

A Phenomenological Study of Stakeholders' Perspectives for Curriculum Development to Enhance Thai Communication Skills among Pre-service Teachers

Theerapat Sinthudech ¹, Paweena Khansila ² and Anucha Pimsak ^{3*}

^{1,2,3} Faculty of Education and Educational Innovation, Kalasin University

* Corresponding author. E-mail: anucha.pi@ksu.ac.th

ABSTRACT

Thai communication skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are core professional competencies that underpin instructional quality, ethical practice, and public trust in the teaching profession. However, pre-service teachers in regional universities continue to face persistent challenges in developing these competencies due to disparities in educational background, linguistic foundations, and access to authentic communication practice. This study aimed to explore stakeholders' perspectives on contextual conditions and challenges influencing Thai communication development, examine perceived needs and expectations for enhancing communication skills in teacher education, and synthesize these perspectives to inform curriculum development aligned with national teacher professional standards. Adopting a qualitative phenomenological approach within an instrumental case study, data were collected from 431 stakeholders at Kalasin University, Thailand, including university administrators, teacher educators, and pre-service teachers. Data collection employed a combination of individual in-depth interviews and small-group discussions. Group-based discussions were used to elicit shared experiential meanings and reduce power-related discomfort, while individual interviews were selectively conducted in cases involving sensitive, vulnerable, or personally nuanced experiences, in accordance with participants' preferences and ethical considerations. This flexible data collection strategy enabled the study to preserve phenomenological integrity while capturing both collective and individual dimensions of lived experience across a large and diverse participant group. Thematic analysis revealed five interrelated experiential dimensions shaping Thai communication development, namely problem-related, context-related, needs-related, awareness-related, and learning-support-related dimensions. Key barriers included unequal prior educational experiences, limited opportunities for sustained and authentic communication practice, and fragmented institutional support. Despite these challenges, stakeholders consistently conceptualized Thai communication competence as a professional and ethical responsibility integral to teacher identity and public trust. The findings underscore the need for curriculum development approaches that prioritize experiential learning, contextual responsiveness, and structured learning support, providing empirically grounded insights for developing coherent and equitable frameworks to enhance Thai communication skills in teacher education.

Keywords: Phenomenological research, Stakeholders' perspectives, Curriculum design, Thai communication skills, Pre-service Teachers

Introduction

Thai communication skills, encompassing listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are fundamental professional competencies that underpin instructional quality, ethical practice, and public trust in the teaching profession (Chaisri, Satjapiboon, & Rueangkitchanan, 2023). Within teacher education, these skills are conceptualized not merely as linguistic abilities but as integrated professional capacities enabling teachers to communicate instructional content clearly, engage learners effectively, and interact responsibly in educational and social contexts (Wijirahayu, 2025). The policy significance of Thai communication competence is explicitly articulated in national professional standards. The Teachers' Council of Thailand (Khuru Sapha), under the Professional Standards Act B.E. 2556 (2013), stipulates that education professionals must possess knowledge in Thai language and culture for professional practice, with demonstrated competency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing Thai accurately for meaningful communication (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2013). Furthermore, the revised Professional Knowledge and Experience Standards (4th Edition, B.E. 2562/2019) specify that teachers must demonstrate communicative competence in Thai language use within instructional contexts and professional settings, including the integration of digital technologies for educational communication (Ministry of Education. 2019, Teachers' Council of Thailand. 2020.). In addition, the Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF:1) for Bachelor's degrees in Education (Ministry of Education. 2019) requires pre-service teachers to demonstrate knowledge and proficiency in Thai language communication consistent with professional standards. The learning outcomes for Thai Education programs emphasize linguistic structure, literature and culture, applied language skills, critical language use, academic and professional writing, persuasive communication, digital media literacy, and pedagogical competence in teaching Thai language. These standards collectively position Thai communication competence as a core indicator of teacher professionalism and readiness. Despite the clear articulation of these policy expectations, persistent educational inequalities in Thailand, particularly those linked to geographical location, socioeconomic background, and institutional capacity, have contributed to uneven communication skill development among pre-service teachers (Wiboolyasarin et al., 2025). These challenges are especially evident in regional universities serving students from diverse and often underserved backgrounds, where heterogeneous linguistic foundations and limited opportunities for sustained and authentic professional communication practice remain significant concerns (Ponet et al., 2024). Pre-service teachers represent a critical transitional group between formal preparation and professional practice, making the systematic development of communication competence at this stage particularly important (Farrell, 2012). However, instructional approaches that emphasize content transmission over contextualized practice and reflective communication remain insufficient, resulting in a persistent gap between nationally mandated professional standards and pre-service teachers' communicative readiness. While prior research has proposed various pedagogical, curricular, and technological approaches to enhance communication skills (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009), comparatively limited attention has been given to how key stakeholders perceive communication competence and its development within contexts shaped by educational inequality and policy-driven standards (Allen, 2025). Accordingly, this study adopts a phenomenological approach to examine stakeholders' lived interpretations of Thai communication competence and to generate empirically grounded insights that inform curriculum development aligned with national teacher professional standards and responsive to contemporary educational realities.

