

THE PROMOTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AND
CULTURE BY ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE IN BANGKOK,
THAILAND



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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Southeast Asian Studies
Inter-Department of Southeast Asian Studies
GRADUATE SCHOOL
Chulalongkorn University
Academic Year 2020
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การส่งเสริมภาษาและวัฒนธรรมฝรั่งเศสโดยสมาคมฝรั่งเศสในกรุงเทพฯ



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา สหสาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา
บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
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Thesis Title THE PROMOTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AND
CULTURE BY ALLIANCE FRANÇ AISE IN
BANGKOK, THAILAND
By Miss Shu-chin Huang
Field of Study Southeast Asian Studies
Thesis Advisor AMARA PRASITHRATHSINT

Accepted by the GRADUATE SCHOOL, Chulalongkorn University in
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CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

ชู-ชิน หวง : การส่งเสริมภาษาและวัฒนธรรมฝรั่งเศสโดยสมาคมฝรั่งเศสในกรุงเทพฯ. (THE PROMOTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE BY ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE IN BANGKOK, THAILAND) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : อมรา ประสิทธิ์รัฐสินธุ์

ภาษาฝรั่งเศสมีบทบาทสำคัญในสังคมนานาชาติ มีการใช้กันอย่างแพร่หลายด้านการค้า การทูต และวิชาการ และเป็นที่ยอมรับกันโดยทั่วไปว่าเป็นตัวแทนของวัฒนธรรมชั้นสูง อย่างไรก็ตาม ภาษาฝรั่งเศสกำลังเผชิญกับการเสื่อมถอยอย่างรวดเร็วในเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ อันเนื่องมาจากโลกาภิวัตน์ ซึ่งได้ขยายบทบาทของภาษาอังกฤษไปทั่วโลกอย่างรวดเร็ว เพื่อแก้ปัญหาลดลงของบทบาทของภาษาฝรั่งเศสในโลก สมาคมฝรั่งเศสได้ก่อตั้งขึ้นเพื่อเผยแพร่ความรู้ด้านภาษาและวัฒนธรรมฝรั่งเศสไปทั่วโลก

การศึกษานี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์กลยุทธ์ที่สมาคมฝรั่งเศสใช้เพื่อส่งเสริมภาษาและวัฒนธรรมฝรั่งเศสในประเทศไทย ข้อมูลสำหรับการวิเคราะห์ ประกอบด้วยข้อมูลหลักสูตรภาษาและกิจกรรมทางวัฒนธรรมที่จัดโดยสมาคมฝรั่งเศส ในกรุงเทพฯ โดยรวบรวมจากเอกสาร การสัมภาษณ์ตัวแทนของสมาคมฝรั่งเศสและแบบสอบถามที่แจกให้กับนักเรียนไทย พบว่ากลยุทธ์หลักของสมาคมฝรั่งเศส คือ 1) ส่งเสริมการสอนและการเรียนรู้ภาษา 2) ทำความเข้าใจวัฒนธรรมฝรั่งเศสให้ลึกซึ้งยิ่งขึ้น 3) การสร้างความสัมพันธ์อันดีระหว่างชุมชนที่พูดภาษาฝรั่งเศส เพื่อให้บรรลุกลยุทธ์ดังกล่าว กิจกรรมเฉพาะถูกจัดขึ้นภายใต้หัวข้อการเรียนรู้ภาษาและกิจกรรมทางวัฒนธรรม ผลการวิเคราะห์พบว่านักเรียนไทยมีแนวโน้มที่จะเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้ภาษามากกว่ากิจกรรมด้านวัฒนธรรม ดังนั้นจึงอาจอนุมานได้ว่ากลยุทธ์ของหลักสูตรภาษาและกิจกรรมทางวัฒนธรรมที่มุ่งเป้าไปยังกลุ่มต่างๆ ในประเทศไทย การศึกษานี้ให้ความรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับปัญหาการส่งเสริมภาษาและวัฒนธรรมฝรั่งเศสในประเทศไทย และให้ความเข้าใจมากขึ้นเกี่ยวกับความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างฝรั่งเศสและไทยในด้านนโยบายการแลกเปลี่ยนวัฒนธรรม

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สาขาวิชา เอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา
ปีการศึกษา 2563

ลายมือชื่อนิติ
ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก

6187605920 : MAJOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

KEYWORD: ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE, FRENCH LANGUAGE, FRENCH CULTURE, FRENCH POPULARITY

Shu-chin Huang : THE PROMOTION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE BY ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE IN BANGKOK, THAILAND.

Advisor: AMARA PRASITHRATHSINT

The French language plays an important role in international society. It is widely used in commerce, diplomatic and academic fields, and is generally recognised as a representative of high culture. However, the language is facing a fast decline in Southeast Asia due to globalisation, which has expanded the role of English very rapidly all over the world. To solve the problem of the decrease in the role of French in the world, Alliance Française was established to disseminate the knowledge of French language and culture around the world.

This study aims to analyse the strategies used by Alliance Française to promote French language and culture in Thailand. Data for analysis, which is composed of information of language courses and cultural activities offered by Alliance Française in Bangkok, was collected from documents, interviews with representatives of Alliance Française, and questionnaires distributed to Thai students. It is found that the main strategies of Alliance Française are: 1) promoting language teaching and learning; 2) deepening the understanding of French culture; 3) building good relationship among French speaking communities. To achieve those strategies, particular activities are organised under the themes of language learning and cultural events. This study provides more knowledge of the problem of promoting French language and culture in Thailand and better understanding of the relationship between France and Thailand concerning the policy of cultural exchange.

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Field of Study: Southeast Asian Studies

Academic Year: 2020

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the writing of this thesis and my M.A study in Thailand, I have receive a great deal of encouragement and help.

I would first like to express my deepest appreciation to my thesis advisor, Professor Emeritus Amara Prasithratsint who guided me with her incredible patience and encouraged me in all time throughout the research. I would also like to thank my thesis committee members, Dr. Klairung Amratisha and Dr. Thanyathip Sripana on their suggestions and comments. I would like to thank Government scholarship to study abroad by the Ministry of Education of Taiwan for the two year financial assistance to study in Thailand. My acknowledgements extended to all the friendly staffs in Southeast Asian Studies program, P'Moo Tun, P'Heart, P' Tian and P'Dream for their assistance at every stage of the research project, and also to my classmates who accompany me through this journey.

I would also like to thank the director of Alliance Française Bangkok, Mr. Silvain Bano and the manager of cultural department, Madame Malaurie Carras for assisting me to collect data and help arrange the interview under this difficult situation of pandemic. In addition, I would also like to offer my thanks to my dear family in Taiwan, my mum, my dad and my sister for their unwavering support and belief in me.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Rational

French maintains a high position in different domains in international society. According to Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (International Organisation of La Francophonie) (2019), it has long been an international language of science, business and literature, and is one of the most widely used working languages next to English in many international organisations in the world, such as the United Nations, International Criminal Court, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, World Trade Organisation, Olympic, FIFA, International Committee of the Red Cross, etc. It is also the official language of 32 states and governments. There are around 300 million French speakers around the world, and French is the 5th most spoken language following Mandarin, English, Spanish and Arabic.

Despite its importance, French is declining, because it has to compete with English. The fact that English is becoming a “global language” and has impact on the learning of other languages is a certainty. In addition, according to Girod (2011), many Francophone regions have no direct connection with French speaking countries, and people tend to abandon French and choose to learn a more useful language like English instead. In Europe, data from European Commission (2012) shows that English has replaced French as the lingua franca in Europe region, used by 38% of European people while the population of French speakers is at 14%.

In Southeast Asia, the influence of the English language is more and more heavy compared to French. Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are members of Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), and Thailand is an observer nation of the organisation (Tilman, 2019). According to the survey made by OIF in 2018, the French speakers in Cambodia are around 2.7% of its total population, 2.73% in Laos, 0.7% in Vietnam, and 0.8 in Thailand. However, besides the national languages in the region such as Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Mandarin, Thai and Vietnamese, English is accepted as the second language or the most important foreign language in these countries. According to Crystal (2003) in his book entitled English as

a Global Language, the English speakers in Singapore are 83.1% of its total population, and they are 63.72% in the Philippines, 62.57% in Malaysia, 39.07% in Brunei, 27.16% in Thailand and 4.45% in Myanmar. Silapa-acha (2013) pointed out that the fact that English is designated as the sole lingua franca in ASEAN had a great impact on the use and promotion of French in the school system in ASEAN countries.

Thailand has been one of the cases affected by the phenomenon of French declining. It was deeply connected with France and is also influenced by the French language. Thailand has been one of the oldest trade partners of France in Asia since the 17th century. French seemed to be an elite language and was largely used for the purpose of commerce and politics. Yanaprasart (2001) mentions that in the 19th century, Siam established trade with France and its relation with France was refreshed by the resettlement of the Ambassador of France during the reign of King Rama IV (1851-1868), the construction of churches, Catholic schools, and signatures in political and commercial agreements.

At the present time, in Southeast Asia the role of French seems to be not only less than English but it also has to compete with other Asian languages. According to Silapa-acha (2013), in Southeast Asia, English and the national languages of the Southeast Asian nations are the most important languages. In addition, the increase of Japanese and Chinese investment made more people learn Japanese and Mandarin instead of French. Even though French is still an important foreign language in secondary schools and universities in Thailand, the fact of its decline cannot be ignored. French has been occupying the position of the second biggest foreign language in Thailand after English due to the power and influence of France in Southeast Asia before World War II. However, this position tended to be given away to such Asian languages as Japanese and Mandarin due to the important roles that they play in the world politics and economics. This also affected the foreign language policy in the education system. In Thailand, the reform of university entrance exams in 2001 allowed students to have a variety of choices of learning second foreign languages. Carral (2013) found that in that year the number of students who learned French in secondary school had decreased.

In Thailand, there is a French organisation known as “Alliance Française”, which has existed since 1912. Its function is to promote the French language all over the world. Therefore, there must be an attempt on the part of Alliance Française to regain the popularity of French and to prevent it from being lost in Southeast Asia including Thailand. Many studies have been done on the role and success of Alliance Française in many parts of the world (See Chapter 2--the review of literature) but no study has been done concerning Alliance Française in Thailand. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by studying how the French language and culture are promoted by Alliance Française in Thailand at the time of French decline in the region.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 To study the historical background of the French influence and the establishment of Alliance Française in Thailand;
- 1.2.2 To analyse the strategies used by Alliance Française in Thailand to promote French language and culture;
- 1.2.3 To examine the activities organised by Alliance Française for Thai people;
- 1.2.4 To determine how successful Alliance Française is in the promotion of French language and culture in Thailand to increase their popularity.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1.3.1 In what way has the status of French changed and for what reason was Alliance Française established in Thailand?
- 1.3.2 What is the strategy used by Alliance Française in promoting French language and culture in Thailand?
- 1.3.3 How does Alliance Française organise the activities to promote the learning of French and culture among Thai people and what do Thai people think about those activities?

1.3.4 How successful is Alliance Française in the promotion of French language and culture in Thailand?

1.4 Hypotheses

1.4.1 French influence in Thailand started during the reign of Louis XIV of France in the 17th century with the arrival of French missionaries, merchants, and envoys in the Ayutthaya period. The main purpose of the French was to propagate Christianity and expand French commercial interests in Asia. Actual colonisation of Indochina was to take place only in the latter half of the 19th century: Napoleon III wanted to restore French glory in the world, and religious persecution in Vietnam provided a pretext for French military intervention in this country. Then, what was understood as the ‘logic of expansion’ came into play, leading to the expansion of French rule over the whole of Indochina.

1.4.2 Siam, as the country was then called, was adversely affected by French colonial encroachments, and the country also experienced France’s ‘civilising’ efforts, which were actually part of French imperialism. A tangible form of this civilising mission in Siam was Alliance Française, which was set up in Bangkok in 1912, to enhance the influence of French language and culture.

1.4.3 The strategy of Alliance Française mainly consists of organising cultural activities, which are open to all Thai people interested in French culture, such as film festivals, art exhibitions and concerts. Various French language courses are also offered to those aspiring to gain a more profound understanding of French culture. The goal of such activities is clearly to strengthen appreciation and recognition of French language and culture among the Thai populace.

1.4.4 Alliance Française is more successful in promoting the French language than French culture. Participants in the cultural activities organised by Alliance Française are more interested in the French language than French culture. Based on the numbers of participants and their evaluation of the activities they have attended in the past ten years, it can be argued that the popularity of French language and culture has not significantly increased.

1.5 Methodology

The main point of this study is based on the concept of “cultural policy” in the research by Paschalidis (2009), which combines the historical context of a cultural institution with the current situation of cultural promotion. Therefore, three methods of data collection were used in order to get data that will lead to the answers to the research questions. They are documentary research method, qualitative method, and quantitative method.

1.5.1 Documentary research method

For the purpose of understanding the influence of France in Thailand and the establishment of Alliance Française in Bangkok, I collected data from various kinds of documents, such as journal articles, books, online newspapers, documents of international organisations and main cultural institutions.

For analysing the strategies used of Alliance Française Bangkok, data concerned of the cultural events and language courses was collected from the official web site and Facebook fan page of Alliance Française Bangkok. In addition, statistics in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 related to the numbers of French students, cultural events, books checked from the library and popularities of the social media was taken from the data handbook of Alliance Française and the website of Alliance Française Foundation.

It should be noted that at first I intended to obtain statistical data from the year 2011 to 2020 (the last ten years) to conclude about the tendency of the decline of French, but unfortunately, the data that I was able to acquire was only of the last four years. That for the other years was not available. Therefore, there is a limitation to my analysis corresponding to the hypothesis stated in 1.4.4. However, the result based on the data of the last four years seems to suffice to yield a considerable evidence of the decline of French popularity in Thai

1.5.2 Qualitative method

Semi-structured in-depth interviews with the representative of Alliance Française Bangkok were used in collecting information of the management structure and the implementation of cultural activities and language courses at Alliance Française in

Bangkok. (see Appendix) The interviewee is the director of Alliance Française Bangkok, Mr Silvain Bano. We discussed the framework of the strategies used, current situation and future plans.

1.5.3 Quantitative method

To obtain data for the analysis of Thai students' participation in French courses and cultural events, questionnaires were distributed to Thai students who are currently taking French classes in Alliance Française. They were also asked to provide their perspectives on the participation in both cultural events and language courses, their motivation in learning French, their suggestion and expectation on the improvement of the activities. The informants were chosen by Alliance Française Bangkok. The total number consists of 15 students from level A1 to B2, and their learning duration, which ranged from 2 months to 6 years. The questionnaire was put online with 16 closed-ended questions and 2 optional open-ended questions. (see Appendix 2)

1.6 Significance and contribution of the study

1.6.1 This study will provide more knowledge of the relationship between France and Thailand and of problems in promoting French language and cultural activities in Thailand.

