

The Communication Effect of Thai Public Service Advertising in China: A Semiotic Analysis

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Abstract

With the increasing significance of public service advertising in information dissemination and value guidance, the dissemination effect of Thai public service advertisements in China has attracted widespread attention. This study selected 20 Thai public service advertisements from 2015 to 2022. It uses case analysis and semiotic theory to deeply explore the role of visual and auditory symbols in the effectiveness and dissemination of Thai public service advertisements. Questionnaire survey and in-depth interview methods were used to research the dissemination effects of Thai public service advertisements on Chinese audiences. Research has found that in Thai public service advertisements, using populist character symbols, philosophical textual symbols, realistic scene symbols, and appropriate auditory symbols can significantly improve advertising effectiveness and the spread of information. Thai public service advertising is found to significantly impact Chinese audiences in the aspects of cognition, attitude, and behaviour. This study provides a reference for creating and disseminating Chinese public service advertising. It is expected to promote further the exploration of content production in Chinese public service advertising.

Keywords: *Thai public service advertising, Semiotics, Communication effects, Advertising symbols.*

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1. Introduction

Rapid economic development and cultural integration have diversified people's values and morals in modern society. The viewpoints conveyed by public service advertisements can improve the audience's quality of life and morality and promote civilized and orderly development of the entire society (O'Keefe & Reid, 2020). The definition of public service advertising is relatively straightforward, mainly referring to non-profit advertising whose core purpose is to serve public interest (O'Barr, 2012). As a tool for influencing public awareness and an essential factor in shaping specific behaviours, public service advertising is seen as a field of interaction between society, public organizations, businesses, and government agencies. It is a targeted way to impact society and aims to solve social problems (Zaitseva, 2020). The influence of public service advertising is particularly evident in the case of Thailand. Thai public service advertising has diverse creative ideas and styles with excellent advertising effects (Chantamas & Chaisuwan, 2020). In recent years, it has won numerous awards at international advertising festivals such as Asia Pacific, New York, and Cannes, earning praise in the global advertising industry. The types of Thai public service advertisements studied in this article are mainly special advertising activities funded by enterprises to arouse public attention towards a particular social issue or concept. There are no commercial symbols in the advertisement content, but most will have the company logo or short slogans at the end of the film.

In China, the impact of Thai public service advertising is significant. Through mainstream media platforms such as Baidu, Sina Weibo, and Tencent Video in China, it can be observed that Thai public service advertising has a high search volume and has often become a hot topic of discussion (Tu, 2018). Many Chinese audiences love Thai advertising (Shang, 2023).

The success behind Thai public service advertising is primarily due to its unique symbolic application. According to research, Thai public service advertising producers use semiotic theory to construct amazing advertising creativity and art from the perspectives of character symbols, scene symbols, action symbols, etc., in their advertising creations, making Thai public service advertisements more attractive (Yang, 2019). Although these studies have not thoroughly analysed the mechanism of semiotics, the semiotic analysis methods can provide valuable inspiration for subsequent research.

After more than 30 years of growth and improvement, Chinese public service advertising has made a qualitative improvement in creativity. However, it still faces some challenges that cannot be ignored: the execution is relatively basic, the government still leads the planning and broadcasting of advertising, and the participation of enterprises is still at a relatively low level. In addition, the content of Chinese public service advertising is severely similar, lacks creativity, and there is still a particular gap in overall production quality and advertising influence compared to other advertising powerhouses (S. Liu, 2021).

Given this, this study takes a typical case of public service advertising in Thailand as the research object. Through in-depth exploration of symbolic strategies in Thai public service advertising, the study learns and draws on the advantages of Thailand in public service advertisement production, enriching relevant theories in the field of advertising, and studying how to effectively increase the expressive power and influence of public service advertising through semiotics. In addition, this study demonstrates how semiotics can be applied in public service advertising to help advertisers create more attractive and infectious content, providing new suggestions and references for improving the dissemination effect of Chinese public service advertising.

2. Literature Review

A lot of rich research has been conducted on public service advertising from different perspectives, including the nature of public service advertising, the dissemination effect of public service advertising, the audience of public service advertising, and so on. Relevant literature will be built on based on the theme of this study, with a focus on the following perspectives:

From the perspective of studying the dissemination effect of public service advertising, scholars mainly explore the dissemination effect of traditional public service advertising on television media and the dissemination effect of public service advertising on social media. With the rise of short video platforms, scholars have also begun to pay attention to the production and dissemination models of public service advertising in short videos. For example, television public service advertising can create a healthy and harmonious society, build a value system, and cultivate role models (Ying Zhang, 2016). L. Liu (2021) focuses on the dissemination effects of public service advertising on Weibo in different countries and

explores the reasons and inspirations behind them. Xie (2021) studies the communication effect and influencing factors of public service advertising on the TikTok platform. Wan (2017) proposed suggestions for the effectiveness of public service advertising dissemination through the lens of channels and trends, taking into account changes in the ecological environment in the era of integrated media. Zhu (2021) analysed the dissemination effect of panoramic video public service advertising from visual, auditory, and emotional guidance perspectives.

Some scholars also conduct research that consider public service advertising audiences. There are many angles for studying the audience of public service advertising, such as focusing on advertising communication from the standpoint of audience cognition, studying the correlation between audience psychology and public service advertising performance techniques, and paying attention to the emotional and behavioural impact of the audience. Park (2016) used cognitive response methods to process information for audiences exposed to particular Olympic public service advertising information. Gan (2015) analysed the correlation between public service advertising performance techniques and audience psychology in new media, including fear-based, humorous, situational contagion-based, rhetorical, etc. Cho (2021) took public service advertising in China and South Korea as the object and, based on Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, considered the impact of gender differences in television public service advertising on the attitudes and behaviours of audiences in China and South Korea under different cultural conditions. Influenced by the background environment, the audience responds well to public service advertising in terms of emotional effects and perception, which are related to fear, comedy, and empathy (Junyan Huo, 2023). The response factors of the audience to public service advertising, according to a survey conducted by Çubuk and Aydınlioğlu (2023), audiences have different preferences, including "attractive copy and images" "positive stories" and "dramatic and impactful stories".

In literature regarding the main focus of this study, i.e. Thai public service advertising, scholars analyse the aspects of creativity and narrative, exploring the creative style, methods, and reasons behind its high-level creativity. Two examples of Thai public service advertising styles are humour and heartwarming stories. Thai advertisements often incorporate both local Thai culture and Western elements (Nelson & Paek, 2007; Z. Yu, 2021). The

use of animal elements such as dogs to highlight the camera's main body and lay the groundwork for a subsequent plot reversal is an example of creative methods in Thai advertising in film and television. Creative composition, comfortable colours, and sound effects are also used to enhance humour (Z. Li, 2017). Thailand's complex and unique cultural charm, open economic and social environment, and high-level advertising talent contribute to its advanced advertising creativity (Z. Liu, 2006). Regarding creative expression techniques, emotion is used to appeal to the audience, often adopting a populist approach and showcasing local characteristics. Family-oriented advertising often uses a warm and touching approach (Wang, 2017).