Questions

1. How do key stakeholders perceive the contextual conditions and challenges influencing the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers?
2. What needs and expectations do stakeholders express regarding the enhancement of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in pre-service teacher education?
3. How can stakeholders' perspectives be synthesized to inform curriculum design considerations for enhancing Thai communication skills in alignment with national teacher professional standards?

Objectives

1. To explore stakeholders' perspectives on the contextual conditions and challenges influencing the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers.
2. To understand stakeholders perceived needs and expectations regarding the enhancement of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in pre-service teacher education.
3. To synthesize stakeholders' perspectives to inform curriculum design considerations for enhancing Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers in alignment with national teacher professional standards.

Analytical Focus

Rather than testing predefined hypotheses, this phenomenological study is guided by an analytical focus on understanding how stakeholders experience and interpret issues related to Thai communication skill development, educational inequality, and curriculum design within pre-service teacher education. The insights generated are intended to serve as an empirical foundation for curriculum design considerations.

Literature Reviews

1. Thai Communication Skills as Lived Professional Experience in Teacher Education

Thai communication skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are widely recognized as core professional competencies in teacher education, underpinning instructional quality, ethical responsibility, and professional identity formation (Chaisri et al., 2023, Clarke & Moore, 2013). Beyond their functional role, communication competence represents a professional capacity enacted through teachers' everyday interactions with learners and educational communities. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that communication skills should be understood not merely as technical language abilities but as experiential and reflective professional capacities developed through practice (Thompson, 1996). From a phenomenological perspective, the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers is shaped by their lived experiences within teacher education contexts, which influence how communication is perceived, interpreted, and internalized. Variations in prior educational backgrounds and learning environments contribute to diverse experiences of communication competence, with educational inequality functioning as an important contextual condition rather than a singular explanatory factor.

2. Curriculum Design as an Experienced Phenomenon in Teacher Preparation

Curriculum design in teacher education is commonly guided by policy frameworks, professional standards, and predetermined learning outcomes (Cochran-Smith, 2001). However, phenomenological perspectives emphasize that curricula are not merely formal structures but lived and enacted experiences shaped by those engaged in teaching and learning (Webb & Welsh, 2019). The meaning of a curriculum emerges through everyday interactions among students, educators, and administrators. Research indicates persistent misalignment between intended and enacted curricula, particularly when learners' contextual realities are overlooked (Letsie, 2024). In communication skill development, curricula that prioritize prescribed content without attending to experiential practice may limit authentic professional learning. Educational inequality thus becomes evident through stakeholders' lived experiences of constrained opportunities and fragmented communicative support, rather than solely through structural indicators.