1.6.2 It will help people in Thailand understand more the thoughts and policies of France concerning the promotion of language and culture.

1.7 Outline of the thesis

The content of this thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. The second chapter is the literature review. The third chapter is concerned with the background of the French influence in Thailand. The fourth chapter presents the result of the analysis of the strategies used to promote French culture and language of Alliance Française Bangkok. The fifth chapter deals with implement of cultural events and language courses. Finally, Chapter 6 is the conclusion.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In discussing the function of Alliance Française, several scholars indicate that this organization is seen as a policy instrument of international relation as well as a symbol of the advancement of France, a country with imperial past. Other organisations that have the same function as Alliance Française are, for example, British Council of Great Britain, Dante Alighieri of Italy, and Goethe Institute of Germany. The most notable method of using Alliance Française as a political tool in recent years is in the domain of cultural diplomacy showing the “soft power” of France. The goal is to spread the influence of French culture around the world.

Such influence is associated closely with the education system in the target countries where French language and culture are recognised. For instance, French is regarded as a foreign language subject in secondary and higher education, and there are cooperation programs that motivate Thai students to learn French.

The review of relevant past studies presented in this chapter is organised into 3 sections: 1) the role of Alliance Française, 2) The role of French in the education system in Indochina, 3) The role of French in Thai Education System

2.1 The role of Alliance Française

2.1.1 Alliance Française is seen as a political organisation

The image and reputation that France built are mainly related to aristocracy and elite cultural events that shaped the image of French into a highly educated language through Alliance Française. However, Horne (2017) argued that the cultural network of Alliance Française connected to modern French political diplomacy was rooted in colonialism. Horne criticises that the cultural and linguistic influence of France provided by Alliance Française has led to the individuals of local groups taking interests in French language and culture, and that they have their own ideas of France without taking into consideration the colonial past of France, because the colonial history tends to be erased in the dominated narrative of Alliance Française. Even nowadays, the cultural network that Alliance Française built globally promotes French as a language beyond the nations’

borders as if the network were part of the former French empire. In order to gain the full story of Alliance Française's role in modern French cultural diplomacy, its colonial past must be examined in isolation.

The examination of the historical phases not only concerns Alliance Française only, but all the other notable cultural institutions. It should be regarded as an ongoing process that adapts itself into a changing environment. Paschalidis (2009) questions whether the historical context of each cultural institution was all written by the insiders of the institutional history. She suggested adopting a more sensitive perspective of the historical background that is associated with the presence of a cultural institution in the domains of culture, economics and politics. Nowadays, the global scene is still dominated by former imperial states that shaped the image of high culture through culture nationalism. In that case, people tended to follow the European standard of high culture to become one of the "advanced" cultural states which does not reflect the cultural diversity in the world. Each nation strived to promote its national brand to impress each other and this cultural propaganda also benefits tourism, media and cultural industries that formed a shared market.

Roselli (1996) points out that the role Alliance Française played in the usage of language education is a means of political action that deals with French linguistic policy in the late 19th century. She examined the actions of the founders of Alliance Française, who were experts that supported the idea of using language teaching to build national unity. French language has probably been used as a political tool since then. The construction of the language as a category of public intervention is associated with a political thought and its progressive implementation as mediation of a national policy. Thus, French has changed from a language of science and technology to a language of politics. She argued that if the language existed as a social object, it could function politically. The foundation of Alliance Française exactly created social space for language, and transformed French language into a political instrument in society.

2.1.2 Alliance Française regarded as having a goal of cultural diplomacy

According to Horne (2018), it can be argued that the use of French language promotion by Alliance Française has become a tool to strengthen 'cultural diplomacy'. Cultural

diplomacy is a term coined by Joseph Nye (2004) meaning a type of soft power that sets a nation's value, political ideology and policy which the government seeks to show to foreigners. In Horne's article (Horne, 2018), the role of Alliance Française was analysed. This French cultural organization was viewed as a cultural front which contributed to the cultural propaganda of Free French during World War II. The policy of cultural diplomacy was executed with an aim to get the military and political support from foreign countries during World War II. Even during the period of the war, the attempt of mobilising global network failed, and it led the post-war government to foster a reinforced, modernised and more expansive policy of French cultural relations abroad. (Horne, 2018)

Alliance Française helps spread the influence of French language and culture since the image of French was regarded as a civilised, artistic and cultural language through teaching, learning and cultural activities organised by Alliance Française in late 19th century. The presence of "greater civilisations" played an important role in cross culture communication through numerous cultural activities. Alliance Française became an organiser or a co-organiser of artistic events with the intention of artistic expansion and cultural exchange with local groups. (Cortier, 2018) The teaching of French language at Alliance Française has therefore evolved to a conception with much more anthropological vision, no longer just gaining knowledge of linguistics, but the skills to be able to study abroad, traveling or work. However, Cortier (2018) indicated that the professionalisation of culture activities and language courses caused the separation instead of strengthening the connection between culture and language.

Besides Alliance Française, many cultural institutions abroad play a significant role in cultural external policies. Paschalidis (2009) stated that most of the cultural agencies used the strategies of cultural diplomacy as a special cultural display to illustrate national figures, therefore avoiding all the controversial issues that may cause a negative effect on a nation's image. The way to shape this image in the new age of cultural propaganda is not a political principle anymore, but through market share like tourism, cultural heritage, education, and media. Consequently, national states become powerless in the role of cultural nationalism, the cultural institutions and agencies are still standing strong as global players. In the concept of imagined community developed

by Benedict Anderson (1983), a nation should be removed from reality and reconstruct the image to survive while nowadays national identities become vague because of deterritorialisation of culture.

2.2 The role of French in the education system in Indochina

2.2.1 Vietnam

The promotion of French language has been active since the 19th Century in Vietnam, therefore the education project and activities are still encouraged. For instance, the notable global network of Francophone higher education, Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (Francophonie University Association, AUF), its office in Asia Pacific region situated in Ho Chi Minh City. Kraiperm, Dupuis & Sandragné (2016) indicate that Vietnam established 36 courses in Francophone universities and 19 programs of master degrees for different fields under AUF, and they created 33 more programs of bachelor and doctorate degrees outside the association. In addition, the cooperation among Francophone universities is not limited between Vietnam and Europe. The Francophone Centre of Asia Pacific in Ho Chi Minh City also seeks opportunities to subsidise seminars, students exchange programs in the South East Asia Region.

Nevertheless, French is not the language that most students choose as a second language in Vietnam. It thus faces the problem of declining and the increase of using English. In the research by Pham and Thipkong (2016) on the training of multilingualism-multiculturalism, they did a survey of students and their parents from high schools in bilingual classes in Thailand and Vietnam where French is used as a medium of instruction. However, many teachers are not good in French. Also, most of the students and their parents think English is more important because of the social influence. They thus suggest that the bilingual programs in high schools better be taught by teachers who are really professional in French language and that the language politics of the country should be expanded to beat the obstruction of dividing the mother tongue, English and French by creating a relation amongst students and the languages.

On discussing this phenomenon, Wright (2008) explained that richer Francophone states of Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), mainly France and Canada offered financial aids that fund Vietnamese education system in the early

1990's. That drove Vietnamese to be interested in Francophonie. Multi-language classes were established by AUF in secondary and high education that use French as medium of instruction in order to train elites. However, the OIF withdrew the funding after seeing that the result did not pay out and Vietnamese students rather follow the economic trend and choose to learn English. The bilingual classes in the secondary system that were funded by French government were not successful and some courses have had to be taught in English. Wright then indicated that Francophone could not expect the promotion of French language education still has privilege in Vietnam based on the past since funding from many other countries existed as Vietnam chose to follow the globalisation phase of Southeast Asia.

2.2.2 Cambodia

Higher education in Cambodia that was highly influenced by French Colonialism, yet had experienced dramatic change. In Rany, Zain and Jamil's study (2012) on the comparison of history context on the higher education system in Cambodia, after Cambodia officially declared its Independence in 1953, the number of schools of primary, secondary and higher education increased dramatically under the education policy of Prince Sihanouk in order to transfer the country into a modernised region. French was used as the medium of instruction in higher institutions of the education system. In spite of that, higher education was confronted with political issues from the cold war after 1970. Most of the schools and universities were destroyed or forced to close during the Khmer Rouge period and almost 200 foreign lectures fled the country in fear of war. Cambodia reopened its market to the world after the end of Cambodia-Vietnam war in 1989.

The language policy decision then allowed English and French to be taught in high school foreign languages instead of Russian and Vietnamese. Western countries started to provide assistance for development in the 1990's, and France was the second largest benefactor in the country providing aid in education, most in universities, including substantial contributions to the Institute of Technology and other higher education institutions. Clayton (2002) specifies that this aid from France and Francophone came with conditions; i.e, the medium of instruction had to be French. Between 1993 and 1995, university students protested against the widespread of French language, and

demanding English be used as medium of instruction to meet the need of the market and to facilitate the trade with Singaporeans, Malaysians, Dutch, or Americans, who use English as the language of business communication.

In addition, Cambodia joined several international and regional organisations including ASEAN where English is used as the working language. Although Cambodia was facing the struggle between English and French, the foreign language used amongst the youths is mainly English. Nevertheless, in 1997, French Culture Centre opened in Phnom Penh and French-language education began to revive in Cambodia and dozens of Cambodian students' study abroad each year in France. Communities of returned refugees from France and Quebec as well as students who have studied in Francophone nations have also added to the French-speaking population of Cambodia, with more than 430,000 French speakers, around 2.7% of the population. Ten universities and higher education institutions in Cambodia are the members of AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, 2019).

2.2.3 Laos

According to Jennar (1997), French language was a lingua franca for a long time in Laos, and was the most learned foreign language in secondary education system until 1992. After that English became more popular in order to strengthen economic cooperation relation with Thailand. However, Jennar also mentioned that in comparison with Vietnam and Cambodia, there were less studies on the francophonic influence in Laos because the economic and strategies of the country is considered less important in Indochina.

In spite of being set aside because of lack of international prestige in general point of view, the strong relationship with Francophone nations and the importance of the Francophone community in Vientiane cannot be ignored. In the research by Gwenaëlle (2011) on analysing the issue of Francophone classes in Laos, she mentioned the situation of French linguistic politics in Laos saying that the bilingual program of AUF in National University of Laos provided French training courses in science fields, that the students can pursuit master degrees in Francophone countries, and that most choose to go to Vietnam. In addition, AUF's program Valofrase that trains French teachers in

Southeast Asia also has existed in Laos since 2007. This program is carried out by French Teachers Training Centre of Grenoble that trains French teachers in normal schools and delivers them in bilingual classes in secondary schools and universities in Laos.

2.3 The role of French in Thai Education System

2.3.1 Secondary Education

Towards foreign language policy in the education system, Thailand is similar to its neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia since the majority of students choose to learn English as the first foreign language over French, and it is not only related to academic fields to make research and studies more universal but also related to students' careers that associate with the economy of the whole country. The article by Yanaprasart (2001) lays out the history and recent situation of French teaching, She indicates that the Ministry of Education of Thailand included foreign languages as subjects in the secondary education system in 1928 and that most schools offered English as the first foreign language, French is the second. Therefore, this policy made French a popular language until the decrease of its importance in Southeast Asia after World War II, and it became an option principally for liberal art students.

According to Yanaprasart (2001), over 200 public secondary schools offered French classes in Thailand (1997), and the main purpose of French courses in secondary schools is to lay the groundwork in order to reach two goals for the students: reach to the curriculum requirements of high levels in higher education and being able to have sufficient language knowledge in the working field. Correspondingly, secondary schools in Thailand offer their liberal arts students compulsory classes for pursuing French in a university efficiently and optional classes of practical French in professional fields, especially tourism and secretarial work. In addition, French classes are also offered to science students. Foreign language programs that propose using French as a teaching medium in certain secondary schools also exist in Thailand. As stated by Pham and Thipkong (2016), the program offered students in bilingual classes to learn math and science courses in French.

However, according to Silapa-acha (2013), the education reform in 1999 gives rights to the head of a high school to decide which second language to teach in school, and Chinese or Japanese tend to be chosen rather than French. Therefore, the numbers of schools that offered French in secondary education decreased from 2005 to 2011 as shown below:

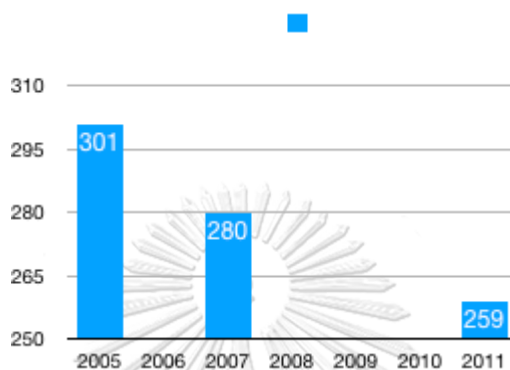


Figure 1 A. Numbers of high schools that offered French courses from 2005 to 2011 (Silapa-acha, 2013)

2.3.2 Higher Education

Various French programs are provided in higher education institutions in Thailand. The University Entrance Exam in Thailand allows liberal art students who wish to study French in a university to take a French test as a subject of second language in the exam. Eleven universities in the country offer French as major or minor, and amongst them, 4 universities in Thailand, namely Phayao, Kasetsart, Naresuan and Rangsit University are members of AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, 2019). Furthermore, Yanaprasart (2002) also mentioned that the main target of French language training in the higher education system is to provide students with adequate training that allows them to use the language in daily life and in the working fields, making the objective more practical rather than just theoretical.

Rojana-anun and Carral (2003) did research on the status of French language in Southeast Asia by asking university students who study French in Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The authors suggested that the educational projects use different strategies to promote French language to adapt to different cultures in different countries of Southeast Asia because the motivation of learning language

depends a lot on the economic context and education system of each country. They added that Laos and Cambodia were considered economically poor amongst all. Thus, students tend to choose French as a useful tool for their future career. The educational reasons widely dominated Thai and Vietnamese students concerning learning French at a university. Rojana-anun and Candelier think that the education system in Thailand has maintained French as a second foreign language in the country, while Vietnam value the importance of educational practice under the influence of Confucian culture and the deep relation with France in the history. Then in Singapore, a relatively rich country, learning French is associated with art and grand culture.

2.3.3 French Teaching and Cooperation Program

According to Yanaprasart (2001), the promotion of French language is also connected closely with the royal family in Thailand, via the relation with Association thaïlandaise des professeurs de français (ATPF, Thai Association of French Teachers), which was created in 1977 by Princess Galayani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhi-was Rajanagrinda, King Bhumipol Adulyadej's sister. Besides promoting the teaching and learning of French language and culture, the objectives of Association Thaïlandaise des Professeurs de Français also focus on being the resource centre and working with Thai organisations along with French ambassadors. (Association thaïlandaise des professeurs de français, 2017) Silapa-acha (2013) also mentioned one significant contribution that Thai Association of French Teachers did on boosting French language education; i.e., they mobilised and created Professional and Academic Aptitude Test of second foreign language (PAT 7) for the University Entrance Exam in 2010.

