

## **University Career Guidance Curriculum Design Oriented by China's New Investment Tendency in Thailand: Business Chinese Major Specified**

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### **Abstract**

Professional career guidance courses and counseling service is one of the important sessions of university education. Decent and wild job openings with boosting business opportunities brought by recent Chinese investors are listed as significant motivation for Thai students learning Chinese or particularly Business Chinese. Career guidance courses which could keep up with the economic and market mainstreams are vital for Business Chinese major graduates building up a solid foundation of successful career life. This academic paper aims to propose a realistic career guidance courses design to leading senior business Chinese major students gaining accurate insights with fast changing investment tendency and employment market in business environment.

By collecting latest information and data from business news ,government business department reports, prestigious business journals and previous outcome of related researches, this study analyzed current China to Thailand investment tendency in terms of investment fields, emerging businesses, capital scale and organization size of Chinese investors since “Thailand 4.0” Policy and “One Belt, One Road” Initiative announced. In accordance with new investment trends, four new inspirations to university employment counseling curriculums were proposed including new required profession skills, business areas and company size for job application and personal traits’ effect on job choices, etc. The author designed a pragmatic career guidance pedagogical program as a result of these inspirations. Inside this new program, lecture processes, students involvement and cultivation goals were demonstrated with details such as, teaching content, class actives and follow ups, expectation of outcome and assessment criteria for further implementation and discussion.

**Keywords:** business Chinese, career guidance, investment trends

## Introduction

The "University Employment Guidance Course" is mainly used to educate students on a more systematic job selection, employment ideas and skills. ( Admissions Office of Shenyang Institute of Urban Construction, 2019).The purpose of this course helps students correctly grasp the current demand of job market, understand industry policies and employment systems. Simultaneously, by analyzing social needs, economy development and business trend, career counseling guide students to establish correct employment concept and orientation, understand the employment process, obtain certain employment skills, and improve profession maturity, more importantly, qualities and abilities necessary to understand independent entrepreneurship.(GuoPing, 2003).

Although Thailand has the one of the lowest unemployment rate all over world, ranking in the last three decades, its graduates employment market is expecting a 3%-4% recession in the year of 2020, a continuous drop since the year of 2017.The employment situation is not optimistic and the competition is fierce.(National Statistical Office of Thailand, 2018)

With the deepening of mutual economic and political trust between China and Thailand, in the background of the "One Belt One Road" initiative and Thailand 4.0 policy, the economic and trade cooperation between the two countries has entered a deeper and further level. According to statistics from China's Ministry of Commerce, In the first half of 2019 alone, China, which ranked second in direct investment in Thailand, invested 24.2 billion baht, a year-on-year increase of 5.3 times.(Thongnoi, 2020). China-Thailand investment cooperation has gradually formed a multi-level, multi-channel, and all-round collaboration grid, which has brought local economic development and more employment opportunities from different industries in Thailand. (Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office of the Chinese Embassy in Thailand, 2018)The new investment and business rise new thoughts on the job hunting goal for Chinese speaking workforce. The popularity of boosting investment areas like infrastructure construction and cross boarder e-commerce has increased gradually on job searching market as a result of prominent labor shortage. Accordingly, graduates has Chinese communication skills are encouraged to attempt on emerging industries instead of competing merely on those traditional advantageous jobs opening from certain companies.

A new and updated career guidance courses have more vital significance for students whose major is Business Chinese. Most of universities which establish Chinese or Business Chinese Subject are using the ideal employability in faculty propaganda to attract students for high enrollment rate. What's more, job positions recommended on the website very similarly are relevant to hospitality, customer service, tourism and education. Those are well known traditional industries which have more intense competition during application period for Chinese speaking Thai students.(Xy zhou , 2017)However, due to the generality and broadness for linguist subjects, not like technology and science major with strong industrial pertinence, plenty of Chinese major senior students are unlikely to have clarified and promising job blueprints if lack of the up-to-date career counseling. New and pragmatic career guidance curriculum designs is bound to plan and implement to help graduating students prepare their career path which match with both individual job-hunting demands and employer's requirements.

## **New investment trends from China to Thailand.**

### ***1. Higher diversity on investment field.***

From the first decade of this century, Chinese investors' tend to fund capital into primary and secondary industry, specifically agriculture, manufacture and Metals, and Machinery. However, with the promotion of Thailand 4.0 policy and "One Belt One Road" initiative, investment from China has distributed their capital into new emerging fields. The investing portion in tertiary industry rises stably in the last five years.(Xuechun, 2016) Inside the new investment fields, there are six business fields are emerging and prevailing currently in Thailand, facing shortage of labors who can communicate in both languages. The contract between Thailand and China for high speed railway construction drives the growth of Infrastructure constructions business. High technology, like AI and digital product(Jun, 2019),online shopping and logistics(Audjarin, 2018),real estate(Li, 2019),entertainment industry(Praphruetmon, 2018)resulted from the heat TV series "ปรมาจารย์ลัทธิมาร"are the rest of five. Workforce Thai-Chinese speakers who also have related basic business knowledge on these areas could have more privileges in job market.