3. Stakeholders' Perspectives as a Foundation for Curriculum Design

Stakeholders in teacher education, including university administrators, teacher educators, and pre-service teachers, occupy distinct yet interconnected positions within the curriculum ecosystem. (Allen et al., 2014) Their perspectives reflect institutional priorities, pedagogical assumptions, and lived learning experiences, offering critical insights into how curricula function in practice. Stakeholders' perspectives are not merely opinions, but expressions of meaning derived from direct engagement with educational processes. (Mathur et al., 2008) Existing literature on curriculum development indicates that reforms designed without meaningful stakeholder engagement often encounter challenges in implementation, coherence, and sustainability. In contrast, curriculum design grounded in stakeholders' perspectives enables the identification of contextual constraints, experiential gaps, and opportunities for improvement that may remain invisible in top-down approaches. (Alexander et al., 2019) Particularly in teacher education contexts marked by diversity and inequality, understanding stakeholders' perspectives is essential for designing curricula that are responsive, equitable, and professionally relevant.

4. Participatory Curriculum Design and Educational Inequality

Participatory approaches to curriculum design emphasize collaboration and shared meaning-making among stakeholders. (Fang, Y. (2018) Such approaches align with broader movements in educational research that advocate for inclusive and context-sensitive curriculum development. (Parker et al., 2024) Through participation, stakeholders articulate their experiences of learning, teaching, and institutional support, thereby contributing to curricula that better reflect lived realities. (Keogh et al., 2010) While educational inequality has often been examined through structural or policy lenses, participatory curriculum design foregrounds how inequality is experienced in everyday educational practices. (Cahill & O'Sullivan, 2022) Stakeholders' narratives reveal how unequal access to communication practice, feedback, and professional learning opportunities shapes the development of communication competence. (Aakhus & Bzdak, 2015) Consequently, participatory curriculum design holds potential not simply to address inequality as a problem, but to reconceptualize curriculum development as a process attentive to diverse experiences and meanings.

5. Phenomenological Research as a Methodological Foundation for Curriculum Design

Phenomenological research provides a rigorous qualitative framework for examining stakeholders' lived experiences and the meanings they assign to educational phenomena. (Aguas, 2020) Rather than testing hypotheses or evaluating predetermined models, phenomenological inquiry seeks to uncover the essence

of experience through careful exploration of participants' perceptions and interpretations. (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015) This approach is particularly well suited to studies that aim to inform curriculum design through an in-depth understanding of stakeholders' perspectives. In teacher education research, phenomenology enables scholars to explore how communication competence, curriculum structures, and professional expectations are experienced by different stakeholder groups within specific institutional contexts. By foregrounding lived experience, phenomenological research bridges the gap between policy intentions and educational practice, offering insights that are both conceptually grounded and contextually meaningful. (Bantugan, 2025) Educational inequality, within this framework, is understood as part of the experiential landscape shaping stakeholders' interpretations, rather than as a variable to be measured or controlled. (Daly-Smith, A. et al., 2020)

6. Research Rationale and Contribution

The literature indicates that while Thai communication skills are widely acknowledged as essential professional competencies, their development among pre-service teachers remains uneven, particularly in regional university contexts. (Choompunuch et al., 2024) Existing research has tended to prioritize instructional strategies, curriculum structures, or policy analysis, with comparatively limited attention to stakeholders' lived experiences and perspectives as a basis for curriculum design. (Aguas, 2020) Addressing this gap, the present study adopts a phenomenological approach to explore stakeholders' perspectives as an empirical foundation for designing a curriculum aimed at enhancing Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers. By positioning curriculum design as an interpretive process grounded in lived experience, this study contributes to the fields of teacher education and curriculum studies by offering context-sensitive insights that support equitable and meaningful curriculum development. (Jamaludin et al., 2025) The findings are intended to inform curriculum design considerations that align with national teacher professional standards while responding to the diverse experiential realities of pre-service teachers and other key stakeholders.