In addition, Yanaprasart (2002) stated that French departments in universities in Thailand provide language programs and professional programs in order to fulfil different purposes, and special courses are offered to cooperate with experts of different professional fields. As to French teaching, concerning the decline of French in Thailand, the French ambassador to Thailand took this crisis seriously by subsidising a project that cooperates with the Minister of Education on the training of French teachers in secondary schools. (Kraiperm, Dupuis & Sandragné, 2016)

Due to the differences of bilateral relations between French speaking countries and each country in Southeast Asia (including Mainland and Maritime Southeast Asia), the importance of French teaching in Southeast Asia region is quite different in each individual country. According to Carral (2014), the interests of learning French in Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are on account of the historical context of politics, but in the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia, they are based on economic cooperation. Brunei and Singapore use English as a medium of instruction in universities. French is only taught in these two countries as a cultural option. Those who specialise in French usually aim to study abroad later. French teaching was neglected in Myanmar because of the insufficiency of the university education system.

Carral then points out the lack of the linguistic policy, educational and cultural cooperation amongst the members of ASEAN countries. French is an important language in several fields in the global society. However, the economic interest in Southeast Asia made people tend to learn English, Chinese and Japanese. Silapa-acha (2013) also mentioned the impact of ASEAN on language learning in education. Despite the decline of French in Thailand, it is still the second most learned language in high schools as a second foreign language. Silapa-acha and Carral both agree that the quality of French language training should be improved. Focus on the training in certain fields for example tourism, is significant. Carral therefore suggested that universities in Southeast Asia should open more on international cooperatives to develop French education.

There are indeed quite many programs that support the cooperation between universities in Francophone countries and those in Southeast Asia. For example, a Thai Government Programme “One District One Scholarship” (ODOS) that offers financial support to outstanding students to study abroad sent 183 students to France, making France the most important destination country in the programme. (Agence EduFrance, 2005) In addition, in an interview with Sylvain Lamourette by the interviewer Laurence Vignes (2017), introducing Rouen University, the only Francophone university that offers financial support to non-Europeans students who want to study in Europe. The programme provided more than 3 million euros on the subvention of cooperation between Europe and Southeast Asia. Lamourette said that the standard of candidates’

French language ability is strict, it is taught only as a foreign language because the working language in this consortium was still English.

2.4 Conclusion

In the review of past studies presented above, we can see that the function of Alliance Française along with other cultural institutions, is clearly political. The association with its colonial past of French Imperialism traced back in the 19th century. Therefore, the role that Alliance Française plays in Southeast Asia can easily connect to the colonisation period in the region. Based on historical context however, the extent of language influence on Southeast Asian culture still remains abstract and vague. Therefore, it requires further research. The knowledge gap on French, the language that influenced Southeast Asia in important history context, is apparently huge.

In addition, even though we can see the cooperation program of French language in the education system of Southeast Asia, and that the reason for the decline of French language is mainly because of the economic trend of globalisation where English takes the lead. The current situation whereby students have suggested the improvements on the education system particularly on bi-language policies in secondary schools and universities based on their motivation. However, an examination of how to attract people to learn French and the actual strategies dealing with the decline of the French language still cannot be seen. This study aims to fill the gap by studying how the French language and culture are promoted in Thailand at the time of their decline in the Southeast Asia region.

Chapter 3

The historical background of the French influence and the establishment of Alliance Française in Thailand

French language has long existed in Thailand as a foreign language. Even though France has never colonised Thailand, this country still fell into a critical condition of being threatened by French imperialism and was affected by French encroachment in the late 19th Century. The earliest formation of bilateral relation between the two nations, however, is far beforehand. From the earliest political tie, France gradually formed a cultural network as its civilisation mission in Siam, as Thailand used to be called, and in the colonised Indochina region. Alliance Française, which later became a big cultural network, was founded in this circumstance.

This chapter aims to study the historical background of French influence in Thailand, in order to acquire a deeper understanding of the relation between Thailand and France. It firstly begins with a description of the earliest political ties between Thailand and France, how it developed, and how French language and culture have influenced Thailand since the period of French Indochina. Finally, it provides a background of the establishment and development of Alliance Française in Thailand.

3.1 The beginning of French influence in Thailand

The influence of French language and culture can be traced back to the 17th century when France made the first contact with Thailand, and the initial issues to discuss are how exactly it happened and how the relationship was developed afterward. The historical context of French influence in Thailand originated with the earliest contact with European missionaries which later brought about commercial activities and diplomatic relations. According to the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Thailand is historically the oldest partner of France in Southeast Asia and the interaction of language and culture between Thailand and France started more than 300 years ago. In 2017, Thailand and France celebrated their 160th anniversary of their formal diplomatic relation, which was established during the reigns of King Mongkut (Rama

IV) of Thailand and Napoleon III of France. In the following sub-sections, I will provide a picture of the relationship between Thailand and France.

3.1.1 Catholic mission

The relationship between Thailand and France started with the European missionary work in Asia. Moffett (1998) shows that there was a historical record of a French missionary attempting to introduce Christianity to Thailand in the 16th century. According to Moffett, the arrival of this Roman Catholic missionary and his team in around 1550 is generally considered to be the first contact of France with Thailand, but the contact did not have any important result until the 17th century. The first formal connection with Christianity from France was with Société des Missions Étrangères, a secular organisation whose members were secular priests. Their arrival in Ayutthaya in 1662 marks the French initial major contact with Thailand with an aim to promote evangelisation among Thai people.

The French missionary team was keen with their works but did not have a deep knowledge of Thai society. According to Love (1999), the French missionaries wanted to convert Thai people to Christianity. When they arrived in Thailand, they were welcomed by the Thai king. He showed enthusiasm to gain more understanding of the western world. This led to the misunderstanding on the part of the Société des Missions Étrangères, who believed that the Thai king and his people were ready to convert from Buddhism to Catholicism. Unlike the difficulty of mission work in Vietnam that had to be done secretly, the missionaries gained support from King Narai who allowed them to preach everywhere freely except in the palace. The king even offered them land, fund and material to build churches and a hospital. (Launay, 1920). One of the missionaries, Pierre Lambert de La Motte, wrote in his journal that the missionaries gave King Narai a collection of Catholic illustrations with their annotations, and he said to the missionaries, "The Christian religion is good" (Launay, 1920). Seeing King Narai show his interest in an alien religion, the missionary team started to conceive a long term strategy that aimed at converting King Narai to Christianity and attempted to make Roman Catholic Church the supreme authority in Thailand, believing that the Thais would accept a foreign religion upon following the sovereign. (Love, 1999) This is due

to their false belief of religion converting and lack of political and social comprehension of Thailand.

The purpose of this missionary work did not purely concern religion but also got involved in politics. That missionaries served as a medium of cultural exchange between the westerners and Thai was supposed to enhance the relation of both sides, but under the aspect of cultural imperialism, it did not reach their ultimate goal of converting Thailand into Christianity. Missionaries played an important role in the earliest cultural exchange between Thailand and the west by contacting the indigenous. They were explorers who took a long voyage to Southeast Asia, trying to learn the language and adapt to the environment, customs, and ways of living, only to spread Christianity. However, with the effect of imperialism, missionary work seems like an attempt to “civilise” the indigenous. They referred to the pagans who were difficult to convert “blind” and heavily criticised the action of worshipping idols, implying the intention of imposing the western religion thought into another culture without actually knowing the society and Theravada Buddhism. This can also be seen in their hope of converting the king of Thailand. Besides the Catholic mission concerning culture, missionaries also played an important role in diplomacy under the ideology of imperialism in that period where religion, trading and expansion of colonies, monarchy power of France were all bonded together.

3.1.2 Early diplomatic and commercial relation

The initial diplomatic relation between Thailand and France originated from the purpose of the Thai king to use French influence as a protector against other European powers. Thailand’s relation with France led to the opportunities for missionaries to assist in building the diplomatic relation between Thailand and France, and they seemed to think that they could accomplish their ultimate missionary goal. At that time, Thailand also had relation with Holland, but King Narai had some distrust with the Dutch and turned to France. King Louis XIV (reg.1643-1715) also aimed to challenge the commerce of Dutch in Asia by allowing the establishment of French East India Company to compete with Dutch East India Company. French missionaries thus took this opportunity to work with East India Company as long as they could spread Christianity to Thailand, and could take credit of introducing French commerce to King

Narai hoping that it would lead to religious conversion. However, King Narai was only interested in trading with Europeans, with a purpose of diminishing the influence of Dutch and Portugal. Consequently, King Narai came up with the idea of sending ambassadors to France in order to extend the relation between the two nations with the assistance of the missionaries. French East India Company offered a vessel for the Thai ambassadors' trip to Europe. However, the ship disappeared during the sail, and the Company lost a fortune. Société des Missions Étrangères was thus blamed for the accident and lost its credibility. (Love, 1999) Then the second voyage of sending ambassadors was organised by King Narai's prime counsellor. The ambassadors were escorted by French priests and arrived in France successfully in 1685. That marked the first formal diplomatic relation with France built by Thailand.

It should be noted that the failure in the religious mission did not lead to abandonment of commercial projects with Thailand on the account of the financial loss of French East Indian Company, instead, it opens a new passageway for the interact between France and Siam. For France, a trade cooperation with Thailand seemed to be a good idea. King Narai allowed the Company to open a factory in Ayuthaya in 1680. In addition, the Company bought goods like tin, woods, and rice, then sell Indian textiles and luxury products to Thailand including the Thai court. (Nguyen, 2017) Therefore, the second group of Thai ambassadors were sent to France, and the reception of these Thai ambassadors in 1686 in Versailles was marked exceptionally in the early diplomatic relation history of France. The Thai and French monarchs at that time shared some extent of similarity in power through these visits, they were recognised as influential powers in the western world.

When the first Thai ambassadors returned, France also sent their ambassadors to Siam with them the same year, but the diplomatic voyages were unsuccessful because the two countries did not seem to reach their goals through the visits. Although sending ambassadors to France seemed to strengthen the connection with each other while also giving chance to show powerful image from both sides, but the reason for France sending their ambassadors to Thailand was only to convert the Thai King. Because of the exaggerated expression and naive belief of Société des Missions Étrangères, France believed in this possibility, but in the end found out there was no intention for King

Narai to convert from Buddhism to Christianity. As for Thailand who wished to get more trading agreement with France, only two insignificant treaties were signed for the benefits of French East Indian Company.

The diplomatic and commercial relation in the seventeenth century between Thailand and France was important in the diplomatic history but did not leave significant French influence in Thailand. Indeed, the communication ended two hundred years after that. Both Thailand and France attempted to dominate through using the power of the counterpart but failed in making the agreement that actually benefiting each other. In Thailand, commercial activities from France was regarded much more important than political and religious activities that France was seeking to achieve, therefore, making it difficult to execute. Then the relation built at that time was forced to discontinue due to the invasion of Burma until the attempt of France to build a colonial empire in Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century.

3.2 The French actual colonisation of Southeast Asia

The French colonisation actually took place in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The religious persecution in Vietnam provided a good excuse for France to intrude. France started to set up a standpoint in Indochina in the mid-nineteenth century and composed an empire during the reign of Napoleon III (reg. 1852-1870) as a part of his plan on restoring French glory. The protection of the Society of foreign mission of Paris was thus a good pretext for military intervention. The expansion of French colonial empire first began in the south of Vietnam, when Da Nang and then Saigon were attacked. In 1863, France founded French Indochina as part of the French colonial empire.

The expansion of France's occupation continuously went further to Cambodia. According to Briggs (1947), King Norodom Prohmbarirak of Cambodia (reg. 1860-1904) was forced to be under French protection and allowed France to quickly extend its territory. Subsequently, Cambodia signed a treaty with France in 1863 and became French protectorate in order to get rid of the control of Vietnam and Thailand. However, Thailand had signed a secret treaty with King Norodom Prohmbarirak later in the same year, saying Cambodia was its tributary, and claimed that Battambang and Angkor

belonged to Thailand. For this reason, in 1865, France and Siam signed a new treaty that acknowledged French protectorate over Cambodia in exchange of French admitting on Thailand's claim over Battambang and Angkor. (Briggs, 1947) Then following by successful control over Annam (central Vietnam) and Tonkin (northern Vietnam) after Sino-French war in 1885, France officially established French Indochina composed of Vietnam and Cambodia in 1887.

The rules of France over Indochina had direct impact on the traditional political system of tributary in Southeast Asia. According to Stuart-Fox (1994), France defined the territories by drawing lines showing borders on the map, and the European law was applied along with the territories. It was much stricter than the traditional Vietnamese administrative system that was defined by sovereignty. Nevertheless, France did not rush into defining all the borders clearly in order to expand the territories toward the west of Southeast Asia and maybe could even extend its influence to Thailand. The conflict between the traditional political system and the European system eventually ended when France successfully invaded Laos with military force and took control of it in 1893.

3.3 The spread of French language and culture

Part of the largest French cultural spreading was through the establishment of colonisation, and one of the major targets was to "civilise" the natives in colonies by bringing in the European religions and languages. This civilising mission did not only have an impact on the indigenous culture but also shaped the history and the identities of the colonies. The influence of language policies imposed in the colonies can still be seen in the Post-Colonial period; for instance, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie was founded in 1970, aiming to unite the French speaking countries and institutions, or those who regarded French as an important language. Many of its first members were part of the French colonial empire during the colonial period.

The extension of colonialism helped spread the influence of French language and culture abroad quickly through the implementation of language policy in an attempt to assimilate to the indigenous in the colonies, and those effects can still be seen in the former French colonies.

3.3.1 French assimilation policy in Indochina

The process of realising the application of French language policy in Indochina was not functioning well because of the traditional education that had remained in its position for hundreds of years. After France included French Indochina into its colonial empire in 1887, French language policy was implemented, and after that French was widely used in the domains of government and trade. As a result, French-Vietnamese education was started by establishing primary schools in Vietnam. Moreover, the demands of training locals to work for French colonial government increased. This led to the creation of French and Quốc Ngữ (Romanised Vietnamese) schools for training interpreters and civil servants. (Tran, 2009)

Even though French schools were established, the pre-colonial education institutions had already existed for a long time, and it was not easy to eliminate the traditional system. In Laos and Cambodia, people sent their children to temples for education, and Buddhist monks played the role of teachers. The temple education existed in local communities that used Laos or Khmer texts to educate young men on basic knowledge and moral principles according to the standards of Laos or Cambodian society in which French could interfere very little. (Dy, 2004) Also in Vietnam, due to the influence of Confucianism, the Imperial Examination System for selecting civil servants had existed for over one thousand years. French colonists attempted to get rid of the Confucian influence through education reform. However, the elimination of Chinese influence was not easy to execute. The Imperial Examination System was then abolished in southern Vietnam in 1861, but remained in Northern and Middle Vietnam until 1916.