### ***2. E-commerce industry gain attention from Chinese investors***

In recent years, China's cross-border e-commerce has developed rapidly; the scale of transactions is expanding continuously. The size of China's cross-border e-commerce transactions reached 4.8 trillion Yuan in 2015. (Ali Research Xue Yan;OuYang Cheng, 2016)That also indicated, domestic e-commerce market in China has entered into a saturated period. However, Southeast Asia is still an emerging market for online shopping. It is just in the early stages of development, and competition between platforms is relatively mild. Giant e-commerce companies, Alibaba and JD.com have both grasped this chance and invested Lazada.com and JD central.com Thailand, creating thousands of associated job openings.

### ***3. Private companies establish branches in Thailand for global expansion.***

Geopolitically located in the core area of the ASEAN region, Thailand is the logistics, trade and financial center of the "One Belt, One Road" in Southeast Asia, connecting China and the ASEAN market. Thus, setting branches in Thailand has turned to an essential step for Chinese company's global intension strategy. In addition to Chinese e-commerce giants Alibaba, JD.com settled in Thailand, well-known domestic mobile phone operators Huawei, OPPO, VIVO, etc. also entered the Thai market. For example, Huawei has set up regional headquarters in Bangkok, including a talent training center and a front-end customer experience hall In addition; it spends effort on the development of Internet and 5G technology and attempt to make Thailand a true digital economic center in Southeast Asia.(Guhong, 2019)

### ***4. SME become a popular form of investment scale***

As a collateral result of China investment on E-commerce platform in Thailand, a batch of new SMEs funded domestically or aboard are boosting in Thailand. Business owners tend to run online sale channel to save the total overhead. Meanwhile, online business is cost efficiently on rentals or operation which attracts business starters to invest and develop.

## **Inspiration for career counseling courses from new business tendency**

### ***1. Dig deeper in emerging industries***

When looking into the current Business Chinese job related education in Thai universities, from the context of textbook, to curriculum arrangement, it seemingly attempt to involve majority of the traditional advantageous business. Students sitting in classroom with 20 more classmate could only use one semester, that is 45 school hours, to learn subjects which may affect their career plan, such as “Chinese for Tourism”, “Hospitality Chinese”, “Civil Aviation Chinese” and extra. Not to mention that approximately 22% of interviewed Business Chinese major students regard the learning materials are stale and not pragmatic.(Han, 2012).

As a result, the new career counseling classes have to pay more attention on new and advanced industry. Students will conduct elaborated study on industrial background development forecast, terminology, industry regulation and working ethics. The search is no longer on simple conversation and new vocabularies, but on daily work related practice. This will also compensate on the shortage of linguist students on business knowledge. On aspect of profession, students do not need to waste plenty of time and effort on Chinese communication skill in area they are not interested or useless for making work decisions. Their study goals will be more precise with that specific targeted industry. In future, they may have better performance during job interview even in formal daily work.

### ***2. Value individual's differences***

As demonstrated, the traditional working fields for business Chinese students are most correlated to hospitality and service. Thus the training and lectures tends to be proceeded in a collective form, time and cost efficient but lack of attention on individual differences.

Unlike the traditional occupations, these growing industries, from construction to digital technology, have little in common. Their distinctions force students to contemplate their personality, advantages, shortages, preference, interests before make further-learning choices. Students who share identical interests on target industry will gather to be a group to help each other and share information in team work. (Zoujun, 2012)Each group could be trained with unique content and assigned different assignments. Moreover, in this giving circumstance, spoon-feeding (cramming) will not more be adapted on career guidance classes.

### ***3. Train students to have international visions.***

The dominating reason of Chinese invested capital increasing in Thailand is companies' own international development needs. Based on and expand the local Thai market, Chinese enterprises could use Thai market as a springboard to radiate and extend to the Southeast Asian market, even the global market. However, due to lack international capital operation experience (The Chinese Commerce Association in Thailand, 2017), the employer is longer to recruit elites who are not only highly proficient in Mandarin but also open minded with strong adaptability, also mastering in cross-culture communication, critical thinking and situation anticipation.

The use of Chinese is widespread. In addition to the Thai job market, Business Chinese students may consider seeking jobs in multinational companies from other Chinese speaking counties like Singapore and Malaysia.

#### ***4. Working in SMEs and self-employed may also be good choices***

Thanks to Thai government's beneficial policy, Small and Enterprise-sized enterprises, no matter domestic or foreign ones, are entitled with fiscal promotions, technology support, and one stop service from BOI. This well explained the rapid growth to 3 million of total SME amount in Thailand among which Chinese business related capital also involved.