Methodology

1. Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological research methodology, implemented through an instrumental case study design, to explore and interpret the lived experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders involved in the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers. Phenomenology constituted the core epistemological orientation of the study, as the primary aim was to understand how stakeholders perceive, experience, and assign meaning to Thai communication competence and curriculum-related practices, rather than to evaluate predefined instructional models or test causal relationships. The case was bounded within the organizational and academic context of the Faculty of Education and Educational Innovation at Kalasin University, focusing on stakeholders' experiences across five interrelated experiential dimensions: context, problems, needs, awareness, and learning support mechanisms that shape Thai communication competence in teacher education. The instrumental case study design was employed as a methodological strategy to situate phenomenological inquiry within a real institutional setting, thereby enabling an in-depth and holistic examination of a complex educational phenomenon embedded in a specific sociocultural and organizational context. This approach allowed the researchers to capture nuanced stakeholder perspectives and to generate interpretations grounded in participants' lived experiences of communication learning and

curriculum implementation. Consistent with qualitative and phenomenological inquiry, the design emphasized naturalistic exploration, interpretive meaning-making, and context-dependent knowledge construction. Rather than asking merely what challenges exist in pre-service teachers' Thai communication development, the study sought to understand how such challenges are experienced, interpreted, and sustained in practice, and how stakeholders envision curriculum-related responses grounded in those experiences. Overall, the selected research design ensured methodological rigor by supporting 1) interpretive validity through the inclusion of multiple stakeholder voices, 2) contextual relevance by situating inquiry within authentic institutional practices, and 3) theoretical transferability through the generation of rich, thick descriptions that may inform similar teacher education contexts in Thailand and comparable settings.

2. Target Group

The target group for this study consisted of 431 participants representing three key stakeholder categories directly involved in or affected by the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers. Participants included university and faculty administrators, teacher educators, and pre-service teachers enrolled in teacher education programs at the Faculty of Education and Innovation, Kalasin University. Administrators were selected based on their roles in academic policy formulation, curriculum governance, and institutional support systems influencing curriculum enactment at both faculty and university levels. Teacher educators from 12 teacher education majors were included due to their direct involvement in teaching, mentoring, and assessing pre-service teachers' communication practices across coursework and practicum contexts. The largest participant group comprised 316 pre-service teachers from years 1 through 4, representing diverse academic backgrounds and varying levels of Thai language proficiency. Their inclusion enabled the study to capture authentic experiential accounts of communication challenges encountered during academic study and field-based professional preparation. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure that all participants possessed direct, lived experience relevant to the research focus. This approach aligns with phenomenological and case study research traditions, which prioritize information-rich participants capable of providing deep insight into the phenomenon under investigation, rather than aiming for statistical representativeness. The study adhered to rigorous ethical standards. Ethical approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Kalasin University (Certification Code: HS-KSU 051/2567). All participants provided voluntary informed consent prior to participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting, with secure data management procedures implemented in accordance with international qualitative research ethics standards. These ethical safeguards enhanced both participant protection and the credibility of the study's findings.

3. Research Instruments

The primary research instrument was a semi-structured interview protocol, adapted from the design-based research framework proposed by McKenney and Reeves (2012). The protocol was refined to align with a phenomenological focus, enabling participants to articulate their lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings related to Thai communication skills and curriculum practices, while maintaining conceptual coherence across interviews. The interview protocol was organized into three overarching experiential categories corresponding to the analytical focus of the study: 1) Problem-Related Category This category explored stakeholders' experiences of challenges in Thai communication competence among pre-service teachers, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing within professional teaching contexts. Questions

invited participants to reflect on concrete, experience-based incidents encountered in coursework and field practice, such as difficulties in instructional explanation, formulation of academically appropriate questions, professional language use, and written assessment practices. Emphasis was placed on understanding how these challenges are experienced and interpreted in authentic professional situations. 2) Context-Related Category This category examined how participants experienced contextual conditions shaping Thai communication development within higher education. Interviews elicited reflections on prior educational experiences, sociocultural and family backgrounds, economic conditions, institutional learning environments, and the availability of instructional and support systems that influence communication learning. 3) Needs-Related Category. This category focused on stakeholders' perceived needs and expectations regarding the enhancement of Thai communication skills. Participants were invited to articulate their experiential insights into desirable curriculum features, pedagogical supports, institutional commitments, and sustainable strategies for strengthening professional communication competence. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was conducted in a conversational yet methodologically structured manner, encouraging reflective engagement while preserving analytic consistency.