The language education set up by French colonist in French Indochina aimed to train the civil servants to work for the colonial government, and assimilate to French culture fully. However, the efficiency of French influence did not go that deep, and did not cover the whole area of Indochina, either. French authorities set up a lot of colonial schools with French education system in order to get support from the elites, and hired local people as their administrative, believing that education was the most effective and influential method to stabilise its power in the colonies. (Vu, 2012) French was thus the principal language that was used amongst the intellectuals, and a tool to make the local people assimilate to French. In French Indochina, Vietnam was more influenced by

French colonial education system than Laos and Cambodia. Nevertheless, the goal of exterminating indigenous languages through education reform did not succeed in any part of French Indochina.

The attempt of the civilising mission only influenced a few people of the elite class and it was largely different between rural and urban areas. In Vietnam, the idea of assimilation to French culture and language faced a lot of resistance. Many French colonists were not interested in “civilising” the indigenous and did not believe that turning the lifestyle of non-French into fully western would be applicable. (Vu, 2012) The French authority then started to adopt French-Vietnamese education and promoted Romanised writing systems in order to lower the status of Chinese scripts, simultaneously challenging the advocate of Confucian scholars. In Cambodia, the introduction of French education system led to compulsory education policy. Besides French schools that trained officers and administrators, it has been obligatory for parents to send their children to learn Khmer in modernised schools since 1906. (Rani, 2012) Similar situations were found in Laos. French colonists opened French schools to train civil servants, aiming to produce Laos elites. However, the policy of French assimilation in Laos were weaker compared to Cambodia and Vietnam, mainly because of the difficulties of transportation that slowed economic development. (Halpern, 1966) French education system was therefore limited in urban areas. In contemplation of getting further education, some elites from wealthy families who received French education in Indochina chose to study in France to compensate for the inadequate education system in their countries.

As pointed out in the previous introduction, it can be seen that even though the reform of education system settled initially by the French colonists in the colonisation period had strong influence on the modernisation process in Southeast Asia region. French language, however, was not implemented much overall since the attitude of the colonists on the idea of assimilating to the indigenous was not very earnest. Moreover, the gap between social classes also emerged because the French authorities only focused on training elites to work for them as civil servants. During the period, the rural areas occupied a big portion in French Indochina, but the difficulties of traffic and lack of resources tended to make the colonists lose interest in promoting the policy broadly.

Therefore, only the French and the small numbers of local people from upper class actually got benefits from the economic progress. However, the concept of modernisation still influenced the colony and had an indirect but huge effect on forming a nation's identification in the subsequent historical progress.

3.3.2 The effect of the French imperialism on Thailand

Even though Thailand was not colonised by France, it was adversely affected by French colonial encroachments. Thailand, the country experienced France's 'civilising' efforts, which was part of French imperialism. In the colonial plan of France, Thailand was affected by France's expanding along with its colonial territories in Indochina. Meanwhile, Thailand became close to other European powers and built diplomatic and commercial relationship with France. In addition, while Thailand was under the threat of the French expansion in neighbouring areas, Thai monarch realised the urge to modernise the whole nation, including the reform of the political system, education, infrastructures, and facilities by following the west.

French colonial power in Indochina has changed the diplomatic and commercial relation with Thailand and extended its influence into education and culture. Many diplomatic agreements and commercial treaties were signed under the reign of Napoleon III and King Mongkut (reg. 1851-1868), and the trade between the Thais and the Europeans were much freer than before. (Jaimeearee, 2015) The most notable treaty to boost the relationship was the one signed in 1856 which opened up the door for trade, guaranteed the freedom of missionaries, the safety of residency for French people and agreed on the jurisdiction of France in Thailand. With the influence of Franco-Thai relation and King Mongkut's adoption of western innovation, Thailand also opened to the western culture and religion. A French priest. Father Emile-August Columbus, founded the first Thai-French church school in 1885, where Thai and French were used as medium of instruction. This school was later known as Assumption College School. However, the process of building up the friendship between Thailand and France did not go all smoothly because unlike Britain, lack of respect on Thai tradition led to Thailand's distrust of France. (Duke, 1963)

According to (Duke, 1963), apart from the importation of western culture as mentioned above, pressure from western powers motivated Thailand to reform itself, while France was seen as the biggest threat and caused a lot of quarrels on the issue of territories with Thailand. Thailand then realised that France was a menace and more dangerous than Vietnam, and finally lost its domination over Cambodia. (Duke, 1963) However in 1893, France strived to occupy the east side of Mekong, seizing Laos to French territories by using border dispute, hence resulted in the Franco-Siamese War. In the end, Thailand signed an agreement on giving up its claim of Laos, French people also obtained the extraterritorial rights under this treaty that took advantage of Thailand. (Duke, 1963) Under this context, the main reason for modernisation was to be treated with equality by European countries. In the process, King Chulalongkorn (reg. 1868-1910) therefore broke the French people's impression of Asian monarch stereotype. He even visited Paris in 1897, with an intention to show that Siam was an independent state facing western colonial powers. This visit was difficult because it took place right after the Franco-Siamese War. (Alddrich, 2017) King Chulalongkorn played a significant role on this occasion by exercising the monarchy power of Thailand and diplomacy, marking an important moment of French-Thai relation.

The education reform during this period was significant as a prototype of the education system nowadays, and it was also the starting point of using French as a medium of instruction in certain fields in the education system. King Chulalongkorn first built a Royal Page School and an English language school for nobles and Royal pages to learn English. This caused English to be more and more important in Thailand. The French consul therefore insisted on making French language have the right of same position with English in Bangkok. (Duke, 1963) The first university, Chulalongkorn University was established in 1917 following the European model, concept of the elite education system in France, German ideas of school of science and British concept of Oxford and Cambridge. However, the establishment did not follow fully the European model, instead it was locally interpreted and adapted in Thailand. (Fernandez-Chung & Hill, 2016) Four schools or faculties were established, they are the Faculty of Arts and Science, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of

Political Science. French language courses were offered at the faculty of arts where students were required to know at least two foreign languages.

As can be seen from above, France has become important and influential in Thailand even though Thailand is not its colony. This is due to two main factors. One is the French establishment of modern high schools and supported the teaching of French in Thai universities. The second factor is that France encouraged Thai students, especially those majoring in law, to further their study in France.

3.4 The development of Alliance Francaise

Cultural institutions had existed long before the establishment of the Ministry of Culture, which marked the starting point of modernizing the culture policy. The most notable one amongst all is Alliance Française established in 1883, It is not only the first French language school in the world but also the first non-government cultural organisation. Although Alliance Française is a private non-government organisation, it is linked directly to the French government, principally with the ministry of Foreign Affairs. Throughout the days, the institution built up the network as French language and culture centres around the world and has cooperated with other cultural institutions. Alliance Française thus holds a significant position in cultural diplomacy of France by its cultural action in history.

Being the oldest major cultural institution, many other countries founded similar cultural institutions later on and took the model of Alliance Française as reference, such as British Council (established in 1934) and Goethe Institute (established in 1951). (Paschalidis, 2009) It is thus important to know how and why Alliance Française was established as well as the development and the influence of the institution in the world. The previous section discussed on the French influence in Thailand and Indochina related to colonisation, this section of this chapter addresses first of all the historical background of Alliance Française with its colonial roots, and secondly how it was built and expanded the biggest cultural network in the world. Finally, the expansion of the network shifts the focus to the development in Southeast Asia, that using the example from the establishment of Alliance Française Bangkok to strengthen the point from the first section.

3.4.1 Establishment of Alliance Française

Even though in France, the concept of using French language as the universal national language in the country was already set during the French Revolution. In the second half of the 19th century especially after 1860's, the collective consciousness of a national language in Europe arose. The awareness was particularly being issued in France on the function of communicating practice as the national language. The reform of the school system around 1880's also associated with the perception of popularised French since bringing the language into public was closely related to academic domain. Alliance Française was thus founded under this circumstance.

The background of the foundation of Alliance Française was actually connected with some controversial political act. In 1883, Alliance Française was established in Paris by a group of establishing committee consisting Prime Minister Jules Ferry (in office. 1883-1885) with his private secretary Paul Cambon, who was also a French diplomat. Other members of the committee were from different domains, including historian Pierre Foncin (1841-1916), scientist Louis Pasteur (1822-1895), writers Jules Verne (1828-1905) and Ernest Renan (1823-1892), and publisher Armand Colin (1842-1900). Some of the members famously made an effort for the expansion of French Empire with controversial advocates. For instance, Ernest Renan embraced political theories on national identification especially concerning race that the colonists used to justify their actions. Also Armand Colin spread French language throughout the entire colonial empire by publishing textbooks, dictionaries and encyclopedias.

The core members of the founders were engaged in politics of the Third Republic, whether personally or by commitment. Jules Ferry, one of the founders of Alliance Française, proclaimed "Superior races has a duty regarded to lower races, that is the duty to civilise them"¹ The Third Republic under Ferry was very keen on the civilised mission and put confidence in science, technology, education, and culture on completing the mission. The founders of Alliance Française believed that French language can be used as a peaceful tool for expanding colonial empires other than military force. Therefore, the primary purpose of establishing Alliance Française is

¹ Speech in the Chamber of Deputies (Chambre des députés) on 25 of July, 1885. See Reclus, M. (1947). **Jules Ferry, 1832-1893**. Flammarion.

demonstrated clearly in the original name of Alliance Française, namely “French alliance for the propagation of the national language in the colonies and abroad (Alliance française pour la propagation de la langue nationale dans les colonies et à l'étranger)”, making the institution plays the role on propaganda of French language. The initial objectives of Alliance Française was associated with civilising missions in the colonies through the propaganda of French language.

The first general secretary of Alliance Française then later president and a short period of vice president, Pierre Foncin (1841-1916) had been in charge of the organisation until World War I. He engaged with the educational reform in Algeria shortly before the foundation of Alliance Française and thought that assimilating the indigenous through teaching them French was considered moral for the colonisers. (Barko, 2000) The purposes of actions of early Alliance Française were these: establishing French schools, introducing French courses, creating normal schools to train French teachers, rewarding the best students, encouraging publications that supported Alliance Française and organising conferences for the purpose of French propaganda

3.4.2 Establishment of Alliance Française Bangkok

During the period when Indochina was under colonisation by France, the civilian governor implemented a series of French cultural and language policies. A French school was set up as early as 1861 in Vietnam, and a modern Franco-Cambodian school was built in Cambodia in 1873, branches of Alliance Française were also established as extensions of the French language education in Saigon in 1887 and in Cambodia in 1889. (Foncin, 1889) On the other hand in Thailand, westernised education was mainly connected to the Catholic church. Christian missionaries were active in the nineteenth Century, probably due to the agreement between King Mongkut and France which allowed them to teach, preach, travel freely, and build schools with the consent of Thai authority as part of the initial process of modernisation implemented by the western power.

French schools had already been settled well in Thailand before the establishment of Alliance Française, but did not have a systematic method of language promotion. In 1899, while being aware of the need for more French language promotion in order to

balance the gradually coming of the influence of English in Siam, the inspector and one of the members of the committee of Alliance Française Saigon wrote to the government of French Indochina demanding a financial subsidy for the establishment of Alliance Française in Siam. Then on September 6th, 1912, Alliance Française was established at the Oriental Hotel with 50 members of the committee. (Le Petit Journal, 2012) They made an announcement in Bangkok Times and rented some space at the hotel as the office and the library.

However, due to the severe situation of World War I from 1914 to 1918, the development of Alliance Française Bangkok remained stagnant and was in the same location for more than ten years. Finally, in 1926, Alliance Française Bangkok moved to a building on Poh Yom Road in Sathorn: It belonged to the government of French Indochina. That was an important turning point with some notable people on the committee, Alliance Française also expanded its development gradually on the courses and facilities. In the 1960s, the financial support started to come from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the number of students increased to eight thousand.

3.5 Conclusion

The relation between Thailand and France in the past was how Thailand dealing with the ideology of French imperialism. By the early 17th century, Thailand had already experienced the attempt of the westernisation mission of Catholic missionaries as they tried to convert Thai people. The Roman Catholic Church was then powerful in Europe and played a significant role in building commercial and diplomatic relationship with Southeast Asia during early modern period. Nevertheless, with the lack of understanding of both Thai society and French culture, the influence was limited to the contact of material aspect. Then in the 19th century France reappeared in Southeast Asia expanding its territories to Indochina. This act threatened Thailand and caused conflict with France. Moreover, Thailand struggled to maintain traditional system while also having to reform itself. This clearly implied that even without being actually colonised, the ambition of cultural assimilation from France did not exist only in French Indochina, but also encouraged the modernisation in Thai history. The influence from French Imperialism was reflected particularly in the reform or modernisation of

education, which was similar and somehow connected to Indochina under French colonisers' rule.

As pointed out in this chapter, French imperialism and colonialism were closely related to the promotion of French language and culture in the past, the influence was not only limited to the colonies, but extended to many other countries. As can be expected, the concept of imperialism is not only concerned with military intervention, but also involved in civilising missions. On the whole, the initial purpose of cultural and language promotion is far from the image and the impression of the public nowadays. We can see the trace all the way from the nineteenth century, and Alliance Française was part of the cultural propaganda since its establishment in 1883.



Chapter 4

Strategies of Alliance Française in Thailand

4.1 The organisation of Alliance Française

The Alliance Française Bangkok is a part of the cultural network of the Alliance Française Foundation the headquarter of which is in Paris. As mentioned before in Chapter 3, the Alliance Française Bangkok has been existing for over 100 years in Thailand since its establishment in 1912. The distinguished feature that makes Alliance Française Bangkok recognisable is the building and the internal space. According to the director of Alliance Française Bangkok, Mr. Silvain Bano, many Alliance Française branches in the world are situated in ancient buildings, and some have to use the space of other local institutions. In contrast, Alliance Française Bangkok owns its newly built building with plenty of space for the auditorium, the central library, the bookshop and the restaurant. In addition, the building is situated next to a new urban planning division project, which can attract more people to visit this place as a cultural centre.

To understand the strategies of Alliance Française, we have to examine its missions first. A mission means work determined to be one's main duty. In the case of Alliance Française, it is involved in the promotion of French language and culture. The main missions of all the branches of Alliance Française as shown in the website of Alliance Française Paris² includes the following: 1) To develop teaching and use of the French language 2) To encourage the promotion and the influence of French culture 3) To foster the diversity of language and culture.

