2	I think that by learning Thai, I can better integrate into Thai culture and understand the local habits and traditions. This helps me build deeper relationships and better adapt to the local society.
Student 3	I am a person who loves traveling. I often travel to Thailand. Learning Thai can enhance my travel experience. Traveling became more enriching and interesting when I was able to communicate with locals in Thai.
Student 4	I believe that knowing Thai can play an important role when negotiating with Thai businesses and partners. I want to start a business in Thailand, which will help me build better business relationships and increase my chances of business success.
Student 5	I am a Chinese teacher. Learning Thai can help me communicate better with students, let my students learn more knowledge, and also improve my teaching experience.
Student 6	I think learning Thai is a challenge because I had never been exposed to it before studying in Thailand, and overcoming this challenge will help improve my cognitive abilities and language learning skills.
Student 7	I believe that learning Thai is not only for a specific purpose but also to enrich one's language skills. Mastering different languages can improve language flexibility and make it easier for me to adapt to diverse language environments.
Student 8	I think that by learning Thai, I can better understand Thai people's way of thinking and cultural concepts, promote cross-cultural

	communication, and reduce possible misunderstandings caused by cultural differences.
Student 9	I know that Thai is the official language of Thailand, and learning Thai can help me better understand Thai literature, movies, music and other art forms, so as to gain a deeper understanding of the local culture.
Student 10	I am someone with a strong interest in Thai culture, history or art, and learning Thai was a natural way for me to pursue these interests. Through language, I can gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of various aspects of Thailand.



<b>Question 2. What do you think is the most troublesome problem for you when learning to speak Thai?</b>	
Student 1	The tone system of Thai is a challenge for me as a non-Thai native speaker, because different tones can change the meaning of words.
Student 2	Thai uses a special alphabet system, Thai alphabet. I have never been exposed to this alphabet system, so it may take some time to adapt and master it.
Student 3	Thai is quite different from English and other Indo-European languages in grammatical structure. It takes me a lot of time to understand and adapt to this different structure.
Student 4	There are some expressions in Thai that are related to social class and social rank. I don't know Thai culture very well, so sometimes I don't understand what Thai native speakers want to express.
Student 5	Some consonants and vowels in Thai are different from those in other languages, especially playing the tongue. There is no such pronunciation in my mother tongue, so I can't pronounce it, so I need to keep practicing.
Student 6	When I first came into contact with Thai, I was in an epidemic situation. I was in a non-Thai environment and lacked the opportunity to communicate directly with native speakers, which had a great impact on the improvement of my oral English.
Student 7	There may be different accents and dialects in different parts of Thailand, which makes me need to adapt to a variety of pronunciation methods. I can't understand the Thai dialect.
Student 8	Compared with other languages, Thai may not have rich learning resources and teaching materials, which will limit my Thai learning.
Student 9	Thai contains many elements of Thai culture, so I may need to know more about Thai culture to better understand and use the language.

Student10	When I first started learning Thai, I didn't have the opportunity to experience the Thai environment personally, so it was difficult to really integrate into the language and understand idioms and oral expressions.
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<b>Question 3. Do you have a favorite way to practice speaking Thai?</b>	
Student 1	I will look for a native Thai language partner for language exchange. I can help them learn my native language while learning Thai from them.
Student 2	I will use online language learning platforms, such as Duolingo, Babbel, etc., to learn Thai. These platforms usually offer a wealth of exercises and lessons.
Student 3	I listen to Thai music, radio, podcasts or TV shows to improve my listening comprehension. Gradually increase the difficulty, from simple conversations to complex news reports.
Student 4	I will use Thai learning apps, such as HelloTalk, Memrise, etc., to improve my language skills through interactive and game-based learning.
Student 5	I watch Thai movies and TV series to better understand the real usage of the language and improve my listening skills.
Student 6	I will take some online one-on-one Thai speaking classes to improve my Thai speaking skills.
Student 7	I will improve my speaking skills by imitating Thai pronunciation, especially the tones in Thai.
Student 8	I think learning to sing Thai songs is a fun way to practice and deepen your understanding of the Thai language through lyrics understanding and pronunciation.
Student 9	I will read Thai articles, blogs or novels to learn new vocabulary, phrases and grammatical structures and improve my reading comprehension.
Student10	I will try my best to communicate with native Thai speakers in my daily life, which will help improve my oral fluency and communication skills.