4. Data Collection

Data were collected through in-depth qualitative interviews conducted separately with each stakeholder group to facilitate openness and minimize power-related response bias. Interviews were conducted between March and May 2025. An AI-assisted voice recording system was employed to ensure accurate transcription and speaker differentiation, complemented by field notes capturing nonverbal cues, interactional dynamics, and contextual features of each interview setting. This combined recording strategy enhanced data accuracy and interpretive depth. All audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and systematically verified to preserve participants' intended meanings. The verified transcripts constituted the primary data corpus for analysis.

5. Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interpretive phenomenological approach, integrating Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Kiger & Varpio, 2020) with a SWOT informed interpretive synthesis to situate experiential findings within institutional and systemic contexts. ATLAS.ti was used to support systematic data management, coding, and visualization (Soratto, Pires, & Friese, 2020; Mastrobattista et al., 2024). The analytic process involved iterative familiarization, inductive open coding, thematic clustering, and cross group comparison to identify convergent and divergent stakeholder perspectives. Emergent themes were subsequently synthesized within a SWOT framework to examine the interaction between internal institutional conditions and external contextual factors shaping communication development. The analysis yielded five experiential dimensions, namely communication awareness, contextual influences, instructional challenges, developmental needs, and learning support mechanisms, which collectively informed curriculum design considerations.

Result

1. Problem-Related Dimension: Communication as a Lived Professional Struggle. The findings indicate that the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers is constrained by weak foundational learning and insufficient opportunities for continuous and authentic practice, particularly in academic speaking and professional writing. Stakeholders consistently described students' difficulties in

organizing ideas, using appropriate professional language, and integrating disciplinary concepts into coherent Thai expression. A teacher educator reflected: “Many students understand the content, but they cannot explain it clearly in Thai. Their ideas are fragmented, and they often rely on informal language that is not suitable for professional teaching contexts” (INT-LEC-04). Similarly, an administrator noted that these challenges become particularly visible during practicum experiences: “When students enter real classrooms, their communication weaknesses become evident. They struggle to give clear instructions or respond confidently to questions from students or parents” (INT-ADM-02). From a phenomenological perspective, these difficulties were experienced as a persistent gap between professional expectations and embodied communicative capability. Within the SWOT framework, this dimension reflects internal weaknesses in systematic skill development and external threats posed by lecture-dominated pedagogical traditions that limit experiential language use.

2. Context-Related Dimension: Unequal Entry Points and Institutional Mediation. Thai communication development was strongly shaped by learners’ prior educational backgrounds, resulting in uneven entry-level proficiency. Participants highlighted disparities between students from urban schools and those from rural or small community schools, particularly in standard Thai usage, spelling, and analytical writing. One pre-service teacher explained: “I came from a small rural school, and we rarely practiced formal speaking or writing. When I entered university, I realized that my classmates from city schools were much more confident in using Thai academically” (INT-STU-09). Lecturers emphasized that such disparities require adaptive instructional strategies: “We cannot assume that all students start at the same level. Some need much more support just to reach basic academic communication standards” (INT-LEC-06). This dimension reflects structural threats arising from educational inequality, while also highlighting institutional strengths, particularly the availability of partner-school networks that provide authentic contexts for experiential communication learning.

3. Needs-Related Dimension: Desire for Experiential and Continuous Practice. Across all stakeholder groups, there was strong consensus that Thai communication skills should be developed through experiential and continuous practice that bridges theory and real professional contexts. Participants emphasized the need for structured opportunities to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing in situations that reflect actual teaching responsibilities. An administrator stated: “Communication skills cannot be developed through lectures alone. Students need repeated practice in real or simulated teaching situations, with feedback that helps them improve step by step” (INT-ADM-05). Pre-service teachers echoed this need: “I want more chances to practice speaking like a real teacher, such as explaining lessons or talking to parents, not just doing written exams” (INT-STU-18). Within the SWOT analysis, this dimension represents a significant opportunity to design technology-enhanced, experiential online curricula aligned with national teacher professional standards.