This chapter aims to study how Alliance Française works under each functional division to achieve the missions mentioned above. Data for analysis was collected from documents, and in-depth interviews with the director of Alliance Française Bangkok, Mr. Sylvain Bano.

² The Alliance Française de Paris  <https://www.alliancefr.org/en/about/alliance-francaise-de-paris>

In order to understand the strategies of the Alliance Française in Thailand, I would like to explain its organisation first. The Alliance Française Bangkok currently has 19 formal staff members, along with 20 teachers in the language centre. They are distributed according to the task differences matching the objectives of the institution. The whole institution is divided into six departments: Language Centre, Culture Centre, Communication Department, Reception, Library and Translation Service Department. The current organisation structure is seen in the figure below:

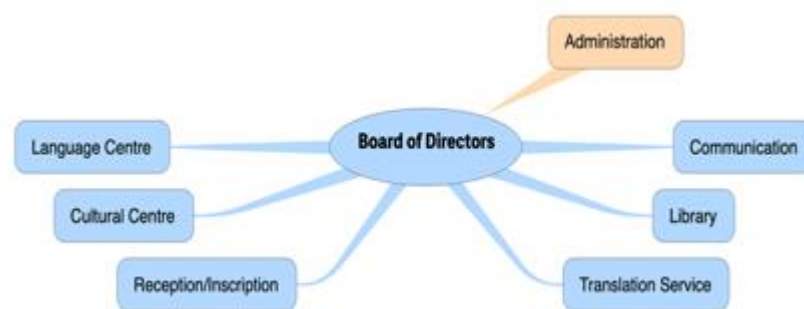


Figure 2 Organisation chart of Alliance Française based on a photo (2020) of Alliance Française Bangkok provided by Mr. Sylvain Bano, drawn by the author

4.2 The sketch of basic strategies of Alliance Française

Even though Alliance Française is a non-government organisation that operates independently, whether in finance or administration, following the law of the country where it is located. The institution still accepts financial support from the French government and is one of the partners of the Ministry of Culture. Each branch of Alliance Française follows the principle guideline from Alliance Française headquarter. Therefore, before establishing an Alliance Française branch in Thailand, local environment elements of the country and the city where it is located have to be analysed carefully, including economy, society, language and culture from different ethnic groups. Therefore, the complexity of cultural policy is applied to each branch, making it not only suitable for the region where it is located, but also distinctive in the French cultural network of the world. Most of the time an Alliance Française branch is self-supporting. The expenses, such as salaries, come from students' payment for language courses, space rental fees and earnings from cultural activities.

In order to analyse the strategies used by Alliance Française in Bangkok, I use the framework of destination branding model proposed by Marcello Resitano (2017). The works of Alliance Française focus mainly on language teaching and cultural activities in order to arrive at the destination of promoting French culture to three target groups: Thai people, French speakers and other foreigners living in Thailand. With the intentions of reaching the target group, five segments for identification are designated; namely, learning culture of France, having cultural exchange with Thailand, serving Francophone communities, engaging in international society and attracting investments along with immigration as shown in the following:

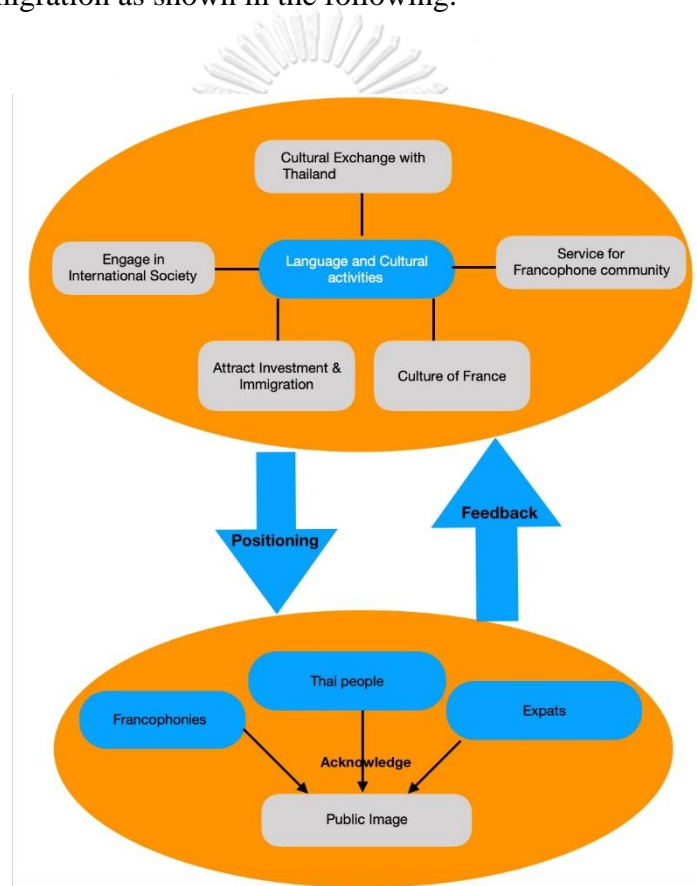


Figure 3 Cultural promotion strategy of Alliance Française Bangkok, drawn by the author

Based on these segments that formed into language and cultural activities, Alliance Française Bangkok is able to identify and position its image while attracting the target audience. The initial step of making strategy plans is to shape the image of French

culture laid out by Alliance Française and to create a platform of communication with those who are potentially interested in learning French in Thailand. Then the image of French culture will be planted in the impression of the receivers with different individual perspectives that reveal their feedback and form a method of bilateral communication.

4.3 Analysis of the strategies of Alliance Française

4.3.1 Promotion of culture of France

The Alliance Française's intention of displaying the French cultural expression is to convey a message in Thailand based on the culture value of France. The most common cultural events are artistic, such as French movies, stage plays, concerts, art exhibitions, and also annual festivals like Christmas markets, Night of ideas³ and Month of Francophone⁴ which display not just the traditional value of French culture but also the contemporary side. For instance, the Francophonie Festival held every year as one of the events during Month of Francophone in March, which offered a series of activities that relate to Francophone culture such as singing contest, games, art workshop, concerts, exhibitions by Alliance Française, Lycée français international de Bangkok (International French school in Bangkok, LFIB) and Association thaïlandaise des professeurs de français. In order to interact with all the target audience, the languages used in the activities are French, English and Thai to make sure everyone is able to participate without language barrier.

³ A project of 24 hour global marathon holding every year on philosophy debates, conference and cultural performance to exchange ideas on various topics, launched around January to February every year

⁴ Celebrate French language and Francophone culture every year in March along with the International Francophonie Day on 20th of March



Figure 4 Poster advertising the Francophonie Festival of 2019 for Month of Francophone. Source: Facebook Fanpage of Alliance Française Bangkok

The French language courses provided by Alliance Française serve as a tool to introduce French culture directly to Thailand. Increasing French speakers' population in Thailand will be a benefit to France in terms of gaining more popularity and increasing the French influence in Thailand. Therefore, Alliance Française is seen as a prestigious language centre for those who are interested in learning French for various reasons and as a place where the public can acquire information. For the external policy, the cooperation with local educational institutions is necessary. Alliance Française helps with teaching French in some schools and universities. This enables Alliance Française to restore the popularity of French and also to cooperate in French education training outside the institution. This action benefits university students who plan to be French teachers in the future.

4.3.2 Cultural exchange with Thailand

Being a foreign institution with the mission of promoting cultural brand, Alliance Française plans for cultural exchange with Thailand. On the one hand, French culture is highly promoted in the form of events, festivals, exhibitions, etc. On the other hand, Thai cultural events such as the exhibition of works by Thai artists and the screening of Thai films are held. Some of the events are clearly intended to promote cultural exchange while displaying works with the cultural backgrounds of both sides and

building a connection that represents the relation between France and Thailand. For instance, a series of film screening activity in 2020 which cooperates with a Thai film program, namely Filmvirus featuring one Thai short film and one contemporary French film with the introduction of the curator and Q&A section to discuss. Also, documentaries in French in the library on the subjects of Thai history and Thai culture allow Thai people to understand their own culture from Francophone perspectives, and provides space for discussing and exchanging their points of view with French speakers and other foreigners. In addition, the theme of the cultural events also includes the neighbouring countries because of the deep connection of Thailand with ASEAN countries, and French former colonies in Indochina.



Figure 5 Poster advertising Filmvirus x AF Double Bill 02 in 2020 Source: Facebook Fanpage of Alliance Française Bangkok

The cultural cooperation also includes financial support offered by Alliance Française to help promote Thai art aiming at two-way communication throughout cultural exchange. Talented Thai artists who wish to promote their works in France may get support from Alliance Française. Therefore, the culture cooperation is not only limited to the liaison between French artists and Thai artists, but also include support for developing local artists. In a way, Thai culture and art are also introduced and

encouraged. This helps create a stronger friendship between the two nations, generating a willingness to learn French culture-on the part of Thai people.

4.3.3 Service for Francophone community

The Francophone community in Thailand is also a target group in promoting French culture. This shows that Alliance Française supports the cultural value of all people and helps improve the accessibility to French art even overseas. Well-known French artists, art groups, and performers are invited to display their works in Thailand, and some of the events use only French with the clear intention of targeting French speakers including Thai French speakers. Furthermore, since fostering cultural diversity is one of their main missions of cultural policy, the venues of these events are not limited to France but also include other Francophone countries, such as Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Canada, broadening the knowledge of the whole Francophone world and strengthening the bond within French speaking countries.

Playing the role of the cultural centre of Francophones, three categories of information and French language service are provided with the purpose of offering assistance in Thailand concerning the French language. The first category of service is translation of important documents from Thai to French and French to Thai. The second category is the arrangement of language courses for native French speaking children. The courses are designed especially for those who attend international schools that use French as the medium of instruction. The Alliance Française assists students to prepare themselves for French exams in schools. As for adults living in Thailand, Thai and Burmese language courses for Francophones are offered to help them cope with their daily life in Thailand as part of exploring Thai culture. The third category of providing service is the library, where books in French kept in the library help them to always connect with their own culture. Also, various travel guide books on Thailand allow the Francophones to acquire more information, encouraging the promotion of Thai culture and tourist industry resulting in furthering the interest in discovering the country.

4.3.4 Engagement in international society

As a part of international society, Alliance Française follows global trends and organise activities concerning worldwide issues. Those trends include human rights, gender

equality and environmental issues like ocean conservation, sustainable development. Hence, Alliance Française cooperates with international organisations, non-profit organisations and embassies of other countries which are not limited to Francophone ones. In this case, participating in these global activities helps create a positive image for Alliance Française and gives their potential audience an impression of Alliance Française taking responsibility and supporting universal value.

Besides global issues, art related courses and irregular scheduled workshops are also available for interested groups. This puts Alliance Française in a position of generosity. It does not only focus on French promotion but also serves as a cultural centre that welcomes everyone in Thailand. Courses like fashion and design and irregular workshops attract amateurs, and there are also dance classes designed for adults, teens and kids. The classes include all ages and use mainly English in communication, Some use French or Thai according to the learners' need. Through covering broader subjects of all issues in contemporary society, there is more room to attract a wider range of audience.

4.3.5 Attracting investments and immigration

As a leading cultural institution of France, it is expected that its strategy can also assist in the cultural policy of the French government through cooperation in the domains of education and business. Being able to attract foreigners to study, work and live in France is one of the ultimate goals of cultural promotion that benefits the economic segment. Therefore, lectures and conferences about studying in France are held, and the official French education promotion centre like Campus France gives deeper information like scholarship, student life in France, and opportunities to Thai people who are interested in studying in France. In order to be able to study in French programs in France, most of the institutions require that students pass certain levels of French test measurement. Therefore, Alliance Française holds some French language examinations to evaluate language proficiency like DELF-DALF (Diplôme d'étude en langue française - Diplôme approfondi de langue française)⁵ provided by the Ministry of

⁵ Diploma in French language studies and diploma in Advanced French studies are certification of French ability for non-native speakers. DELF certified level A1, A2, B1 and B2,

Education and TCF (Test de connaissance du français, French knowledge test)⁶ by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation of France.

Apart from attracting people to pursuing education and receive academic training in France, training Thai professions and seeking talents in French for the French companies in Thailand are good opportunities to gain the profit for French industries. Cooperation in the business domain also exists. Most of it involves French companies. However, Alliance Française is also willing to cooperate with other companies that encourage the promotion of French language, culture and education. Partner's Club (Club de Partenaire) of Alliance Française Bangkok allows building partnership that offers tailored French classes to train and co-organise cultural events in exchange of financial support.⁷ On the measurement of language proficiency for professionals, the professional version of French examination DELF, namely DELF Pro is offered for pursuing a career in a French speaking enterprise. Training talents from different countries through the French education system can shape the image of France as inclusive and diverse, and the result can be a successful promotion in Thailand that positively related to talent attraction.



DALF certified level C1 and C2.

⁶ French language knowledge test assesses a non-native speaker's French ability, it is used by Québec for immigration procedure.

⁷ Alliance Française Bangkok Partner's Club <https://afthailande.org/en/partners-club/#/>



Figure 6 Poster advertising free consulting activity of Campus France Source: Facebook Fanpage of Alliance Française Bangkok

4.4 Current challenges and future plans

As social media became more prominent in this era, especially in Thailand, where there are 55 million users of social media, it is expected that Alliance Française uses this trend to make activities more accessible to Thai people. This is evident through the multiple accounts that Alliance Française uses different social platforms, such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Instagram, Line. According to the director of Alliance Française in Bangkok, Mr. Bano, most marketing media are being published and promoted online, and traditional off-line materials, such as printed posters and brochures became less preferred. The works of Alliance Française Bangkok are regarded as active in the French cultural network in the region of Oceanic and Asia amongst 108 branches with all the cultural events being announced on social media, showing that the reachability to general public is considered to be high as the statistical number of 2020 shown below:

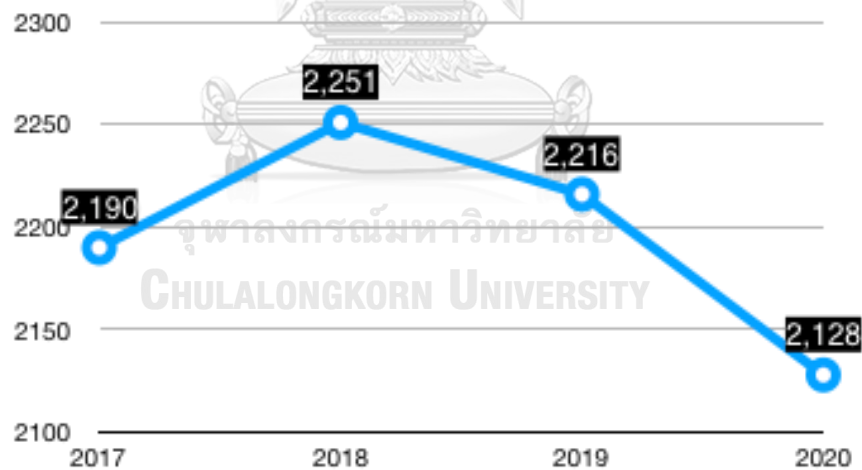
*Table 1 Statistics related to business content of Alliance Française Bangkok in 2020.
Source: Livret Data of Alliance Française 2020*

Content	Number	Rank (within 108)
French learning students	2128	13
Enrolments of language examination courses	A1: 1848 A2: 1110 B1: 1155 B2:308 C1: 149	A1: 8 A2: 5 B1: 3 B2: 6 C1: 6
Participants of language certification	2630	1
Cultural events	150	1
Performers and visitors of cultural events	2353	6
Books Checked From the Libraries	8572	4
Facebook page fans	28098	4
Instagram followers	2478	16
Twitter followers	2096	5
Watched in Youtube	15400	9

We can see in the statistics that each index of business content all rank in the top twenty in Oceanic and Asia region, this indicates that the result of promotion of Alliance Française works is seen as adequate in comparison to the other Alliance Française branches in Asia, as can be seen that a well-known language centre successfully

attracted people to French study, and that the exceptional number of cultural events held is ranked number one in the region. However, since most of the events are not organised by Alliance Française alone but cooperated with local groups, international organisations and embassies with the public that brought from external agencies, it is difficult to evaluate the true success of cultural activities.