<b>Question 4. Do you think Thai grammar is difficult for you?</b>	
Student 1	Yes, I find Thai grammar difficult, especially the sentence structure and the lack of tenses. This is very different from the English I'm used to and it takes a lot of time to get used to.
Student 2	I don't think Thai grammar is difficult. I actually appreciate its simplicity, especially the lack of complex verb conjugations, which makes it easier for me to learn.
Student 3	I sometimes struggle with Thai grammar, especially with the use of classifiers. This takes a while to get used to, but I'm slowly getting better.
Student 4	Yes, Thai grammar is a little difficult for me, especially with the tones and how they affect the meaning of words. This requires a lot of practice and listening.
Student 5	No, I find Thai grammar to be masterable and it's much easier than some other languages I've learned once the basic rules are understood.
Student 6	I do find some aspects of Thai grammar difficult, such as the use of particles. They add subtle changes in meaning, which are difficult to fully grasp.
Student 7	Yes, Thai grammar is a little difficult for me because it's very different from my native language. However, with constant practice, I feel that it is slowly getting easier.
Student 8	No, I actually find Thai grammar to be very logical and systematic. The lack of verb tenses makes the grammar easier in some ways.
Student 9	No, I actually find Thai grammar to be very logical and systematic. The lack of verb tenses makes the grammar easier in some ways.
Student10	I don't think Thai grammar is particularly difficult. It's more about getting used to the different structures and vocabulary. Over time, with constant practice, this becomes easier and easier.

<b>Question 5. Do you think building up your vocabulary will help you speaking Thai?</b>	
Student 1	Yes, I think increasing my vocabulary will definitely help me speak Thai. More vocabulary means I can express more ideas and communicate more flexibly in different situations.
Student 2	Of course, increasing my vocabulary is an important step to improve my language skills. It not only helps me understand what others say better, but also allows me to express myself more confidently in conversations.
Student 3	I believe that increasing my vocabulary will significantly improve my Thai. A rich vocabulary allows me to describe things and express feelings more accurately, which is very important for fluent communication.
Student 4	Yes, increasing my vocabulary is very important for me. Having a larger vocabulary allows me to use more appropriate words in different situations, thereby improving communication effectiveness.
Student 5	I think increasing my vocabulary will definitely help. It not only allows me to understand more Thai content, but also allows me to use more complex and diverse sentences when communicating.
Student 6	Increasing my vocabulary will help me a lot in learning Thai. More vocabulary means I can perform better in listening, speaking, reading and writing, and it is easier to communicate with native Thai speakers.
Student 7	Of course, I think increasing my vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. Only when I have mastered enough vocabulary can I really speak Thai fluently, not just simple conversations.
Student 8	I think increasing my vocabulary is necessary. It not only helps me understand grammar and sentence structure better, but also makes me more natural and fluent when communicating.
Student 9	Yes, increasing my vocabulary is very important for me to learn Thai.

	More vocabulary allows me to express myself more delicately, thus being more comfortable and flexible in conversation.
Student10	There is no doubt that increasing my vocabulary will help me speak Thai. A rich vocabulary allows me to find the right words to express my meaning in different situations and improve the quality of communication.



<b>Question 6. How would you increase your vocabulary?</b>	
Student 1	I increase my vocabulary by reading Thai books and articles. I choose different types of books, from novels to news reports, and read to constantly expose myself to new vocabulary. I also write down words I don't understand and learn them.
Student 2	I use language learning apps, such as Duolingo or Memrise, which have special vocabulary exercises and memory functions to help me systematically learn new words.
Student 3	I like Watch Thai movies and TV series with Thai subtitles. This way, I can learn new vocabulary in context and hear the actual pronunciation and usage of the vocabulary.
Student 4	I take Thai classes or hire a Thai tutor. Through systematic learning and the guidance of a teacher, I can increase my vocabulary more effectively and correct mistakes in time.
Student 5	I learn a few new words every day and use them in my daily conversations. I will make a study plan to learn 5 to 10 new words every day and use them repeatedly.
Student 6	I do a language exchange with a native Thai speaker. I will find a native Thai speaker and we can learn each other's language. I can learn a lot of practical vocabulary through communication.
Student 7	I use vocabulary flashcards for memorization. I make physical flashcards or use electronic vocabulary flashcard apps to reinforce new vocabulary by memorizing and testing it over and over again.
Student 8	I write a diary or short essay to record my daily life in Thai. Through writing practice, I can reinforce the vocabulary I have learned and try out new vocabulary.
Student 9	I join Thai online forums or social media groups. By interacting with other Thai learners or native speakers, I can learn a lot of spoken

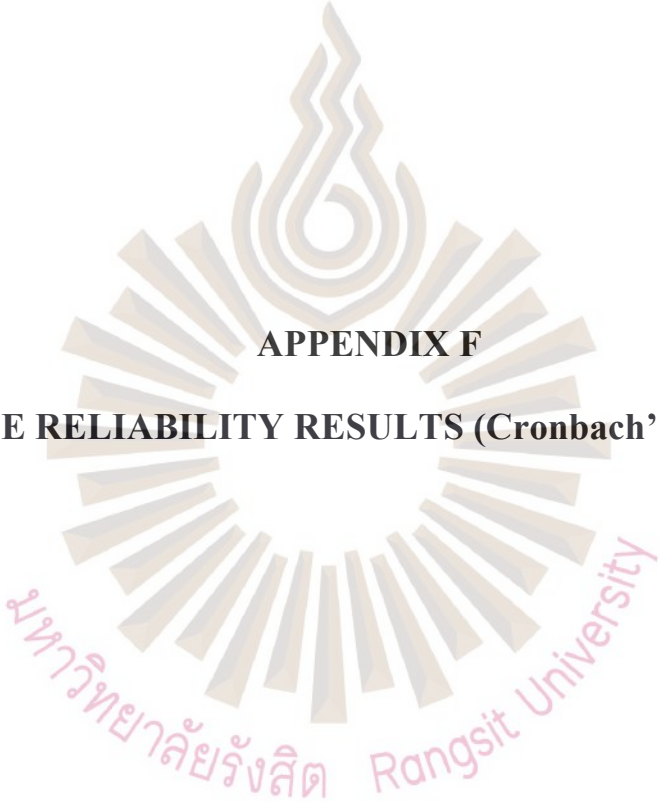
	vocabulary and daily expressions.
Student10	I use language learning websites such as Italki or HelloTalk to communicate and practice online with Thai teachers or learning partners to continuously increase vocabulary through conversation and feedback.