4. Awareness-Related Dimension: Communication as Ethical and Professional Identity. Stakeholders consistently viewed Thai communication as a core marker of teacher professionalism, ethical responsibility, and public trust. This awareness was grounded in lived experiences during practicum, institutional expectations, and professional interactions. A university administrator remarked: “The way teachers communicate with parents and communities reflects not only the individual teacher, but also the credibility of the institution” (INT-ADM-03). A teacher educator highlighted the cognitive and ethical

dimensions of communication: “Language shows how teachers think. If they cannot communicate clearly and respectfully, it affects students’ trust and learning” (INT-LEC-07). A pre-service teacher reflected on a critical learning moment: “When I used an inappropriate tone in class, some students stopped asking questions. That experience taught me that communication is not only about information, but about trust” (INT-STU-14). This collective awareness represents a key institutional strength and provides a strong foundation for curriculum reform that positions ethical, clear, and context-appropriate communication as a defining attribute of teacher professionalism.

5. Learning Support Dimension: Institutional Infrastructure and Digital Mediation. Learning support systems were identified as essential for sustaining Thai communication development, although existing infrastructures remain weakly connected to authentic practice. Stakeholders emphasized the potential of digital technologies, mentoring systems, and communication labs to support continuous experiential learning. A lecturer suggested: “We need a dedicated space, both physical and online, where students can practice professional Thai communication and receive personalized feedback” (INT-LEC-10). Students also expressed the need for structured support: “Online platforms are useful, but we need guidance and feedback. Without that, it is hard to know whether our communication is improving” (INT-STU-21). Synthesized through a SWOT-informed perspective, these findings underscore the need for experiential, context-sensitive, and sustainably supported curricula that integrate technological mediation with professional communication practice.

6. Learning Support Conditions: Institutional Infrastructure and Digital Mediation. Learning support systems were identified as essential for sustaining Thai communication development, yet existing infrastructures remain weakly connected to authentic practice. Stakeholders highlighted opportunities to enhance experiential learning through communication labs, mentoring, and digital technologies, alongside constraints related to limited resources and institutional capacity. Overall, Thai communication development is shaped by the dynamic interaction of five experiential dimensions, with educational inequality and limited practice constraining learning, while professional awareness and technological mediation enable change. Synthesized through a SWOT-informed perspective, these findings underscore the need for experiential, context-sensitive, and sustainably supported curricula, forming the conceptual foundation for the proposed Experiential Online Curriculum Model at Kalasin University.

Table 1 Strategic SWOT Analysis of Thai Communication Development

Experiential Dimension	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
1. Problem-related	Shared recognition of deficiencies in Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers	Predominantly lecture-based learning with limited continuous practice	—	Traditional pedagogy and limited feedback hinder sustainable skill development

Experiential Dimension	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
2. Context-related	Existing school partnerships and authentic practicum contexts	Highly unequal linguistic entry levels due to prior schooling and digital access	Context-sensitive online modules responsive to diverse learner backgrounds	Structural educational inequality reproduces communication gaps
3. Needs-related	Strong stakeholder commitment to Thai communication as a core professional competence	Lack of standardized, teacher-specific Thai communication assessment	Experiential online curriculum aligned with Teachers' Council standards	Variation in learner readiness and motivation
4. Awareness-related	Communication recognized as central to teacher identity, ethics, and public trust	Inappropriate language use undermines professional image	Faculty-wide culture promoting ethical and professional communication norms	Weak communication damages institutional credibility
5. Learning-support-related	Existing LMS, digital libraries, and instructional media initiatives	Fragmented mentoring, labs, and feedback systems	Dedicated communication labs, AI-assisted feedback, performance-based assessment	Limited funding, expertise, and uneven technical readiness