Regarding language promotion, it should be noted that the numbers of participants of French language courses in Alliance Française have not been significantly increased from 2017 to 2020 where the figure below even shows the tendency of decreasing. However, the largest decrease from 2019 to 2020 was probably effected by the impact of Covid-19. Hence, there is limitation in finding out exactly whether Alliance Française successfully attract more students throughout the years, However, data seems to show decrease of the numbers of students who participate in French language courses, as shown in the following chart.



*Figure 7 Numbers of French learners at Alliance Française from 2017 to 2020.
Source: Livret Data of Alliance Française 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020*

When facing the decline of French language in Asia, Alliance Française attempts to raise the willingness to learn a second foreign language for the reason of either self-interest or practical use. As the movement of the global economy is fast changing, most people are more interested in Japanese, Korean and Chinese than French because those

languages are more useful in the economical way. By way of contrast, most French learners are attracted to the characteristics of French culture. According to Mr. Bano, this aspect could actually make good use by creating a more relaxing atmosphere while learning French because they do not need to urge themselves to learn for work like other popular foreign languages. In the meantime, French language can still be promoted as a useful language in the economy of international society, as 31 countries listed French as one of the official languages or sole official language including big countries like Canada, and many in Africa.

Besides the problems mentioned above, Alliance Française is confronting the problem of the decrease of students and participants have lost interest due to the pandemic, which limits them to take courses online instead of going to class in Alliance Française. Currently the biggest challenge that Alliance Française is facing is the harmful effect caused by the global pandemic of COVID-19. At the time of severe situation and the Thai government's restricting public activities, French classes are obliged to be taught online and have caused the decrease of the number of students who seem to prefer studying in the classrooms. But this situation is considered temporary, as Mr Bano reckons that the students will come back once the state of emergency is lifted. Moreover, as fewer and less individuals participate in the activities, it is therefore necessary to consider organising more suitable projects, especially under the pandemic.

When talking about the vision of Alliance Française in Thailand in the future plan, Mr Bano mentioned three objectives of the work. They are: 1) Develop further for the understanding of art through more courses related to various branches of art, art history, and culture, deepening the knowledge of art in order to fulfil the demand of artistic education in Thailand. 2) Expand the development outside Bangkok in order to distribute the resource in other parts of the country. It is suggested to provide online courses in cooperation with the schools in other cities like Khon Kaen and Hat Yai. 3) Continue the development of the cooperation with more French companies to create more opportunities towards expanding the affairs and services to more fields.

4.5 Conclusion

Alliance Française Bangkok acts as a cultural institution that aims at building relations with Thai people. Based on the guidelines of missions from the headquarters in Paris, the policies of every branch adjusted according to the history and cultural background of each country that makes every Alliance Française different from each other. Alliance Française Bangkok is distinctive from the appearance of the building to the influence of its cultural strategies like the cultural exchange between Thai artists and French artists, and offering opportunities to Thai artists to draw near to France. Similarly regarding the French learning and teaching, not only French courses are provided in the institution but also language examinations and French education information offered to those who want to study in France. There are also training projects for Thai teachers who expect to teach French in Thailand. It appears that the objective of these activities are to deepen positive impression of French culture and empower the position of French language to Thai people.

Alliance Française Bangkok does not serve only as a language centre, but also get involved in different works of various fields of activities, seeking opportunities to cooperate with embassies, international organisations, local art groups and enterprises concerning different issues, not only artistic ones. Alliance Française Bangkok is keen to follow global trends as being responsible in the international society. Providing in a wide range of topics can also able to attract a broader audience, create more interaction with the participants and give opportunities for exchanging different thoughts. Moreover, expanding the business content as an attraction thoroughly using the spaces, operating the book shop and the restaurant also enhance the institution. It appears that Alliance Française Bangkok attempts to shape the image of being an international cultural agency in the local community.

Based on the number of cultural activities held and students enrolled in Alliance Française in the last four years, it appears that cultural activities are more active than the language courses. However, it is difficult to distinguish whether getting involved in the cultural industry actively can be a measurement of the success of Alliance Française Bangkok, nor does it position itself as an artistic centre while language is still the centre of cultural diplomacy of France, especially situated in a region where French language

is fast declining. Therefore, it requires further discussion based on more data on the other hand, the number of students tend to decrease. However, this year, the reason for the decrease is likely to be due to the pandemic of Covid-19 which forced the courses to be taught online, and many cultural activities normally attract many people were also postponed, cancelled or moved online.



Chapter 5

The Activities of Alliance Française Bangkok for Promoting French Culture and Language

Alliance Française proposes two main types of activities to strengthen the influence of Francophones in Thailand; that is, holding multiple activities based on different topics and providing French language courses. The institution is not only a language school but also positions itself as a cultural communicator by building a bridge between Francophone and Thai culture. According to the Charter of Alliance Française, each branch should be administered by volunteers of the city or country where it is located, and should offer the following to the local communities : 1) General or specific French courses for the local, and if necessary, courses teaching languages of the host country can be offered to the French speaking residents in favour of promoting multilingualism; 2) Cultural activities and documentary resources concerning France and Francophone countries, and also cultural events to celebrate the culture of the country or city where it is located, on the part of fostering cultural exchange between Francophone culture and local culture 3) Language-study programmes in France or French-speaking countries; 4) Activities designed to raise awareness of general civic, social and environmental responsibilities.

Thus, this chapter aims to analyse the situation of execution of both language courses and cultural activities constituting the cultural promotion strategy of Alliance Française Bangkok and to examine if the results correspond to the duties mentioned in the charter of Alliance Française. Data for the analysis of French language courses was taken from the website of Alliance Française Bangkok and data for the analysis of all the cultural events held in 2019 was collected from Facebook Fanpage of Alliance Française Bangkok. Furthermore, data for examining the achievement of the strategy was based on a survey of the Alliance Française students' opinions with the use of questionnaires on the motivation and feedback of their participation in French courses and cultural activities.

5.1 Activities for promoting French language

Various language courses are provided by the Alliance Française to fulfil the need of Thai people as well as native French speakers in Bangkok. The general language courses that Alliance Française Bangkok proposes are extensive, semi-intensive and intensive courses based on DELF-DALF and TCF levels, which include DELF-DALF for all public, Prim (8-12 years old), Junior (middle school students), TCF for all public, Canada, for Quebec and for French nationality; French courses for children categorised by non-native and native French speakers, then by different age groups, the holiday camp with various activities is also offered. According to the information provided on the website of Alliance Française Bangkok, different class times are provided as options for adult students, such as weekday classes, weekend classes, semi-intensive and intensive classes. Simultaneously, the course schedules of children's classes are adjusted to young students' normal school times and vary according to each age group, for instance, weekday classes are for kindergarten children, and weekend classes are for elementary school and secondary school students as the table below:

*Table 2 General and Children French classes offered by Alliance Française Bangkok
Source: Website of Alliance Française Bangkok*

Categories	Course-names	Frequency	Total Hours	Fees
General Class	Standard French courses	Weekday: Twice a week (Tuesday & Friday 10:00-11:30 or Tuesday & Thursday 18:45-10:15) or once a week (Wednesday 17:00-20:15) Saturday : Once a week (Morning 9:00-12:15 or 13:30-16:45) Sunday: Once a week (Morning 9:00-12:15)	24 hours over 2 months/section	Weekdays Class: 4500 THB Saturday Class: 5700 THB Saturday Class: 5950 THB (For B2+ Levels) Sunday Class: 5950 THB
	Semi-Intensive courses	Weekdays : 3 times a week (Monday, Wednesday & Friday 18:00-20:00) Weekend : twice a week (Saturday & Sunday 9:00-12:00)	48 hours over 2 months/1section	Weekdays Class: 9000 THB Weekend Class :11,600 THB
	Intensive courses	4 Times a week (onsite course: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9:00-12:15, online course: 13:30-16:45)	48 hours over 1 month/1 section	9000 THB
Children Class	3 to 6 years old non native French children	2 hours / week	30 hours/ section (approximate 4 months)	14000 THB
	7 to 11 years old non native French children	2 hours 15 minutes/ week	18 hours/ section (approximate 2 months)	5750 THB
	12 to 15 years old non native French children	2 hours 15 minutes/ week	18 hours/ section (approximate 2 months)	5750 THB
	3 to 11 years old native French children	Weekday: 1.5 hours / week (For Kindergarten children) Weekend: 2 hours / week	30 hours / section	14000 THB
	Native French children in middle school	2 hours / week	30 hours/ section	14000 THB

Apart from general classes, Specialised French courses are offered for professional fields of cuisine, fashion, business, tourism industry, linguistic workshop on grammar, phonetics, media press, essay writing. In addition, Alliance Française is also the examination centre for acquiring certification of DELF-DALF, TCF and DAEFLE (Diplôme d'Aptitude à l'Enseignement du Français Langue Étrangère)⁸, therefore DELF exam preparation courses are also offered, recommended for B1 level and above. On behalf of the purpose of cultural and language exchange, not only French language courses are provided, but also Thai and Burmese courses targeting the native French speakers as part of the languages offered to Francophone community in Bangkok.

Different means of taking classes based on different situations are also considered by Alliance Française Bangkok. Thus, online and private courses are also offered. The courses are also arranged so as to take into account the limitation of those who live outside Bangkok, and the restriction due to the pandemic situation in 2020 and 2021. French, Thai and Burmese private courses are also offered and students can take them either on site at Alliance Française or at home.

5.2 Activities for promoting French culture

Cultural events are held at Alliance Française for different types of target audience but with one common purpose, i.e., shaping the positive image of French culture. In order to understand the purpose of cultural promotion through cultural events, I categorised all 56 cultural events held in 2020 and published on the Facebook fan page of Alliance Française Bangkok. Then I analysed them with a focus on these four points: 1) theme 2) participation fees 3) language used, and 4) cultural background

5.2.1 The theme and entrance fees of cultural events

The purpose of analysing the theme and the fees of cultural events is to arrive at the image that Alliance Française attempts to spread and how much the audience has to pay for it. It is found that the major themes of the cultural activities are on art (65.9%), composed of 35.6 % visual art (including activities like film screening and exhibitions), 30.3% performing art (including activities like concerts and theatre), human rights

⁸ Professional qualification for teaching French as a foreign language, a diploma offered by Alliance Française Paris for anyone who wishes to teach French as a foreign language

(7.1%), and the rest is on environment, literature and education (3.6% each), then science, business, festival, history, gastronomy and philosophy (1.8% each).

In addition, it is also found that more than half of the events are free (53.5%), and the fees paid for the events range from 100 to 1000 baht, making the average of 127.7 baht, including the membership fees. However, since the range of the fees is too wide, it has affected the average too much. This means that generally it is very cheap to join a cultural event at Alliance Française Bangkok.

Table 3 Themes of cultural activities in 2020

Participation Fee	Total	%
Free	30	53.5%
100 baht	1	1.8%
120 baht	11	19.6%
150 baht	1	1.8%
200 baht	4	7.1%
250 baht	1	1.8%
300 baht	2	3.6%
350 baht	1	1.8%
500 baht	2	3.6%
600 baht	1	1.8%
980 baht	1	1.8%
1000 baht	1	1.8%
Average	127.7 bahts	

Table 4 Participation fee of cultural activities in 2020

Participation Fee	Total	%
Free	30	53.5%
100 baht	1	1.8%
120 baht	11	19.6%
150 baht	1	1.8%
200 baht	4	7.1%
250 baht	1	1.8%
300 baht	2	3.6%
350 baht	1	1.8%
500 baht	2	3.6%
600 baht	1	1.8%
980 baht	1	1.8%
1000 baht	1	1.8%
Average	127.7 bahts	

5.2.2 Cultural background and language use

The analysis of cultural background and language use reflects the goal of cultural diversity that Alliance Française attempts to reach. Various institutions, organisations and individuals from different countries cooperate with Alliance Française. Therefore, I categorised the cultural background by regions and summed up its frequency. Some cultural backgrounds of the events are more than one, and there are also cultural exchange in events with two different cultural backgrounds from different regions. Therefore, I calculated how many times one cultural background appeared in all 56 events. It is found that European culture appears the most (57%), followed by Southeast Asian culture (30%). The rest is composed of North America, Africa, East Asia and Middle East (5%, 4% and 2%, respectively). As for the language used in cultural events, I concluded the main language used in the events and also the translation language, including the language of the subtitles for movies, then calculated how many times each language was used in all of the cultural events. The result shows that English is used in 80% of the activities, followed by 70% French and 57% Thai. The rest includes Japanese, Malay, Swahili, Romanian and Hebrew (2% each).

Table 5 background of cultural activities in 2020

Cultural Background	Frequency	%
European	32	57%
Southeast Asian	17	30%
North American	3	5%
African	3	5%
East Asian	2	4%
Latin American	2	4%
Middle Eastern	1	2%
Total: 7		

Table 6 Languages used of cultural activities in 2020

Language used	Frequency	%
English	45	80%
French	39	70%
Thai	32	57%
Japanese	1	2%
Malay	1	2%
Swahili	1	2%
Romanian	1	2%
Hebrew	1	2%
Total: 8		

5.3 The motivation for learning French and feedback on cultural activities

Thai students' motivation for learning French is related to the promotion of French culture, and the participation in cultural events. Concerning the current situation of students learning French, the director of Alliance Française Bangkok, Mr. Silvain Bano said the following:

People usually study French for their own pleasure, it is a purpose. They might be attracted to culture or it is an activity for their soul and brain just like yoga. It is nice because it is not like English and Chinese which you have to learn for work.