For the narrative techniques of Thai public service advertising, scholars focus on their storytelling methods and causal narrative approaches. Cheryl and Ayob (2020) argue that most Thai advertising uses a storytelling narrative approach. Further, advertisers create a unique cultural expression of humanistic care and emotional value through unique emotional narratives (Niu, 2019). The narrative strategy of Thai public service advertising also includes narratives centred on cause and effect, emotional resonance inside and outside the narrative, and the process of achieving true equality (Xiong, 2018). Thai public service advertising is adept at using reverse plots to drive the audience's emotions, spreading public service advertising attitudes through concepts, and enhancing the story's connotation through cultural core (Sun, 2020), mainly adopting a causal narrative structure, presenting the plain narrative style of Thai public service advertising through storytelling (Chu, 2017). Its themes include love, social morality, and motivation. The narrative subject has a personal narrative and a nonpersonal narrative. Narrative techniques include narrative structure and spatial narrative lens (Chen, 2022).

In studying public service advertising, scholars have also conducted extensive research on semiotics. Semiotics, also known as "semiotics science", is an essential tool in media and cultural research and is a deep-seated ideological critique in imagery and other texts (Barker, 2004). The signifier of a symbol refers to a specific object, while the signified refers to the meaning behind the object (Faizan, 2019). The advertising content includes "signifier" and "signified". In addition to disseminating information, advertising can also reflect the profound connotations and cultural value of advertising. This distinction provides a theoretical framework for advertising to explain how it affects information recipients. Semiotics is interpreting visual communication through understanding textual mechanisms and

functions used to study how symbols generate meaning (Hoy, 2002). Semiotic text analysis can reveal the deep cultural and ideological structures in public service advertising. Moreover, in the context of cross-border cultural dissemination, semiotic theory helps to understand the audience's interpretation and acceptance of public service advertising information in different cultural contexts. Through analysis, it can be found that semiotics can enhance the influence and effectiveness of Thai public service advertising among audiences.

Past research on Thai public service advertising has mainly focused on its creativity and narrative methods. There has still been little research on its semiotic elements and profound cultural and social significance. The lack of this research prevents a comprehensive understanding of Thai public service advertising and also overlooks the rich symbols and cultural connotations contained in advertising. Thus, this biased research perspective leads to a superficial and one-sided interpretation of the meaning of public service advertising, one that ignores the profound role and influence of advertising in the social context. Therefore, this study selects Thai public service advertising as the research subject, and through semiotic theory, deeply analyses the impact and role of symbolic elements within it on advertising narrative, advertising communication effects, and other aspects. Further, this study explores the deep factors that cause wide audiences to recognize Thai public service advertising, and based on this, provides inspiration and suggestions for the production and dissemination of public service advertising in China.

3. Method

This study uses the research method of collecting typical cases to study the dissemination and effectiveness of Thai public service advertisements that have spread into China. The research samples are all Thai public service video advertisements which audiences love due to their creativity and emotional appeal. The videos selected have won international awards for their high quality and influence. Moreover, video as a medium is suitable for displaying advertising semiotics theory, as it can contain more information than other forms of advertising, relies more on various symbols to display meaning, and values narrative structure and plot (Lv, 2022).

This study empirically investigates public service advertising through data analysis. Bilibili is a popular website among young people in China,

the leading group on the internet. According to researchers, Bilibili has a relatively large video coverage, which includes almost all public service advertising worldwide. In a 2022 analysis report released by Bilibili, the proportion of young and willing consumers on Bilibili was reported at over 75 per cent, and the proportion of highly educated individuals was 10 per cent higher than the average level of the entire network (Bilibili, 2023). The target audience of Chinese public service advertising is young people, who spend most of their time browsing information online (Livingstone, Bober, & Helsper, 2005).

Young people receive information quickly, create content, and share information on social media platforms. They have a high sensitivity to fashion and social issues. When they identify with a particular social concept, they may become disseminators, further expanding the influence of public service advertising. Furthermore, compared to the previous generation, young people are more receptive to new ideas and information. Through public service advertising, it is easier to influence them and cultivate a sense of social responsibility among young people. This study chooses Bilibili's data as the primary reference for the above reasons.

Similarities in the cultural and historical backgrounds of Asian countries result in similarities between the expression of public service advertising and the public response as compared to non-Asian countries, providing a more consistent and comparable basis for this study. In choosing Thailand specifically, the methodology applied was as follows: Firstly, by conducting keyword searches on Bilibili, a leading video platform in China, we searched for playback data of public service advertising in more developed Asian countries such as Thailand. The results showed that a search using "Thai public service advertising" as the keywords yielded advertisements that reached 890,000 views, far exceeding the views of public service advertising from other countries, such as Singapore, Japan, and South Korea, which had at most 38,000, 11,000 and 63,000 views, respectively. On Weibo in China, the reading volume of the topic "Thai public service advertising" reached 1.443 million, again far exceeding other Asian countries, using search terms such as "Singapore public service advertising", "Japan public service advertising" and "South Korea public service advertising" which yielded reading volumes of 1,348, 282,000 and 29,000 respectively. In addition, a literature search for corresponding keywords was conducted on CNKI. The number of articles related to "Thai public service advertising" reached 38,

which also exceeded the number of articles in other Asian countries, such as Singapore, Japan, and South Korea, where the number of articles on public service advertising was 2, 13, and 29, respectively. This indicates that the Chinese audience and academic community have paid great attention to Thai public service advertising in China.

This study selected 2015 to 2022 as the research interval to ensure the typicality and representativeness of the research sample. Since 2015, Thai public service advertising has attracted widespread attention in China and demonstrated its unique charm and influence (Jiang, 2021). This study mainly focuses on the playback volume and interaction data of Thai public service advertising on the Bilibili platform. Generally speaking, Thai public service advertising with relatively high views generates more user behaviour data such as likes, comments, and shares. Therefore, this study only collected data on Thai public service advertising with views exceeding 10,000. Eight indicators were identified when establishing an analysis framework using the case analysis method. This article conducts an in-depth analysis of Thai public service advertising by collecting and observing these data (See Table 1). The primary advertising information collected are the advertisement name, advertiser, theme, and length, providing a fundamental description for the research. Secondly, metrics such as views, likes, shares, and comments reflect the audience's acceptance and influence of advertising, making them an useful way to evaluate advertising effectiveness (Fedotova, 2023).