The Strategic SWOT analysis provides an integrative interpretation of stakeholders' lived experiences by linking phenomenological findings with institutional and curricular conditions. Rather than serving as a managerial tool, SWOT functions here as an interpretive framework that explains how strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats emerge across five experiential dimensions. A central strength lies in stakeholders' shared recognition of Thai communication as a critical professional competence, reflecting collective awareness of the gap between expected standards and current student performance. However, this awareness is constrained by lecture-based practices, limited authentic practice opportunities, and the absence of standardized assessment frameworks aligned with professional standards. The analysis further highlights structural inequalities as both internal weaknesses and external threats, particularly unequal linguistic foundations and digital access, while institutional partnerships and experiential learning opportunities represent key strengths. Strong stakeholder alignment around the need for reform creates strategic opportunities to develop experiential, context-sensitive online curricula supported by structured feedback and assessment systems. In addition, widespread awareness of communication as a marker of professional identity and public trust provides an ideological foundation for reform, though gaps between awareness and enacted practice remain. Finally, institutional infrastructures and emerging digital technologies offer significant potential for sustainable communication development, despite constraints related

to funding and capacity. Collectively, the findings indicate that the primary challenge lies not in a lack of commitment, but in the absence of a coherent, experiential, and equitable learning system capable of translating shared professional values into sustained communicative competence aligned with national teacher professional standards.

Discussion

This study explored how key stakeholders in teacher education, including administrators, teacher educators, and pre-service teachers, experience and interpret the development of Thai communication competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing within a regional university context characterized by educational inequality and policy-driven professional standards. Interpreted through a phenomenological lens, the findings demonstrate that Thai communication competence is not merely understood as a linguistic outcome or a classroom-based skill, but is experienced as a lived professional phenomenon embedded in stakeholders' lifeworlds, institutional meaning systems, and uneven learning opportunities. The analysis identified five interrelated experiential dimensions, namely problem-related, context-related, needs-related, awareness-related, and learning-support-related dimensions. Among these, the awareness-related and learning-support-related dimensions emerged inductively from the data and therefore represent a significant empirical extension beyond prior curriculum models.

New knowledge

This study contributes new empirical knowledge to teacher education and curriculum studies by reframing Thai communication competence as a lived professional phenomenon rather than a set of discrete linguistic skills. The findings shift analytical focus from skill acquisition to professional becoming, demonstrating that communication competence is embedded in stakeholders' lifeworlds, institutional expectations, and access to learning opportunities. A central contribution lies in the identification of a five-dimensional experiential structure underlying communication development, extending prior curriculum models through the inductive emergence of awareness-related and learning-support-related dimensions. The awareness dimension reveals that Thai communication is widely understood as an ethical and professional responsibility, yet awareness alone is insufficient without sustained and guided practice. The learning-support dimension further demonstrates that institutional infrastructures and support systems function as catalytic conditions for transforming professional values into embodied communicative competence. In addition, the study reconceptualizes educational inequality as an experiential condition manifested through linguistic insecurity and constrained participation, rather than merely a structural variable. Collectively, these insights integrate phenomenological meaning structures with strategic institutional analysis, showing that sustainable Thai communication competence emerges at the intersection of embodied practice, institutional awareness, contextual mediation, and structured learning support. This integrative framework provides an empirically grounded foundation for context-sensitive curriculum design and teacher education reform in conditions of educational inequality.