In this case, I therefore distributed questionnaires to 15 Thai students who were studying French at Alliance Française,. My aim was to examine their reaction towards language learning and their feedback on their involvement in cultural activities

5.3.1 Personal Background

With reference to the personal background of the students, the result of the survey shows that all the participants can be divided into 4 age groups. (See Figure 5-1 below) The first group is 19 to 24 years old with 2 students (13%), the second group is 25 to 30 years old with 6 students (40%), the third group is 31 to 40 years old with 5 students (33%), and the fourth group is 41 to 50 with 2 students (13 %). The students' occupation including 6 students work as employees (40%), 2 students work for government as public servants (13%), 2 are currently students (13%), 2 are unemployed (13%), 2 is supervisor, 1 is freelancer and 1 is housewife (7% each). As for the French level of these students, 9 students are A1 level (60%), 2 students are A2 level, 2 students are B1 level, and 2 students are B2 level (13% each).

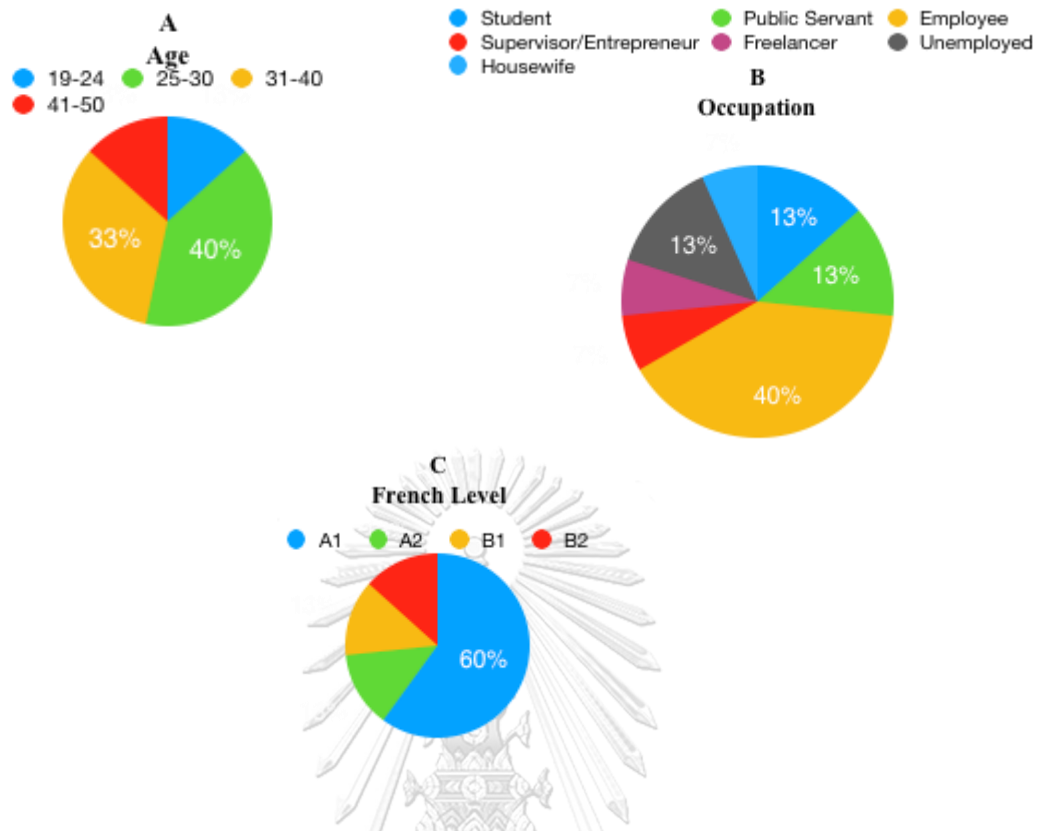


Figure 8 A. The age range of the respondents B. The occupation of the respondents C. The French levels of the respondents

5.3.2 Reasons for learning French and the occasions when French is used

Concerning the motivation of learning French, the result of the survey shows that 10 students (66.7%) learn French because of their personal interest, 4 students (26.7%) learn French in order to further their study in France in the future, and 1 student (6.7%) who learns French for using it at work. In order to understand whether the students use French as a practical language, I asked on what occasions they used French, 13 students said they used it at Alliance Francaise (86.7%), 7 students used it in daily life with their friends and family (46.7%), 2 used in school and 2 used for work (13.3% each), and others learn French in order to understand French books, movies and podcasts (13.4%). See Figure 5-2 below.

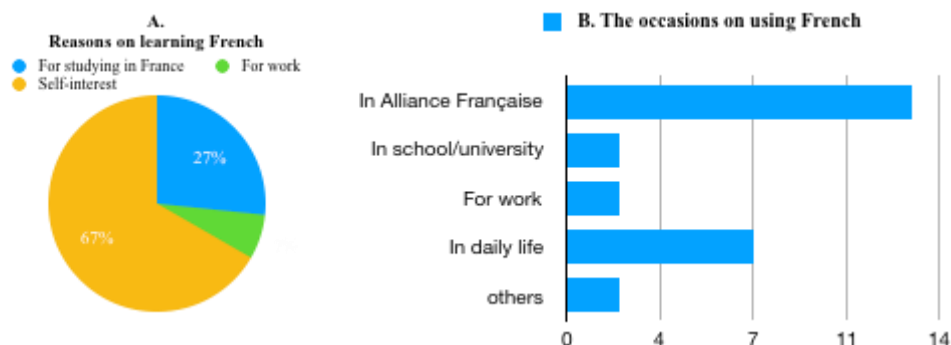


Figure 9 A. The respondents' reasons on learning French B. The occasions on using French of the respondents

5.3.3 Participation on the cultural events

When asked whether they had ever participated in cultural events held by Alliance Française Bangkok, 10 students (66.7%) answered that they had never participated in any cultural activity, while 5 students (33.3%) said they had participated at least one. When asked why they had never participated in cultural events, 5 out of the 10 students (50%) answered that the time organised was not convenient for them, 3 of the 10 (30%) said they had no interest in the topics of the events, and 2(20%) think the information of the events is not clear.

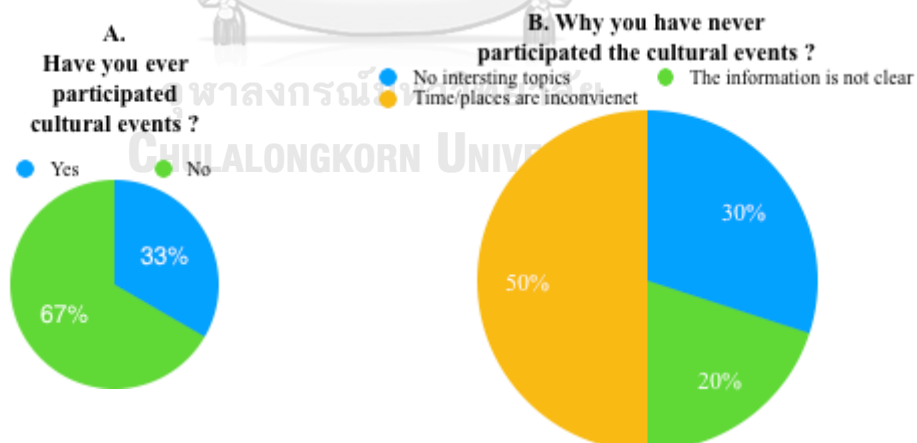
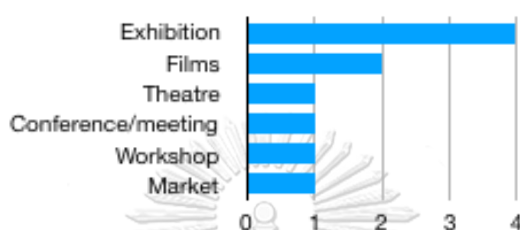


Figure 10 A. Whether the respondents have participated cultural events B. The reasons of the respondents who have not participated the cultural events

For those who have participated the cultural events, 4 students (80%) have participated in exhibition events, 2 students (40%) have participated in films events, theatres, conferences, workshops and market events (20%). As for the advertisement method, 4

students (80%) got the information from social media, 3 students (60%) acquired it from posters and flyers, 1 student (20%) heard it through word of mouth. This proves the active use of social media on promoting the events as mentioned before; however, even though the traditional way of advertising has been reduced, it is still effective while students are in Alliance Française.

■ A. What kind of cultural events that you participated ?



■ B. How did you know about the cultural events ?

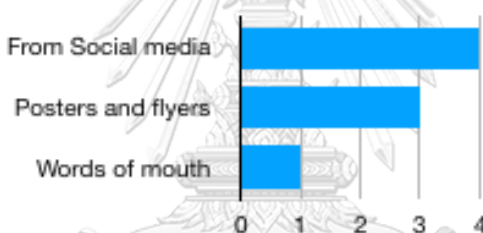


Figure 11 The categories of cultural events that respondents participated B. The advertisement that the respondents acquire information of cultural events

5.3.4 Understanding French culture and language

Another question on whether they gain knowledge through participating in the cultural events, 1 student (20%) rates it as fair, 3 students (60%) as good and 1 student (20%) very good. When asked how much they understood French culture through language courses, 5 students (33.3%) think it's very good, 8 think it's good (53.3%), 1 thinks it is fair and 1 thinks it's very bad (6.7% each). However, concerning the knowledge of the language through language courses, all the students feel satisfied as 9 think it is very good (60%) and 6 think it is good (40%).

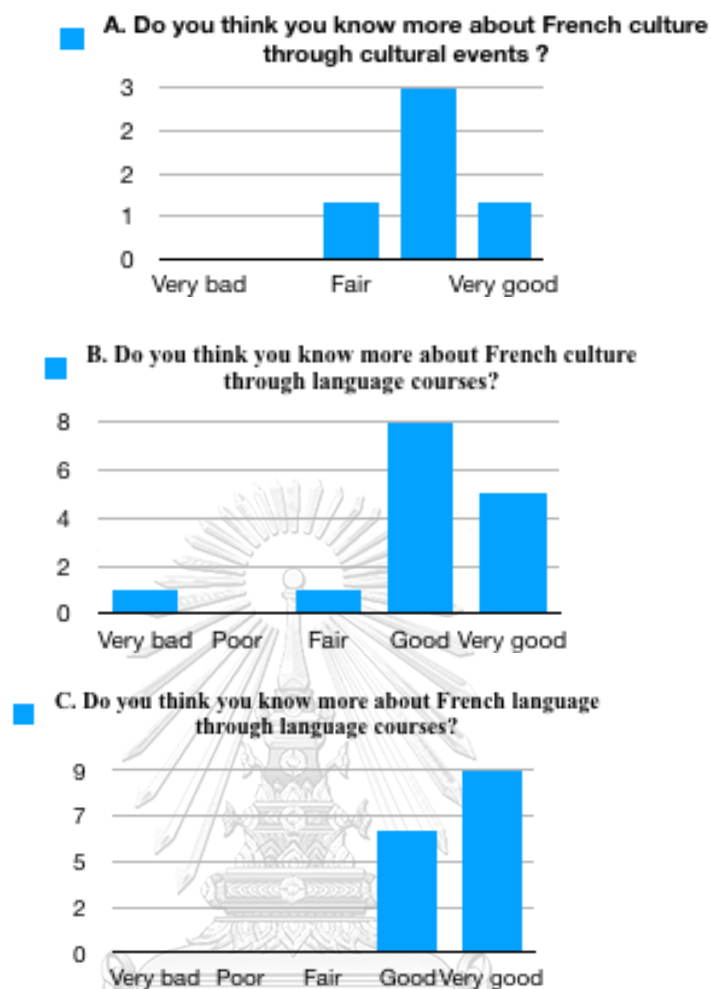


Figure 12 A. The respondents' understanding of French culture through cultural events. B. The respondents' understanding of French culture through language courses. C. The respondents' understanding of French language through language courses

5.3.5 Feedback on the cultural events and language courses

In the end, I asked the students if they have any suggestion for the improvement of cultural events as an optional question and found out it is hard for students to give out suggestion because of their absence and lack of interest. The students expect Alliance Française to expand by holding more themes of the cultural events that they are interested in, and also they want Alliance Française to increase activities online so that more people can have opportunities to join in.

I would join the activities I am interested in such as classical music show, painting workshop for beginners. (A1.4 student, learned French for 8 months)

I haven't attended the activities so I couldn't say much, maybe do it online as well. (A1.3 student,)

There could be more events on French movies, plays or book reading sessions for students.
(B2.8 student, learned French for 3 years)

Concerning the suggestions about French language courses, the students tend to prefer more activities that promote practical use of the language based on the need of each individual outside text books. For this reason, the idea of combination of cultural events and language courses is attractive to them:

Because the classmates in language courses always speak Thai, it would be great if Alliance Française can provide a special zone for only-French speaking. There should be the weekly clubs to draw people with the same interests but different levels of language to exchange ideas and culture in order to help each other improve the language ability at the same time. For example, the art club where everyone shares and discusses their favourite books, film, songs on every Saturday evening. (A1.4 student, learned French for almost a year)

There could be more activities for students to practice their French speaking skills. (B2.8 student, learned French for 3 years)

I would suggest that we deviate from the curriculum in the text book once in a long while, and maybe have some lighthearted session about vocabularies and phrases relevant to each student in class. (A1.3 student, learned French for five months)

Make the cultural events a part of the language courses, and impose more on daily life usage. (B2.8 student. Learned French for 2 years)

5.4 Conclusion

Even though the various activities organised by Alliance Française Bangkok accord with the missions of promoting French culture, the content of two main strategies, cultural events and language activities, are clearly leading to different ways and

targeting different groups. Apart from the service for the local Francophone community, the language courses are offered to Thais who are willing to get deeper knowledge of French culture through the understanding and use of the French language. In contrast, cultural events dealing with art along with the global role that France plays, seem to attract people who are more interested in French art than the use of French language.

Based on the analysis of the cultural events, the result shows that art is the major subject categorised into different forms and based mainly on the point of view of European culture. In order to make the cultural events more approachable to the audience with different language backgrounds, most of the cultural events use English, including translation, subtitles, and more than half of them do not charge entrance fees. However, even though the events seem to be composed of various cultural backgrounds, the percentage of each cultural background is imbalanced. Especially for a French culture promotion institution, it does not, however, show the cultural diversity within the French speaking countries. The French speaking events focus mainly on the European culture, the other culture of Francophone countries in Africa and central America are being neglected. Even though the cultural events provide opportunities for cultural exchange with Thailand and the neighbouring countries in southeast Asia, they did not offer opportunities for the language exchange between Thai and French, nor with the French speakers outside Europe.