Table 1. Collection Table of Typical Cases of Thai Public Service Advertising

No	Advertising Name	Advertisers	Advertising Theme	Advertising Length	Playback Volume	Like Count	No. of Forwards	No. of Comments
1	Violent Landlady	7-11	Preventing Online Compliance	5:11	807,000	49,000	3,499	1,483
2	Unknown Hero	Thai Life Insurance	Molar	3:04	390,000	15,000	3,422	381
3	Environmental Challenges	Bar b. Q Plaza	Environment Protection	3:01	713,000	71,000	1,189	434
4	If you give me a bill and make me give up on you	7-11	School Education	8:40	510,000	14,000	6,132	981
5	My father is a scaffold	Metlife	Fatherly Love	3:27	272,000	11,000	5,664	230

No	Advertising Name	Advertisers	Advertising Theme	Advertising Length	Playback Volume	Like Count	No. of Forwards	No. of Comments
6	A little girl who cannot be locked down	Kleenex Issue (USA)	Motivation	6:33	262,000	6,238	1,567	248
7	A bowl of Egg Fried Rice	CP Food	Home Education	2:52	228,000	7,774	3,613	232
8	My Blind Teacher	7-11	Education	10:43	215,000	5,826	1,813	315
9	Beggar's Graduation	Vizer Camera	Gratitude	5:29	174,000	5,699	197	324
10	Death is not the end but another continuation	7-11	Education	9:27	170,000	289	1,518	251
11	Try a little harder	Nestle Coffee	Home Education	4:27	97,000	1,395	1,690	52
12	Giving is the best way to communicate.	True Communication	Molar	2:58	88,000	9,796	196	353
13	Son, how long will you stay when you come back this time?	Five Star Roasted Chicken	Family Affection, Companionship	4:48	67,000	2,858	526	145
14	If I were a girl	Sunsilk Shampoo	Transgender Beauty Pageants, Marginalized Individuals	4:02	65,000	1,599	378	82
15	Pineapple Popsicle	AIS Communication	Home Education	2:28	64,000	3,153	380	176
16	What value does graduation have for you?	CP	Filial Piety	6:30	46,000	1,450	1,206	91
17	Children don't need the best dad	Thai Insurance	Family Love	3:01	25,000	339	332	14
18	Auditory Child	7-11 Supermarket	Education	11:17	21,000	929	159	65
19	Dreams triggered by bean sprouts	AIS Communication	Home Education	3:00	17,000	188	795	14
20	Gratitude Dog	Kiatnakin Bank	Repay Kindness	2:27	59,000	217	28	33

In addition, this study sorted out relevant literature on public service advertising audiences, communication effects, and semiotics both domestically and internationally and compiled a semi-structured interview outline. Then, using sampling survey methods, the interviewees were determined. Among the 12 selected interviewees, six are from Thailand, and

six are from China. This includes senior advertising scholars and core staff of advertising companies.

This study defines senior advertising scholars as those who have published significant research results on public service advertising in the academic community. In contrast, the core staff of advertising companies refers to individuals who participate in critical decision-making and creative development in advertising companies. The criteria for selecting interviewees considered a professional background in public service advertising and at least five years of rich research or practical experience in public service advertising. This study sought people of these background to capture in-depth and multi-perspective insights, and help ensure the research's depth and breadth. The interview covered the characteristics, strategies, audience insights, dissemination effects, and interpretation of success factors of Thai public service advertising, as well as the differences between Thai and Chinese public service advertising. The code table for interviewees is as follows:

Table 2. Interviewee Editing Information

Interviewee	No. of Interviewees	Interviewee Code
Chinese Advertising Scholars	3	A01, A02, A03
Chinese Advertising Companies Core staff	3	B01, B02, B03
Thai Advertising Scholar	3	C01, C02, C03
Thai Advertising Company Core Staff	3	D01, D02, D03

4. Results

Advertising is a symbol system composed of many individual symbols, an effective means of communication with profound cultural connotations and meanings (Yildirim, 2021). Video advertising is composed of visual and auditory symbols. According to the high and low-context culture proposed by American anthropologist Hoy (2002), Thailand is classified as a high-context country. This means that in disseminating Thai public service advertising, in addition to language symbols, it also relies on symbols such as character performance, body language, intonation, and facial expressions for audiences to understand the conveyed meaning. Therefore, this study mainly analyses the symbol application of Thai public service advertising from two dimensions: visual symbols and auditory symbols (See Table 3),

allowing for a corollary analysis of information dissemination and emotional expression of advertising in depth. By comprehensively utilizing visual and auditory symbols, one can fully use the advantages of audiovisual media to create advertising works that are infectious and emotionally expressive.

Table 3. Classification of Typical Public Service Advertising Symbols in Thailand

Symbol Category	Specific Symbols
Visual Symbols	1 Text Symbols: Advertising Slogans, Advertising Subtitles
	2 Character Symbols: Landlady, Teacher, Student, Vendor, Mother, Children, Coach, Transgender Person
	3 Scene Symbols: Life Scenes, Educational Scenes, Sports Scenes, Digital/Technological Scenes
Auditory Symbols	Monologues, Dialogues, Voiceovers, Sound Effects

4.1 Revealing Visual Symbols in Thai Public Service Advertising

Visual symbols refer to symbols, information, or meanings conveyed through visual elements (Fontana, 2003), which are essential factors in advertisement communication or attracting audience attention. It is an abstract concept based on graphical images and a unique concept of visual elements such as images or videos (Mühlenbeck, 2020). Graphic symbols in Thai public service advertising, predominantly textual, character, and scene symbols, often go beyond surface meaning and contain deep communication of cultural and social concepts.

4.1.1 Life-Oriented Textual Symbols

In the field of semiotics, writing is an important symbol. Although text appears relatively infrequently in advertising, it is an essential component of visual symbols in advertising. Moreover, as mentioned by interviewee C03 in their in-depth interview, the textual symbols used in Thai public service advertising are easy to understand by the general public. The text symbol in “Dreams Triggered by Bean Sprouts” is an example. After repeated challenges and failures, the mother still says, “Let’s try” to her child. At the end of the advertisement, the theme or slogan of the advertising is displayed: “Mother’s encouragement makes children full of confidence,” introducing sincere and encouraging suggestions through every day and plain language.

Thai public service advertising slogans are usually displayed at the end, accompanied by the company or brand’s logo, playing a role in elevating

the theme. It is a brief expression of brand information and reflects brand culture (N. C. M. Liu, 2015). Public service advertising mainly spreads to the audience through audiovisual language. It creates emotional resonance, and even changes one’s attitude and behaviour. Written symbols are more persuasive and essential to audiovisual language (F. Yu, 2003). In the advertisement comments, netizens’ showcase the changes in their cognition and attitude towards Thai public service advertising (see Table 4).

Table 4. Text Symbol Analysis Table for Typical Cases of Thai Public Service Advertising

Advertising Name	Text Symbols	Displayed Information	Display of Comments from Netizens
A Bowl of Egg Fried Rice	Remember to take care of every bite of your food	The daughter recalls her mother’s love for herself, reflecting the greatness of maternal love.	“We always feel grateful to the person who gave us a bowl of rice, but we are overly harsh on the person who has been in charge of our food for over a decade.”
Unknown Hero	Believe in doing good deeds	The protagonist silently does good deeds, reflecting his self-worth.	“Giving is happier than receiving.”
Violent Landlady	Don’t judge others solely based on the side of the story you see; create a better society with an open heart.	Advocate for people to understand the whole picture of things and approach things with a more inclusive heart.	“I won’t comment on the whole picture of an unknown matter, but the most difficult thing is to know if what I know is the whole picture, so don’t easily judge others.”
Make a Little Effort.	Defeat yourself and make a little progress every day	Advocate a positive and upward attitude towards life.	“Effort always pays off!”
Dream Triggered by Bean Sprouts	Family education stimulates the infinite potential of learning	Emphasize the importance of parents teaching by example.	“Mother’s encouragement makes children full of confidence!”