Depriving from this point, business Chinese learner should be inspired and change old perspectives---must work in famous giant companies. (Zhu, 2019) Starting working experience in SMEs, graduates have less competition on job application session and enable to gain insight of work from different departments thorough the company and industry. And even if, they decide to do job hopping in the later career path, related filed experience plus sufficient knowledge in SME will polish their profile to be competitive. On the other hand, with language advantages, business Chinese graduates should have confidence and ability to run a own small business. Investment from China Alibaba.com and JD.com on Thailand cross boarder e-commerce platforms which offer a well-equipped incubation and development center for startups.

### **New Teaching goals, teaching procedure and class activities design**

#### ***1. New teaching goals***

The teaching goals for career guidance courses are subject to adapt with current business and employment market. First of all, the aim is to help students obtain both soft and hard skills. There are many related soft skills need to emphasize, for instance, international horizons, critical thinking, multi-cultures acclimation and Psychological preparation as newbie in workplace and so on. Hard skills include writing and job interview tricks, Chinese terminology implementation in specific industry will not be neglected as well.

Secondly, employment counseling curriculum has to be long term guidance. The lecturer should consider as many as possibilities for audiences' career path in future. Lecture and assignment on specific linguist or business concept could merely suit student's short run demands at the very early career stage. On the contract, the lecturer should lead student to develop abilities and concepts which has profound effects, such as life time learning, information collection and summary, business analysis and predication..etc. Last but not least, the new teaching arrangements are designed to focus on individual characters and personal career demands. At the end of the curriculum, students are able to know themselves better from employment prospective. They will know about their personalities and how it could influence their work. Meanwhile, they are capable to figure out and express their desires and plans on further profession paths.

#### ***2. Lecture procedures and class activities design (flaw chart in appendix)***

The whole process of career preparation courses for business Chinese major will be assigned into two phrases. One is called "General Introduction" and the other is "Field Expertise".

In the first phrase, students have lectures together to know about the background, mainstream and development forecast of those promising investment areas.

The general information could be collected by internet, media report and guest speakers from different industries. With the stimulation from the lecture, students are required to summarize the common soft skills required, such as International vision,

cross culture communication, life time self-learning and adequate psychological preparation for workplace freshman and start up business owner.

After the student gain the overall outlook for each industrial, personality and character identification need to be tested along with advantage, interests and career demand of individual. In order to have the most precise result, there are three methods could be combined to apply, online personality test tool, self-evaluation and institute feedback. In this process, the Business Chinese students are able to know themselves as much as they can before choose, explore and get trained in the specific industrial areas in second phrase.

Moving into “filed expertise “phrase, students will find their group categorized by their career filed choice. Each group will create a shared employment portfolio. Starting from there, group members will explore and do research on their specific industry. To lead the detailed career exploration, lectures need to give assignments to each groups including latest industry new collection, most useful terminology summary, important industry polices analysis and Chinese –Thai joint venture case studies report etc. Considering linguistic students’ difficulties on business subjects, the lecturers will supervise and assist on each of the assignment. Additionally, students are encouraged to maintain good connection with guest speakers in the first phrase, resorting to their suggestion and advice regarding frequent job interview questions, company recruitment standards or business professions in that specific field.

In order to trace and assess each group’s work, methods like team demonstration, terminology communication quiz and business plan outline are going to apply through the whole career preparation program. Every time when team finding and test approved, their outcome will be archived into group portfolios. At the end of the curriculum all group portfolios is likely to be exhibited in a class share drive.

By this means, the students have the access to browse other team’s work and get to know different industry information as they do have possibility to switch job fields in the future.

### **Conclusions and suggestion**

Career guidance or career related courses for Chinese major in most aforementioned searched Thai university currently are designed and implemented on the basis of recruitment demands and requirements of traditional advantageous industries, for instance tourism and hospitality. Those industries are considered unstable and easily influenced by high and low season. Taking the ongoing pandemic Covid-19 as an example, the worldwide pandemic and protection steps, like quarantine, city lockdown and curfew strike hospitality industry and Airline Company significantly. (Becker, 2020) Even the giant hotel chain Marriot has to lay off staffs or reduce the salaries. (Karmin & Fung, 2020) Interviewed Business Chinese graduates in authors’ faculty are struggling with job hunting. This worldwide dilemma remind university career guidance lecture to introspect if the class design are lack of updated career or emerging industries’ information and if the information could be deprived from new investment tendency from Chinese investors to Thailand since the “One Belt, One Road” imitative and “Thailand 4.0 policy”.