The attitude toward language learning at Alliance Française Bangkok tends to be positive, but as indicated by the Thai students' lack of understanding of the current cultural events, the method of using French language to gain more knowledge of French culture is their main concern. Although the result of the survey on the motivation for learning French corresponds to the interview with the representative of Alliance Française that the intention of most of the students is personal interest instead of economic reason, it is required to see the result of language learning on practical use in daily life and in combination with leisure activities. Another potential problem is the limitation of advertising and holding cultural events during the pandemic. Most of the new students are not able to participate and require new type of culture activities by using online tools.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 Summary

French used to be a very important and popular language in the world, but now it is affected by globalisation and has to compete with English and other languages. More and more people in Thailand tend to study other foreign languages that are considered to be more beneficial than French. It is interesting to see how such an organisation as Alliance Française deals with the problem of the decline of French popularity. Therefore, this study attempts to find out how Alliance Française in Thailand promotes French language and culture in order to maintain the importance of French language and culture. Data for the analysis was collected from documents, interviews and questionnaires.

The results of the study reveal that from the initial contact between Thailand and France, the relation between the two countries was marked by political ties with religious purposes. It was based on French imperialism, which continued to the period of the French colonisation of Indochina. The establishment of Alliance Française in Thailand was also related to colonialism with the purpose of spreading French language and culture in Asia. Even though the French influence from the past had effect on the education system in Thailand with the establishment of French schools and language programs in higher education, the influence of France in Thai society seems to be indirect.

Concerning the strategies used by Alliance Française to promote French culture and language, the result of the analysis based on the interview with the director of Alliance Française, Mr. Silvain Bano, Alliance Française Bangkok, reveals that the emphasis of this organisation is on building a bridge of cultural exchange between Thailand and France through various cultural activities, especially in the area of art. Nevertheless, the target groups of Alliance Française are not only Thai and Francophone but also other foreigners who live in Bangkok. English is largely used in the cultural events. In addition, events about issues that attract international concern are also organised in order to get Alliance Française involved in the international society. As for language

courses, Mr. Bono mentioned that most Thai students wanted to learn French for various personal reasons. So the Alliance Française tried to create a more stress-free way of learning to help the students enjoy themselves more while learning French, but currently the number of students is decreasing because of the pandemic, which forced the classes to be taught mostly online, and was a great obstacle to organising cultural events.

The results based on statistical numbers of Thai people taking French courses in the last four years show a tendency of decrease in the popularity of French language in Thailand. Although, the available data covers only the last four years, it seems to be an evidence of the decline of French language in this country. As for the number of cultural activities, Alliance Française Bangkok was ranked No1. branch organising events in Oceanic and Asia region held in 2020, but this includes events that co-organised with other institutions and some are not directly related to French culture.

The result of the analysis of cultural activities and language courses that target three groups, Thai people, the Francophones and other expats shows that the most popular theme of the cultural events is French art. With reference to the characteristics of the cultural activities, most of them concern art with the intention to attract non-Francophone people who are interested in French culture. English translation is provided, and most of these events are free of charge. In addition, the cultural background of the activities concentrates on Europe on the cultural exchange with Thailand. The intention of the cultural promotion is not only for French but also helps promoting Thai art.

Concerning the participants' evaluation of their experience at Alliance Française, the result of the analysis based on the questionnaires distributed to 15 informants shows that they were involved in language courses more than cultural activities. Thus, it may be inferred that strategies of language courses and cultural events target different groups in Thailand. The low frequency of participation in cultural events shows their lack of interest and not getting information. This result also shows that they expect cultural activities to be combined with language classes, so that they can have more opportunities to learn French for practical use.

6.2 Discussion

6.2.1 The colonial past of Alliance Française in Thailand

The propaganda of French culture and language in the colonial period fostered the establishment of Alliance Française in France. It is evident that the role played by Alliance Française rooted in colonialism and French imperialism, but the attention to this part of the history has been ignored. In the cases of French propaganda during the period where France expanded its territories to Southeast Asia, it can be seeming that the French influence did not only happen in the colonies, but also in Thailand. This indicates even though Alliance Française Bangkok is situated in Thailand, which has never been colonised, its establishment is still highly related to French colonialism.

The effects of French influence began as early as 17th century along with the attempts on spreading Roman Catholic and the commercial interest to Thailand of France. When French established its colonial empire and expanded to Southeast Asia in 19th century, the use of promotion of French language and culture was even more deeper like the creation of the first French school. Nowadays, Alliance Française Bangkok attracts people with the image of artistic side and high culture in the international society, and keeps playing an important role of strengthening the diplomatic relation with Thailand

6.2.2 The clear boundaries of being a language school and a cultural centre

Even though the two strategies of Alliance Française Bangkok, cultural activities and language courses, have the same intention; that is, to foster the promotion of French language and culture, they lead to different ways of attracting different groups of people. The cultural activities attempt to attract mainly those who are interested in French art, but not necessary French speakers. Therefore, many of the cultural activities provide English translation for those who understand neither French nor Thai. In order to attract wider potential audience, various activities are co-organised with international organisations and the embassies of other nations, on various topics, including global issues. That gives an impression that Alliance Française is an institution that belongs to the international society. That is to say, diplomacy is incorporated in the function of these cultural activities.

It is evident that Alliance Française Bangkok does not regard itself as only a French language school, even though the language courses seem to attract Thai people to participate more than cultural events. Therefore, it is a good reason to keep offering language courses while supporting cultural activities. Thus, it seems like there are two different systems that work in separate ways in the same institution, and the cooperation between cultural activities and language learning does not exist. Overall, it is difficult to say exactly whether the strategies on attracting Thai people to get knowledge of French culture is successful because some of those who participate in cultural events may not be truly interested in French culture. Moreover, many of the cultural activities are not organised only by Alliance Française but in cooperation with other institutions. The audience were possible the target group from those institutions, not from Alliance Française.

6.2.3 French is seen as a representative language of Europe

The result of the examination on the cultural background of the cultural events organised by the Alliance Française shows the tendency of being Europe centred, as more than half of them concentrate on European culture. Obviously, Alliance Française attempts to include different culture outside France, like Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Canada, along with the relation built on the intercultural communication with Thailand in order to foster cultural diversity. However, the cultural diversity of the Francophone countries outside Europe seems to be absent. For instance, the culture of African French in 31 Francophone countries like Congo in central Africa, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Togo in west Africa, then Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in north Africa with 1.5 billion French speakers (Valantine, 2007) that has been ignored. That being the case, French culture in Alliance Française seems to represent Europe.

6.2.4 Students are not interested in cultural events

According to the survey with students who learn French at Alliance Française, the students are motivated to learn the language for their own interest related to French culture in general, but few of them are interested in cultural events organised by Alliance Française. Even though the reasons for most students for learning French is not about using it at work or studying, they still expect it to be a useful language that they can use for daily life with their friends, and also combine it with their interest in

the culture. Some students suggest that cultural events should be based on language courses and allow them to exchange ideas, make cultural exchange and practice daily conversations in French.

Students' lack of participation in cultural activities is more obvious amongst the beginners who learn French. This is probably due to the difficulties for students to participate and for Alliance Française to organise the cultural events on site during the pandemic of Covid-19. However, in contrast with language classes taught online, there are not many online cultural activities being organised and the advertisement to promote these events is also insufficient. Apart from special situation like the pandemic, on-site cultural activities cannot effectively attract people outside Bangkok. There should be a new way like distance learning and online events to expand and cooperate with secondary schools that provide French courses as secondary language and the universities with French major in other provinces, especially those without branches of Alliance situated in.

6.3 Suggestions and recommendations to future work

6.3.1 Increase cultural diversity of Francophone countries

One of the main missions of Alliance Française is to encourage cultural diversity which should not be limited to culture exchange between Europe and Southeast Asia. It can be seeming that the representative of culture from Southeast Asia in Alliance Française is not only Thailand. Activities related to the Francophone culture outside Europe should be more. Many countries are not visible in the Alliance Française cultural events. Perhaps, showing a film in the cultural context of African French, would be more interesting to Thai people and some other audience, as well.

6.3.2 Combine language learning with cultural activities

The strategies of Alliance Françaises on promoting French culture and language with the concept of cultural exchange between Thailand and France are realised only in the cultural events. The language courses, on the other hand are based on the content of the curriculum and the interaction between the teachers and the students. Since most of the students choose to learn French because of their interest in French culture, they expect to have more opportunities to use French. Therefore, language exchange events could

be organised for Thai students and Francophone students to exchange their thoughts on certain issues to help foster cultural exchange and also to give more opportunities for Thai students to practice the language. The students also expect expanding more activities based on the current events, such as art workshops, French movies and French book reading section that might attract more people to learn French in Alliance Française Bangkok.

6.3.3 Strengthen the promotion of the practical use of French language

Since French language can still be promoted as a useful language, it is considerable to increase more training sections targeting the practical use of French. Although special French courses for different professional use on business, tourism industry and fashion are already offered, it seems that there is no regular class for it, and general classes based on the standard of CEFR (The Common European Framework of Reference for Language) are still the main effort of Alliance Française language policy. When asked about the future plan of Alliance Française, Mr Bono, the director, mentioned that there was a plan to develop more cooperation with French companies for more opportunities. This can also be a solution on expanding the promotion of French language.

6.3.4 Make good use of online tools

Having difficulties in promoting French language and culture under the pandemic can actually turn this into opportunities to attract more people outside Bangkok by using online tools. Mr. Bano, the director, expects to provide more online courses and cooperation with other parts of Thailand, such as Khon Kaen and Hat Yai. Using online tools helps facilitate online activities even after the pandemic in the future. It can possibly help to equalise the uneven distribution of resources on learning French between urban and rural area.

6.4 Recommendations for future studies

The following recommendations could be examined:

6.4.1 Research on the cultural policies of Alliance Française in other countries in Southeast Asia region should be done. The cultural network of Alliance Française is one of the biggest in the world. However due to the regional limitation, this research could only focus on the situation in Thailand. Analysis of the role and strategies of other

countries to compare with the findings in this study should give more insight into Alliance Française and the relationships between France and Southeast Asian countries.

6.4.2 Future studies should investigate the details of cooperations from other French cultural agencies in Thailand in order to get deeper understanding of the foreign cultural policies of France in Thailand, the role playing of Alliance Française Bangkok with other cultural network that shares similar visions.



APPENDIX I

Semi-structured interview questions to the representative of Alliance Française Bangkok

Part 1: Management structure and mode of operation

Questions:	Purpose:	Extensive Questions:
Q1: How did you become director of Alliance Française ?	Acknowledge the background of the director	What is your experience related to French cultural policy?
Q2: Can you introduce each department of Alliance Française and explain simply the main task of each department?	Structure of management and distribution of business content	
Q3: Is there any guideline to follow from French Government's foreign cultural policy?	The connection of French government and Alliance Française	
Q4: What is the characteristic of Alliance Française Bangkok that is most different from other branches ?	The focus of the operation mode that distinguish Alliance Française Bangkok with its counterparts	
Q5: What is the biggest difficulty or challenge that you are facing currently?	Details of the execution of operation mode	
Q6: How do you decide which cooperation institutions that Alliance Française work with on promoting French culture in Thailand ?	The direction of the strategies used on promoting French language and culture	

Part 2: Implementation of cultural activities

Questions:	Purpose:	Extensive Questions:
Q6: When you plan the cultural activities, are there any guidelines from authorities that you need to follow?	Principles of the implementation on organising cultural activities	
Q7: What is the language used the most in cultural activities, Thai/ French/English?	Target of the audience and language barrier	Do you have a target public while planning the activities? (Thai/Francophones/others nationalities)
Q8: What are the main types of cultural activities held?	Details and the direction on organising cultural activities	Are there any kinds of activities that are regularly held?
Q9: How do you promote these cultural activities to the public?	The method of advertising	

Part 3: Implementation of language teaching and learning

Questions:	Purpose:	Extensive questions:
Q10: Could you briefly explain the current situation of Alliance Française work with local educational institutions?	The method and the interaction of cooperation with Thai educational institutions	
Q11: How do you choose when you hire a lecturer for Alliance Française ?	Acknowledge the background of the lectures	
Q12: Is there any guideline for the teachers when they introduce French cultures, to say something important to the students or sensitive issues that they should avoid?	Method and restriction of teaching French	
Q13: Are teaching materials updated every few years?	Details on the use of teaching material	
Q14: What do you think about the decline of French learners in Thailand/Southeast Asia?	Aspect and approach on facing language decline	Do you think it is an obstacle to teach French under this phenomenon?

APPENDIX II

Questionnaire: Survey of Language and cultural promotion in Alliance Française

This project aims to examine the activities organised by Alliance Française for Thai people. I would like to know your feedback towards participating cultural events and language courses. This questionnaire will only take around 10 minutes to fill and it is completely anonymous. All the data collected from the respondents will be used as a measurement of success on integration of the research.

Section 1: Personal Background

1. Your gender male females others
2. Your age under 18 19-24 25-30 31-40 41-50 Over 51
3. Your occupation student public servant (work for government) educator
employee supervisor/entrepreneur freelancer house keeper retired
unemployed
4. Your French level (DELF standard) A1 A2 B1 B2 C1 C2
5. How long have you been learning French in Alliance Française ? _____
6. Which French course you are currently taking in Alliance Française ? _____
7. Have you ever participated the cultural events in Alliance Française? to study in France in the future to improve my current study in school/university for work self interest others: _____

Section 2: Feedback on cultural events

8. Have you ever participated the cultural events in Alliance Française? yes no

9. If no, why you have never participated any cultural events? no interesting topics
 the information of cultural events is not clear Time/places of holding events
 are inconvenient for me others: _____
10. If yes, what kind of cultural events that you have participated? (multiple choices)
 films concerts theatre exhibition conference/meeting workshop
 market others: _____
11. How do you know about the events held in Alliance Française? (multiple choices)
 from social media (Facebook Fan page/twitter) posters and flyers words
 of mouth (friends, teachers) others: _____
12. Do you think you know more about French culture through cultural activities not
 at all 1 2 3 4 5 very well

Section 3: Feedback on language courses

13. Do you think you know more about French culture through language course?
 not at all 1 2 3 4 5 very well
14. Do you think you know more about French language through language courses?
 not at all 1 2 3 4 5 very well
15. Are you willing to promote French language and culture to others? yes no

Section 4: Suggestions

16. What suggestion can you give to improve the cultural activities held by Alliance Française? _____
17. What suggestion can you give to improve the language courses of Alliance Française? _____



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