4.1.2 Civilized Character Symbols

In the visual symbols of public service advertising, characters are the main constituent factor conducive to the advertising’s narrative presentation and emotional expression (Dessart, 2018). They promote the development of advertising narratives and strengthen the dissemination of emotions.

The character symbols in Thai public service advertising are superficial social roles and represent a particular class's social groups, cultural concepts, and social values (see Table 5). Character symbols include commoners, ordinary people, identities such as street vendors, shop owners, mothers, children, teachers, and some vulnerable groups such as beggars, poor people, and impoverished students. By focusing on these vulnerable groups, they can evoke sympathy and support from the public.

The selection of character symbols in Thai public service advertising is essential to their success. In an in-depth interview, interviewee A01 mentioned that "the selection of civilian characters in Thai public service advertisements and natural performances by non-professional actors allow audiences to emotionally resonate after watching." There are also unique character symbols, such as transgender individuals and autistic children. The advertisement "If I Were a Girl" tells the story of the protagonist (Tiffany, the runner-up of the 2017 Transgender Beauty pageant), who has been pursuing feminine beauty since childhood. When she reached university, she finally achieved her dream and became a transgender person. The advertising reflects their actual social reality. During the process of the protagonist becoming a transgender person, she encounters misunderstandings from her family. Ultimately, she finally receives her father's understanding and encouragement to fulfil her dream. The advertisement "Autistic Children and Teachers" tells the story of a teacher helping an autistic child learn through love and patience. This type of advertising provides social care for special character symbols.

In this case, as a character symbol, the teacher represents the teacher community and signifies Thailand's respect for knowledge and morality. These advertisements showcase the role of teachers both inside and outside the classroom, not only imparting knowledge but guiding students to learn how to be good people, reflecting the multiple symbolic meanings of teachers. For example, in the public service advertisement, "Death Is Not the End, but Another Continuation," the role of a teacher goes beyond traditional teacher responsibilities and becomes a guide for students' emotions and morals. This expression not only expresses teachers' love for their selfless dedication to students but also reflects the expectations and respect of the Thai nation towards teachers. In addition, the scene of the Teacher Worship Festival further strengthens the cultural and social significance of teacher character symbols, and students kneel and bow to teachers, reflecting

Thailand's tradition of respecting teachers and valuing education (Bunwirat & Crocco, 2019).

Table 5. Figure Symbol Analysis Table for Typical Cases of Thai Public Service Advertising

Advertising Cases	Character Symbols	Advertising Content Display	Cultural Symbols
Violent Landlady	Landlady	A reversal plot where the surface is fierce but kind.	Thailand's culture of compassion and helping others.
If Give Me One Billion to Give Up You	Principal	Resist the temptation of wealth and persist in running schools.	Thailand values education and the selfless dedication of educators.
Pineapple Popsicle and Dreams Triggered by Bean Sprouts	Mother	Strive for self-improvement in adversity and have a positive impact on children.	Emphasize the values of family education.
Unknown Hero	Worker	Be kind and generous, even if the economy is not prosperous, willing to help others.	The benevolence and generosity in Buddhist culture.

4.1.3 Scene Symbols with Local Characteristics

Scene symbols are visual symbols that are essential background for storytelling. In a particular social and cultural context, a specific scene is given a specific meaning, and this “scene” becomes a “symbol” (Wu, 2019).

In the in-depth interview, interviewee A03 mentioned that “Thai public service advertising is easy to understand; even if you don’t understand Thai, you can understand the content of the advertising through scenes and non-verbal symbols.” This highlights that in Thai public service advertising, the selection and application of symbols can enhance the overall communication effect of the advertising. In Thai public service advertisements, scene symbols often comprise life scenes or natural scenes, which are closely related to daily life and have specific social significance, providing a social background for advertising narration. This scene can be divided into several categories: life, educational, sports, and digital/technological.

Firstly, life scenes are the foundation of Thai society. For example, the scene symbols displayed in “Pineapple Popsicle” include low-income family environments, noisy markets, snack stalls, traditional cross-legged dining

tables, etc., reflecting daily life and Thai society's elemental composition and cultural characteristics. As mentioned by interviewee C03, scenes in Thai public service advertisements usually are places with Thai characteristics. Moreover, these scenes showcase the attitudes of Thai society towards poverty, family, and life wisdom by showcasing families' economic situation and lifestyle. The advertising conveys to the audience that even with limited living conditions, success can still be achieved through hard work. The scene symbols reveal Thai society's importance placed on and emotions about effort, wisdom, family, and maternal love (Buriyameathagul, 2013).

Secondly, educational scenes include schools and classrooms, while sports scenes include football fields, playgrounds, etc., which also carry critical symbolic meanings. The scenes such as school, football field, and home in "A Little Effort" not only serve as crucial stages for the growth of young boys but also imply that education and sports are the keys to their growth. These scenes are not only physical environments but also symbols of children's learning, growth, and realizing their dreams. Through these scenes, the critical value of hard work and family support in personal growth in Thai culture is conveyed (Deveney, 2005).

Similarly, social media and violent scenes, as shown in the advertising "Violent Landlady", remind people of the influence of public opinion and the importance of information authenticity in the information society. These scenes also reflect Thai society's reflection on the information age and contemplation on online morality (Guzzetti, 2015).

Thai public service advertising scenes are realistic, natural, and down-to-earth, hence manage to convince people. In the in-depth interview, interviewee D01 also mentioned, "Due to Thailand's economic strength, there won't be too much budget to produce advertising, but the most authentic side will be presented in the advertising, such as the scenes of the lower-level personnel in 'Unknown Hero'."

4.2 Analysis of Auditory Symbols in Thai Public Service Advertising

Sound is also a way of disseminating information, playing a promoting role in expressing emotions and plot development. The auditory symbols in film and television advertising refer to all the sound elements that can be heard in the advertisement (Pirhonen & McAllister, 2006). They have a wide range, including monologue, dialogue, narration, sound effects, background music,

etc. Tavassoli and Lee (2003) argue that “the addition of auditory elements can complement visual factors and work together with the sensory system to promote the expression of plot.” Auditory and visual symbols construct the narrative structure of an advertisement, which strengthens the ideas and emotions expressed. Auditory symbols can compensate for the shortcomings of film and television images, ensure the completeness of the narrative, enhance the content of advertising stories and promote the development of the plot (Liao, 2010). As stated by S. Li (2007), whether it is monologues, dialogues, or background music, they are indispensable tools in film and television. They can convey the ideas of characters, save production costs, and accurately disseminate information.

4.2.1 The Role of Dialogue in Shaping Characters

Dialogue is the conversation between two or more actors (Fedotova, 2023) speaking in an advertising scene. In the advertising “If I Give Up You One Billion”, a combination of the female principal’s self-narration and dialogue from other characters showcases a student-centred and resilient teacher image. The auditory symbols here emphasize educators’ dedication to education and reflect Thai society’s respect towards educators.