Thailand 4.0 policy and China One Belt One Road initiative bring new investment opportunities from China to Thailand. A few of new industries emerge and grow rapidly. Meanwhile, the advantages as small and middle sized companies become

obvious .Investment tendency effect the job market. As consequences, a updated career guidance curriculum design is required to aid senior students grasping potential job opportunities, enhancing skills, planning long term career path and being successful in both workplace and personal life. Thus, an appropriate course design need not only focus on CV writing and interview traits lectures. It should include both soft and hard skills trainings and basic business information introduction. In class activities, students' personalities and career preference will lead them to form different groups to explore deeply on their interested business areas. Under supervision and assistance of lectures and experts, they are able to apply their language learning to real situation and develop skills beneficial in a long run, for instance, information collection and analysis skill, international vision. As group work outcome, business portfolios will be created and shared for Business Chinese students' reference in the future.

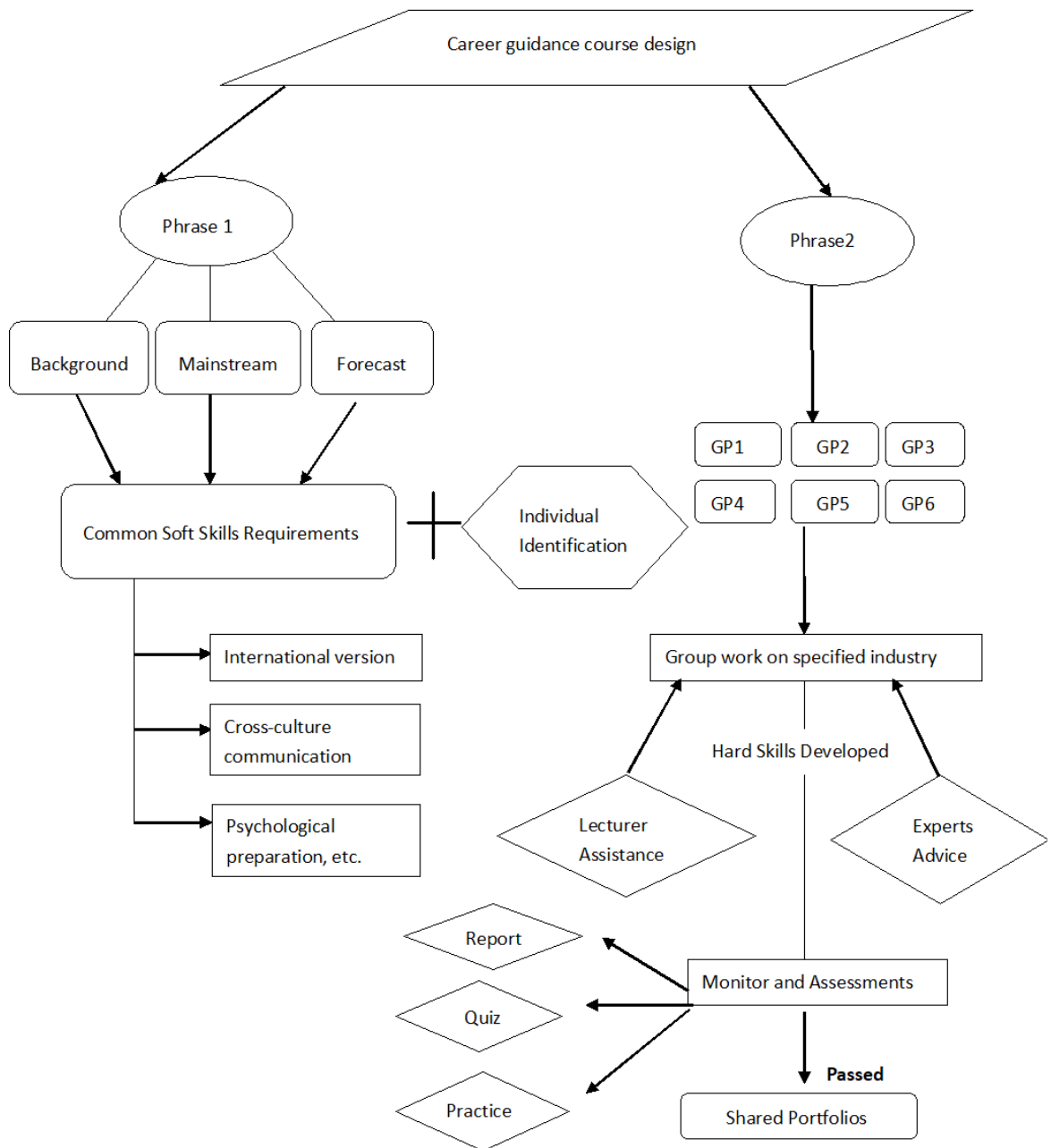
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**Appendix: New Designed Career Guidance Curriculum Flow Chart**



\*\*\* 'GP' is short for "group of student" aforementioned in "Lecture procedures and class activities design"