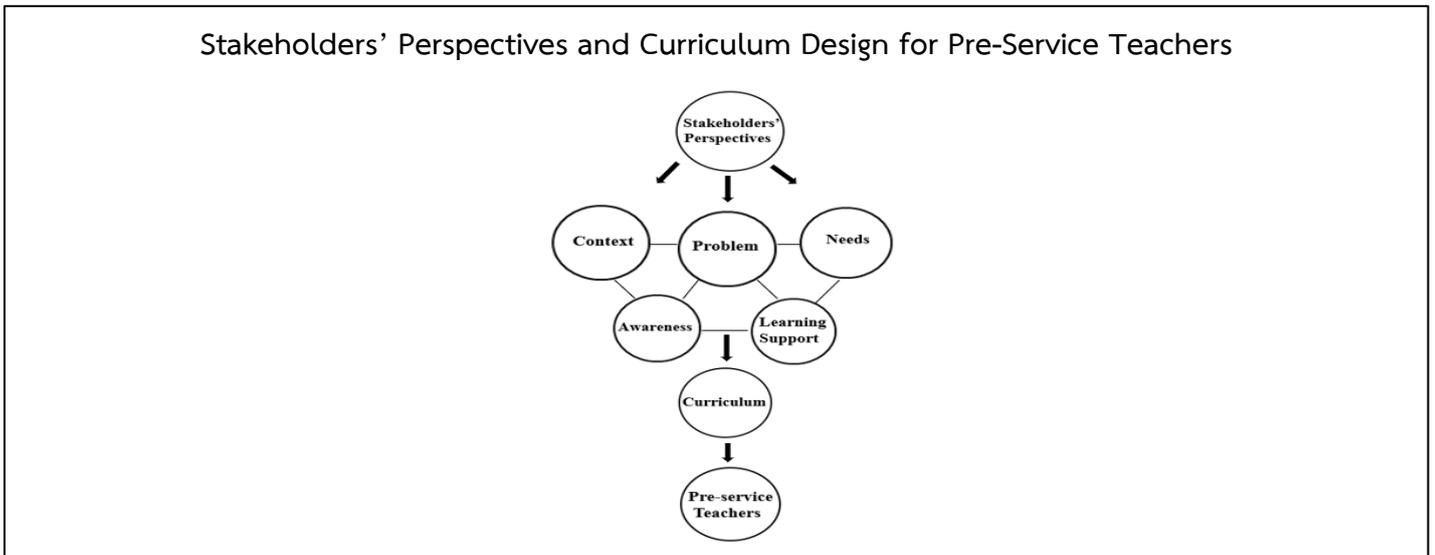


Figure 1 A Phenomenological Framework of Stakeholders' Perspectives Informing Curriculum Design for Pre-Service Teachers

This framework illustrates that curriculum design emerges from the dynamic interaction of experiential dimensions, particularly awareness and learning support, which function as key catalytic conditions extending beyond traditional curriculum models. By linking stakeholders' perspectives with curriculum structures, the framework highlights the study's central contribution: sustainable Thai communication competence develops through the integration of embodied practice, contextual mediation, institutional awareness, and structured learning support within contexts of educational inequality. Accordingly, the figure synthesizes the study's new knowledge and provides an empirical foundation for designing experiential and context-sensitive curricula that strengthen professional identity, ethical communication, and public trust in the teaching profession.

Acknowledgments

Based on the research findings, it was found that the development of Thai communication skills among pre-service teachers is influenced by interconnected experiential factors, including unequal educational backgrounds, limited opportunities for authentic communication practice, insufficient reflective feedback mechanisms, and fragmented institutional learning support systems. The findings further reveal that Thai communication competence is perceived by stakeholders not merely as an academic skill, but as an essential component of professional identity, ethical responsibility, and public trust in the teaching profession. These insights underscore the importance of grounding curriculum development in stakeholders' lived experiences to ensure contextual relevance, equity, and alignment with national teacher professional standards. There are recommendations for applying the research results and for future research as follows:

Recommendations for Applying the Research Findings

Teacher education institutions should implement experiential and practice oriented curricula that embed authentic professional communication tasks. Curriculum designs should incorporate systematic formative feedback and guided reflection to support sustained competence development. Learning support infrastructures, including mentoring and technology enhanced feedback systems, should be strengthened to ensure equitable access to communication development. Online and blended learning environments should be designed with contextual flexibility while maintaining alignment with the professional standards of the Teachers Council of Thailand. Continuous integration of stakeholders' perspectives is essential to support institutional coherence, shared ownership, and long term sustainability of communication skill development.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should investigate the implementation and longitudinal effectiveness of experiential online curricula for enhancing Thai communication skills. Comparative studies across different teacher education institutions are recommended to examine contextual transferability. Quantitative or mixed methods approaches may further explore the relationships between communication competence, professional identity formation, and public trust. Additional research should also examine the role of emerging technologies, including AI assisted feedback systems, in supporting reflective practice and reducing educational inequality. Finally, studies on stakeholder collaboration models may provide deeper insights into participatory curriculum design that strengthens equity, coherence, and professional relevance in teacher education.

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