The primary function of dialogue is to express the characters’ thoughts, emotions, and personality traits in advertising, thereby promoting the development of the story plot. For example, the advertising “Dreams Triggered by Bean Sprouts” showcases a girl’s encouragement and support from her mother through auditory symbols in dialogue, thus striving to achieve her dreams. Similarly, in the advertising “Strive a Little”, the character dialogue also showcases the little boy’s mother not giving up, encouraging him to “improve a little bit every day”. With his mother’s encouragement, the boy was greatly encouraged and persisted in training, ultimately achieving good results (see Table 6).

**Table 6. Dialogue of Characters in Thai Public Service advertising
 “Make a Little Effort”**

Character	Character Dialogue	Scene
Mom	Coach, how did M perform?	
	M? Oh, he showed great determination.	
	But his foundation is not very good.	
Coach	His heading technique is basically zero.	Football Stadium Reception Hall
	Let’s observe more days, shall we?	
	Sorry.	
	I talked to your coach today.	
	He said you have been working hard all along.	
Mom	Before that, you wouldn’t even know how to use your head to head the ball.	Home
	But you can do it now and then.	
	Try a little harder.	
	Just a little touch is enough.	
Mom	Does it hurt?	Football field
Son	I can’t catch up with others.	Football field
	It’s okay	
Mom	Just strive to surpass the person right in front of you.	Football field
	Just a little bit is enough.	

4.2.2 The Expressive Role of Monologues in Advertising

Inner monologue refers to an actor expressing their inner thoughts in a self-explanatory manner (Frobenius, 2014), and in advertising, monologues often blend with the visuals. For example, in the advertising “Strive a Little”, the mother’s inner monologue not only provides the audience with background information about the protagonist’s son practicing ball, it allows the audience to understand the mother’s thoughts, saves narrative time, and also shows the audience the image of a mother who pays for the child and cares about his growth. It promotes the development of the story plot, and shapes the character image of a persistent mother and a son who strives for progress (see Table 7).

Table 7. Inner Monologues of Characters in Thai Public Service Advertising “Strive a Little”

Characters	Inner Monologue	Scene
Mom	Am I the worst mom in history?	Football field
	Am I telling him a lie?	Home
	Am I harming him?	
	I may not be the best mother.	
	I don’t want my child to always get first place.	Football field
	I just hope he can surpass me every day. Just a little by myself.	

4.2.3 The Role of Narration in Advertising Narrative

Voiceover adds richness and depth to the narrative of advertising. As a frequently used narrative technique in public service advertising, it often manifests as a first-person “self-narration” or a third-person narration of a story or event (Niroula, 2023), adding emotion and depth to advertising. Moreover, adding voiceovers gives people a visual sense of dialogue with the audience, achieving good communication between the advertising and the audience (Medrado, Ferreira, & Behlau, 2005).

The advertising for “Unknown Hero” uses auditory symbols to highlight the advertising theme: believing in kindness through narration. The narration conveys profound life philosophy and emphasizes the different pursuits of material and spiritual pursuits, resonating with the audience (see Table 8).

Table 8. Voiceover for the Public Service Advertising “Unknown Hero”

Lens	Voiceover
The protagonist quietly leaves after delivering bananas to the elderly lady who lives alone, and the old lady opens the door.	What will he gain if he does it every day?
The protagonist eats, feeds chickens, worships Buddha, and waters flowers at home.	He didn’t gain anything, didn’t become wealthier, didn’t appear on TV, and still remained nameless.
The flowers on the street, with his help, bloomed new flowers. He helped the street vendor push the cart and helped him wear a hat.	It hasn’t become more famous either.
The protagonist was moved to tears when he saw the sponsored little girl successfully enrolling in school.	Because what he gains is emotions.
The protagonist smiled on his face after giving the puppy chicken legs.	Seeing happiness.

Lens	Voiceover
The protagonist is eating bananas at home.	Can understand.
The old lady who gave bananas to the protagonist took the initiative to hug him.	Get love.
The master princess moved the smiling faces of the elder sister, who gave up her seat and the beggar who received his support.	Get things that money cannot buy.
Watered plants bloom beautiful flowers. The begging daughter teaches her mother knowledge.	Get a more beautiful world.
Butterflies perched on flowers. Beautiful sunset scenery.	What is your greatest pursuit in life?
The logo of Thai life insurance	Believe in doing good deeds.

4.2.4 The Role of Sound Effects in Character Development

Sound effects can render the atmosphere of the camera and enhance realism (Mott, 2014). For example, in the advertisement “A Bowl of Egg Fried Rice,” the sound effects and symbols of fried rice and the proprietress of the snack stand make the girl who runs away from home feel warm at home and remind her of her mother’s preparation of three meals for herself year after year. In the advertisement “Violent Landlady,” various auditory symbols such as a dog barking and falling scales add a tense atmosphere to the advertising. The use of sound makes the advertisement more realistic, promotes the development of the plot, and allows the audience to better empathize with the landlady, understand her inner goodness and the virtue of helping others, and promote the audience to re-interpret this character (see Table 9).

Table 9. Sound Effects of Public Service Advertising “Violent Landlady”

Lens	Sound Object	Sound Effects
Car driving into the camera (from afar)	Car audio system	Whoosh
Boss and subordinates (close-up)	Automobile	Brake
Boss getting out of the car (close shot)	Automobile	Bang
Dogs in the Market (Panorama)	Dog	Wang
The sound of a vendor opening coconuts (close shot)	Knife opening a coconut	Pup
The sound of the boss lady throwing the scale (far view)	The scale falling to the ground	Pa Pa
The sound of netizens typing (close shot)	Keyboard	Pi Li Pa La

4.3 Thai Public Service Advertising Symbol Strategy and its Effect Analysis

4.3.1 The Role of Symbol Application in Thai Public Service Advertising

The positive impact of using symbols in advertising is that it enhances the effectiveness of advertising (Gentry & Holland, 1997). Research has shown that consumers or the public exhibit higher efficiency in recognizing and recalling certain symbols (Moazzam, 1967). Based on Robins (1971) contextual theory, it can be inferred that symbols in Thai public service advertising are not only simple images, text, and sound but also relate to specific cultural and linguistic contexts. As a country with a rich cultural heritage, the symbols in Thailand's public service advertising often contain the characteristics of Thailand's own culture, such as Buddhist culture, traditional festivals, moral concepts, etc.

The content of Thai public service advertising is not only related to the country's society and culture but also spreads universal values and social issues of concern to the public to evoke emotional resonance among the audience during dissemination. The narrative technique of Thai public service advertising often uses familiar visual and auditory symbols, using civilians as the protagonists and spreading public service concepts through story-based advertising. It is plain and natural, with delicate narrative techniques, and is skilled in using auditory symbols such as narration to provide emotional connections between advertising and audiences. This also suggests that Chinese public service advertising creators should deeply explore their cultural elements in content creation, combine universal values such as being kind to others and receiving good rewards, and use emotional narrative methods to strengthen the connection between advertising and audiences, thereby improving the persuasiveness and influence of public service advertising.