<b>Question 7. Do you think learning to speak Thai as your second language will help you find a job in the future?</b>	
Student 1	I think yes, because Thailand is a member of ASEAN, and mastering Thai can help me find a job in international organizations or projects in Southeast Asia and expand my career development space.
Student 2	I think learning Thai will help me find more opportunities in the education industry, such as working as a Thai teacher, translator, or coordinator of cultural exchange projects.
Student 3	Probably not, because if my future career plan does not involve Thailand or Thai companies, the practical application scenarios of learning Thai will be very limited and will not help me much in my job search.
Student 4	Yes, because Thailand's manufacturing and agricultural exports are global, and mastering Thai will help me find jobs related to supply chain management and international trade in these industries.
Student 5	I think yes, in the field of healthcare and public health, Thai language skills will enable me to participate in international aid and cooperation projects related to Thailand and increase employment opportunities.
Student 6	Probably not, because many international companies pay more attention to the ability of English or other global common languages.
Student 7	I think yes, learning Thai will help me find a job in the news media and publishing industry, especially positions involving Thai news reporting and cultural communication.
Student 8	Probably not, although the Thai economy is growing, the demand for Thai language is relatively small worldwide.
Student 9	I think so. Thailand has a very developed tourism industry, and learning Thai will allow me to find more opportunities in the tourism, hotel and service industries, especially those positions that require

	communication with Thai tourists or partners.
Student10	Probably not, because the use of Thai is mainly limited to Thailand. If my future career goal is not in Southeast Asia, the practical usefulness of learning Thai may be limited.





**APPENDIX F**  
**THE RELIABILITY RESULTS (Cronbach's Alpha)**

### Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Analysis

Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation (CITC)	Cronbach's Alpha
8	0.878	0.996
9	0.920	0.995
10	0.902	0.996
11	0.938	0.996
12	0.963	0.996
13	0.929	0.995
14	0.951	0.996
15	0.946	0.996
16	0.905	0.996
17	0.879	0.995
18	0.965	0.996
19	0.887	0.995
20	0.891	0.996
21	0.956	0.996
22	0.886	0.995
23	0.900	0.996
24	0.918	0.996

25	0.911	0.996
26	0.950	0.996
27	0.918	0.995
28	0.918	0.996
29	0.945	0.996
30	0.951	0.995
31	0.958	0.996
32	0.960	0.996
33	0.960	0.996
34	0.941	0.994
35	0.917	0.996
36	0.940	0.996
37	0.924	0.996
38	0.937	0.995
39	0.937	0.996
40	0.951	0.996
41	0.927	0.996
42	0.949	0.996
43	0.911	0.996
44	0.946	0.996

45	0.957	0.996
46	0.937	0.996
47	0.954	0.995
48	0.959	0.996
Average Cronbach's Alpha: 0.996		





**APPENDIX G**

**CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

## Consent Form for Research Participants

### Name of Research Project:

*Perception of Common Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Master's Degree Chinese Students at a Thai Private University*

### Name, Address and Phone No. of Principal Investigator

*Name: Shuting Yang*

*Address: Lifa House, 796/7 Soi Charoenrat1,*

*Sathon Rd, Yan Nawa, Sathon, Bangkok 10120*

*Mobile Phone: 0661144686*

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ consent to my participation in the research project entitled “*Perception of Common Challenges of Learning Thai as a Foreign Language of Master's Degree Chinese Students at a Thai Private University*”

2. I understand that I am free to withdraw my participation in the research at any time and that if I do I will not be subjected to any penalty or discriminatory treatment.

3. The purpose of the research has been explained to me and I have read and understood the information sheet given to me.

4. I permit the investigator to tape record my interview and read the journal I kept throughout the study as part of this project.

5. I understand that any information or personal details gathered in the course of this research about me are confidential and that neither my name nor any other identifying information will be used or published without my written permission.

6. Rangsit University's Ethics in Human Research Committee has approved this study.

I understand that if I have any complaints or concerns about this research I can contact:

*Executive Officer*

*Ethics in Human Research Committee*

*Rangsit University*

*Tel. 66-2791-5728*

*Fax 66-2791-5689*

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**BIOGRAPHY**

Name	Shuting Yang
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