4.3.2 Factors Influencing the Successful Dissemination of Thai Public Service Advertising in China

The successful dissemination of Thai public service advertising in China may also be caused by similar social and cultural factors in the two countries. For example, China advocates "valuing peace", which is highly respected in Thailand and deeply influenced by Buddhist culture. Both countries attach great importance to respecting teachers and value morality, filial piety, truth, goodness, beauty, social responsibility, and altruistic

thinking for the sake of others (Shang, 2023). The creation of public service advertising is influenced by social culture and values, and it is precisely these similar cultural foundations that contribute to the further popularization of Thai public service advertising in China.

In disseminating public service advertisements, symbols can evoke emotional resonance among the audience and cross the boundaries of different countries. This study explores how to optimize Chinese public service advertising through the use of symbols so that it can have better dissemination effects on Chinese media platforms. Especially considering the cultural differences and similarities between China and Thailand, it is worth learning how to use symbols appropriately to achieve better communication effects.

4.3.3 The Cross-Border Communication Effect of Symbolized Application of Thai Public Service Advertising in China

O'Keefe and Reid (2020) believe that the effectiveness of public service advertising can be evaluated by its impact on the audience. Based on the audience's response, the effectiveness of public service advertising can be divided into three levels: cognition, attitude, and behaviour. Thus, in this section, we will analyse the dissemination effect of Thai public service advertisements in China and study the impact of public service advertising from three dimensions: cognitive effect, attitude effect, and behavioural effect.

Cognitive effects focus on the audience's understanding of advertising content, attitude effects evaluate the audience's perception of advertising content, and behavioural effects focus on the potential impact of advertising on audience behaviour. By qualitatively and quantitatively analysing comments on Bilibili from the chosen cases of Thai public service advertisements, in addition to using a questionnaire survey, feedback from the audience was obtained, and the advertising effectiveness was systematically evaluated.

The questionnaire design of this study includes not only essential individual items but also questionnaire measurement items to measure the audience's awareness, attitude, and behavioural effects towards Thai public service advertising. There are a total of 15 questions, using the Lister 5-point scale, with 1-5 representing "strongly disagree" "disagree" "average" "agree" and "strongly agree". After the questionnaire design was completed,

three experts and scholars in advertising were invited for evaluation to ensure the professionalism and accuracy of the content. These experts and scholars have rich research achievements in advertising, high academic standing, and rich knowledge and practical experience in advertising research methods. After their scrutiny, the survey author made modifications and improvements based on their suggestions.

Because the test subjects of the questionnaire are college students, this study adopted a comprehensive sample selection strategy to cover different cognitive perspectives. College students from different regions were selected, with ten students from each city. Considering the vast geographical area of China, six cities were chosen, resulting in a total sample size of 60 students. Additionally, four categories of disciplines were invited to cover the academic backgrounds of different disciplines, including literature and art, social sciences (including advertising), natural sciences, and applied sciences, with ten students selected from each field. Altogether, based on these criteria, about 100 college students were invited to conduct a preliminary survey to ensure the diversity and breadth of the sample, covering a more comprehensive range of viewpoints and cognitive differences. The survey content was modified and improved through testing and feedback. Finally, a formal survey questionnaire was determined to ensure the effectiveness and reliability of subsequent surveys.

After the questionnaire design and pre-survey processes were completed, the formal data collection process began. The data was collected through the online professional questionnaire survey website “Wenjuan.com”, which then forwarded the links and QR codes to social media such as WeChat and QQ. The official questionnaire data was collected from September 26, 2023, to November 10, 2023, with 541 questionnaires collected. After removing nine invalid samples, 532 questionnaires were collected, with a response rate of 98 per cent.

Next, a detailed statistical analysis was conducted on the data from the valid samples. The basic statistics of the effective samples are as follows: (1) 172 males, accounting for 32.3 per cent of respondents; 360 women, accounting for 67.7 per cent of respondents. (2) Most respondents (502) were young people aged 18-24, accounting for 94.4 per cent. (3) The education level was primarily undergraduate, with a total of 442 people, accounting for 83.1 per cent; 46 college students, accounting for 8.6 per cent; 41 people with a Master’s degree or above, accounting for 7.7 per cent. (4) Major:

79 people were majoring in advertising, accounting for 15 per cent; 453 students were from non-advertising majors, accounting for 85 per cent.

This survey focused on the views and reactions of young college students toward Thai public service advertising. Therefore, an attitude scale was designed, divided into three dimensions: cognitive, attitude, and behavioural effects. We specifically explored issues such as “the level of love for Thai public service advertising”, “the impact of Thai public service advertising on concepts and values”, “after watching public service advertising, it stimulates the audience’s inner truth, goodness, and beauty”, and “after watching public service advertising, it triggers a sense of responsibility”. After analysis, the reliability of this scale was a good 0.821.

(1) Cognitive Effect Analysis

There is a larger audience of young people with a higher level of acceptance and exploration of things at Bilibili. In addition, Thai public service advertising has high creativity and novelty, with high viewership, which makes them more likely to attract the attention of young people. Moreover, high-volume advertising is more likely to engage young audiences in discussions, thereby deepening the cognitive effects of advertising.

Of the three levels of advertising effectiveness, cognitive effectiveness is the first level achieved by advertising (Mehta, 2000). Cognitive effects focus on the audience’s perception and understanding of advertising information, including awareness, information, etc. (Olson, 1982). By analysing the comments on typical Thai public service advertising, we can understand the audience’s interpretation of public service advertising, and explore whether the advertising has successfully disseminated information, i.e. whether the audience has received the information conveyed in the advertising and learned new knowledge.

For example, public service advertisements such as “Giving is the Best Way to Communicate” and “Unknown Hero” generated enthusiastic discussion among netizens. A netizen mentioned their previous blood donation experience in a comment that resonated emotionally with the saying, “Giving is the Best Way to Communicate.” Another netizen expressed that every time he watched “Unknown Hero”, it moved him deeply. The advertisement successfully conveyed the message of love and dedication.

We further explored the awareness of Thai public service advertising in China through in-depth interviews. The respondents had a very similar view,

believing that Thai public service advertising attracts audience attention due to its exquisite narrative, warm stories, and touching character symbols. For example, interviewee B02 said, “Regarding dissemination effectiveness, there is no doubt that both Chinese people are talking about Thai advertising. Which country will achieve this? This has crossed national borders. The original target audience of Thai public service advertising was already willing to watch these advertising actively, and the impact on the audience is far-reaching. The effect of telling stories and slowly penetrating various values into the audience is very good.”

According to our survey data, 98.3 per cent of respondents reported having seen Thai public service advertising, which further proves the high awareness of Thai public service advertising in China, indicating that Thai public service advertising has been widely spread in China in recent years. According to the data, the audience watches these advertisements on TikTok, Bilibili, Weibo and other media platforms. This reflects the situation of young Chinese audiences using media platforms primarily and also means that these media platforms have played an essential role in promoting the dissemination of public service advertising in Thailand. It can be seen that the choice of media may also affect the audience’s acceptance and the effectiveness of an advertisement’s dissemination.

From the results of the questionnaire survey, among the 20 typical Thai public service advertising cases, the most popular one is “Violent Landlady”; the second and third are “Unknown Hero” and “A Bowl of Egg Fried Rice”, respectively. The number of votes for “What Value Gratitude Has for You” is 50, accounting for only 9.4 per cent, the lowest proportion indicating that the emotional resonance with the audience is not high. It can be seen that the popularity of each advertisement varies based on a combination of factors such as playback volume. It may also be related to the advertising content and target audience. In addition, other factors may affect the effectiveness of its dissemination, such as duration, themes, etc. Due to space limitations, these potential factors have not been further explored in this article.

When evaluating the cognitive effect of Thai public service advertising, “What is your overall impression of Thai public service advertising?” was used as an indicator for measurement. Through descriptive statistics of the data, the mean was 4.20 (see Table 10), indicating that the audience’s overall impression of Thai public service advertising is very good, i.e. that the audience widely recognizes the content of Thai public service advertising and

gives it a good evaluation. The positive evaluation may be due to the unique symbolic expression and narrative style of Thai public service advertising, which captivates the audience. Moreover, Thai public service advertisements resonate with the audience with its solid emotional elements. In addition, in terms of themes, paying attention to social hot issues can create a resonance between advertising content and the audience’s sense of responsibility.

Table 10. Statistical Table of Questionnaire Survey Description

	N	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
Q7 What is your overall impression of Thai public service advertising?	532	2	5	4.20	0.682
Q9 How much do you agree with my view that I like Thai public service advertising?	532	1	5	3.75	0.855
Q10 Does Thai public service advertising have an impact on your beliefs and values?	532	1	5	3.8698	0.69022
Q11 How much do you agree with the idea that Thai public service advertising is creative?	532	1	5	4.02	0.786
Q12 Thai public service advertising can inspire my inner truth, goodness, and beauty.	532	1	5	3.7970	0.72885
Q13 Thai public service advertising can evoke a sense of responsibility in my heart.	532	1	5	3.82	0.743
Valid N (list status)	532				

(2) Attitude Effect Analysis

The attitude effect refers to the audience’s inner evaluation and psychological and emotional response to a specific dissemination of information after receiving it, as well as the possible changes in viewpoints or emotions that may arise (Nicolas Hamelin 2017).

The attitude effect is also significant in advertising communication. Thai public service advertising has gained love from audiences on Chinese video websites and has left a deep impression. Most audiences express their passion for the advertisement content and actively share their opinions in the comment section. The comments show that most of the audience’s

acceptance and liking of Thai public service advertising reflects their identification with the advertising. Through analysis, it can be concluded that the reasons why audiences like Thai public service advertising include creativity, production quality, and the positive values conveyed.

The comments on the advertisement “Unknown Hero” sparked praise from netizens, who have said “Thai advertising is great” and “Thai advertising is heartwarming”. In the advertisement “A Bowl of Egg Fried Rice”, netizens commented: “I heard from my teacher that all Thai TV stations are better looking at advertising than TV dramas, so the advertising is very long, and the audience will have no objection.” In the advertisement “Dreams Caused by Bean Sprouts”, a netizen commented, “This story is a real story, it’s really good. It demonstrates the power of family education, making such a story into advertising for everyone to benefit together. We should also learn from this example.” In the advertisement review, it can be seen that the advertisement triggers the audience’s thinking and generates positive emotional feedback. For some audiences, the content in the advertising resonates emotionally with their actual experiences, leading them to develop new perspectives on specific aspects of life.

Our questionnaire survey also confirmed the popularity of Thai public service advertising among Chinese audiences. When asked, “What is your overall impression of Thai public service advertising?” up to 85.6 per cent of respondents gave positive feedback. In the option “Your level of agreement with the viewpoint of ‘I like Thai public service advertising’”, 64.5 per cent of the survey respondents expressed liking Thai public service advertising. These data demonstrate that most respondents are positive toward Thai public service advertising.

In the in-depth interviews, the respondents generally held similar views and highly evaluated the dissemination effect of Thai public service advertising in China, especially their clever narrative techniques, attractive storylines, and thought-provoking civilian character images. For example, interviewee A01 mentioned, “The dissemination effect of Thai public service advertising is very good. I often search for Thai video public service advertising online when preparing for classes. I noticed that these advertisements’ comment areas are full of praise, and many netizens expressed envy for Thailand’s ability to produce such excellent public service advertising. I have also used Thai public service advertising in the classroom as teaching materials multiple times.”

In terms of evaluating the attitude and effectiveness of Chinese audiences towards Thai public service advertising, we measured the degree of liking for Thai public service advertising and conducted descriptive statistics on the data, with a mean of 3.75 (see Table 10), indicating that young audiences hold a relatively positive attitude towards the viewpoint of “I like Thai public service advertising”. This positive attitude may be due to the cultural similarities between China and Thailand and the unique creativity and narrative techniques of Thai public service advertising (Punyapiroje & Morrison, 2002). This score reflects the acceptance of Thai public service advertising by Chinese audiences and inspires the production of Chinese public service advertising.

The option “Your level of agreement with the idea of ‘Thailand’s public service advertising creativity is good’” achieved a mean of 4.02 (see Table 10). This indicates that most of the audience believes that Thai public service advertising has good creativity and also suggests a good fit between Thai advertising and the concepts of Chinese audiences, which subsequently provides positive feedback for the dissemination of Thai public service advertising in China. Usually, captivating narrative techniques are used, combined with emotionally resonant storylines, which provide a reference for developing public service advertising in China.

A cross-analysis was conducted on the two questions: “Your level of agreement with the idea that ‘Thai public service advertising is creative’” and “Please describe the specific actions you took after watching Thai public service advertising.” The chi-square test showed a P-value of 0.004, less than 0.05 (see Table 11). There is a clear correlation between the overall positive impression of Thai public service advertising and the specific actions the survey respondents plan to take after watching Thai public service advertising. This may mean that the creativity of Thai public service advertising has touched the audience, inspiring them to take specific practical actions, further demonstrating the close connection between the emotional response and behavioural effects of Thai public service advertising.

Table 11. Chi-Square Test Table for Options “Your Level of Agreement with the Idea that ‘Thai public Service Advertising are Creative’” and “Please Describe the Specific Actions You Took after Watching Thai Public Service Advertising”

	Value	Df	Progressive Sig (Bilateral)
Pearson Chi-Square	410.084 ^a	336	0.004
Likelihood Ratio	304.422	336	0.891
N in Valid Cases	532		

a. The expected count for cell 404 (95.1%) is less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

To further explore the effectiveness of Thai public service advertising in China, the research for this article breaks down acceptance and perception into two measurable indicators: audience impression of advertising and audience liking of advertising, measured across a Lister 5-level attitude scale on questions Q7 for “Overall impression of Thai public service advertising” and Q9 for “Liking Thai public service advertising” (1-5 representing “strongly disagree—strongly agree”). At the same time, this article examines the degree of advertising effectiveness achieved by Thai public service advertising, designing three relevant indicators: “Impact on audience views and values Q10”, “Inspiration of audience inner truth, goodness and beauty Q12”, and “Inspiration of audience social responsibility Q13”.

This study conducted chi-square tests on the relationships between Q7 and Q10 and Q9 and Q10. The results showed that the P-values were all 0, significantly lower than the 0.01 level. Different levels of audience perception of the overall impression of Thai public service advertising and their liking for it would lead to different advertising effects (varying degrees of influence on audience views and values). This indicates that the better the audience’s impression of Thai public service advertising, or the more the audience likes Thai public service advertising, the greater the impact on the audience’s views and values.

At the same time, this study conducted chi-square tests on the relationship between Q7 and Q12, Q13, and the relationship between Q9 and Q12, Q13. The results showed that the P-values were all $0 < 0.01$, indicating a significant relationship between the audience’s perception of Thai public service advertising and the stimulating effect of advertising on the audience’s truth, goodness, beauty, and social responsibility. The better the audience’s impression of Thai public service advertising, or the more

the audience likes Thai public service advertising, the higher the degree to which advertising stimulates the audience's inner truth, goodness, beauty, and social responsibility.

Through analysis, it can be found that the degree of influence on the audience's views and values is a mediating variable, which means that the audience's acceptance and perception of public service advertising may require some intermediary processes to ultimately stimulate the audience's inner truth, goodness, and beauty, and stimulate their sense of social responsibility. The audience's exposure and perception of Thai public service advertising will first affect their values. When values have a more profound impact, they may further stimulate their inner truth, goodness, and beauty, stimulating their sense of social responsibility (O'Shaughnessy, 2002).

(3) Analysis of Behavioural Effects

The goal of advertising is not only to disseminate information but, more importantly, to promote specific behavioural changes in the audience (Vakratsas & Ambler, 1999). Thai public service advertising often focuses on ordinary people, showcasing the principles of life through them. Their themes are primarily about transmitting truth, goodness, beauty, and positive energy. Studying the feedback of advertising audiences, such as comments on video website advertising, and exploring the strategic awareness behind Thai public service advertising is an effective method to understand advertising effectiveness. For example, some netizens said that after watching the advertisements "Violent Landlady" and "A Bowl of Egg Fried Rice", they had a new understanding of society's public opinion as well as their own relationships with their families, and prompted them to change and think about their willingness to act. For example, in the comment section of the advertisement "If I Were to Give Up You One Billion", a netizen suggested, "As a future teacher of the people, I hope I can also truly love education." Another netizen mentioned, "I graduated from a normal university this year and strive to become a good teacher in teaching and educating people." It is consistent with the message conveyed in the advertisement of love and respect for education, and is compatible with Bandura and Walters' (1977) social learning theory, which states that learning is achieved by observing the behaviour of others, also known as "observational learning".

On the aspect of behavioural effects of Thai public service advertising on Chinese audiences, this study evaluated the degree of agreement with the view that “watching Thai public service advertising can trigger a sense of social responsibility in my heart”. A score of 3.82 was obtained using descriptive statistical methods (see Table 10). Most of the audience believes that watching Thai public service advertising can evoke a sense of social responsibility. This score demonstrates the emotional and social appeal of Thai public service advertising, indicating that Thai public service advertising not only gains audience recognition in creativity but also achieves significant results in encouraging people to take on social responsibility. Behind this score is the deep reflection of Thai public service advertising on local culture and social values. It effectively conveys public service information through attractive storylines and audiovisual symbolic effects, arousing the audience’s sense of identification.

In terms of practical actions, our survey further reveals the actual impact. According to the survey, 51.3 per cent of respondents said they would share their favourite advertisements with friends or family after watching Thai public service advertising, indicating that well-designed public service advertising can resonate with the audience and spread to acquaintances. Sharing behaviour is an important symbol of audience emotional resonance and a link in the dissemination process. In addition, 47.2 per cent of people will post comments or reposts on social media, which suggests that in addition to the quality of production in advertisements, how to encourage audience interaction is also an important factor to consider. 36.7 per cent of people said that after watching Thai public service advertising, they would reconsider their lifestyle habits or attitudes. 35.3 per cent of the survey respondents stated that they will pay more attention to relevant general welfare organizations and activities, and 32.5 per cent of people will actively guide those around them. The above data once again proves the potential impact of Thai public service advertising.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Theoretical Contributions

Firstly, the paper analyses the application of symbols in Thai public service advertising from a semiotic perspective and its dissemination to China effect. In the existing research field of Thai public service advertising, most of the

focus is on the creativity and narrative techniques of advertising. However, this study found that Thai public service advertising has successfully attracted the attention of Chinese audiences and resonated emotionally through visual and auditory symbols. It provides a new research perspective and approach for disseminating public service advertising. In addition, this study enriches the theoretical exploration of semiotics and provides literature support for subsequent discussions.

Secondly, this study provides a detailed analysis of the dissemination effects of Thai public service advertising in China at three levels: cognitive effects, attitude effects, and behavioural effects, providing a detailed framework for subsequent advertising research. Cross-national cultural dissemination is a hot topic, and how to effectively improve the dissemination effect of cross-border advertising is one of the academic research focuses. This study provides a specific method to provide theoretical support for achieving the dissemination effect of public service advertising in different cultural backgrounds.

5.2 Practical Contributions

Firstly, this study provides valuable references for advertising creators and advertising companies. Being adept at using symbols through meaningful textual symbols, vivid and positive character symbols, appropriate and distinctive scene symbols, and appropriate auditory symbols can enhance the audience's understanding of advertising. Moreover, when these symbols align with the audience's values, they can improve positive emotional responses and enhance the persuasiveness of the advertising. This helps advertisers consciously create content and improve the effectiveness of advertising dissemination.

Secondly, through qualitative and quantitative research, this study found that Thai public service advertising has a better dissemination effect in China than other Asian countries, influenced by the wide recognition Thai public service advertising receives and the study's findings that they can spread truth, goodness, and beauty, arouse the audience's sense of responsibility, and the audience will take positive actions after watching public service advertising. Moreover, through symbols, Thai public service advertising provides excellent inspiration for Chinese public service advertising in terms of advertising production and emotional resonance. It may also bring some inspiration to other countries in the creation and dissemination of public

service advertising. The study also found that audiences will spread their favourite advertisements to people around them or will interact on social platforms. Therefore, it is also necessary to consider enhancing audience interaction in disseminating advertising.

6. Shortcomings and Prospects of Research

Although we have gained valuable experience from the successful strategies of Thai public service advertising, this study still has certain limitations. Judging the effect of Thai public service advertising only by the case and data of the Bilibili platform, there is a certain degree of one-sidedness, and subsequent research will select platform data such as TikTok as a supplement. In addition, cultural differences and social development processes between China and Thailand may affect research on strategies. Further research is needed in cross-cultural advertising strategy research, data collection, and other areas for future research.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that Chinese producers of public service advertising pay more attention to the selection and use of symbols when creating and combining China's national conditions, society, and culture to produce higher quality and more widely disseminated public service advertising. Future research can also creatively integrate the successful experiences of other developed countries in public service advertising while respecting and preserving their own culture and characteristics to enrich the development path of Chinese public service advertising.

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