Metaphorical Concepts of the Current Education System in Thailand

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Abstract

The present study draws upon Conceptual Metaphor Theory, its findings revealing the core concepts of the current education system in Thailand. The data is gathered from fourteen handbooks concerning quality assurance in education published on the website of the Bureau of Higher Education Standards and Evaluation, Office of the Higher Education Commission and the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence; website of Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. The results show that students are metaphorically understood as customers, products, business persons, resources, and engines; instructors as engines and artisans; and academic institutions as service industry organizations, producers, engines, depositories of wisdom, and combat units. The engine metaphor is found in every element of the education system, reflecting the fact that the Thai education system tries its best to develop people in order to ensure they can remain up-to-date with contemporary trends and function effectively in a highly competitive global environment. Moreover, the study sheds light on the effects of the "student-as-customer" metaphor, one which

	may cause a deterioration in students' creativity and enthusiasm as well as in the quality of student-instructor relationships.

Introduction

Thailand's first national education plan was implemented in 1932. The twelfth national education plan, currently in force, was developed in order to keep up with the current social, cultural, and political environment inside the country as well as changes in the broader global society. The importance of quality assurance in the field of education was highlighted for the first time in the National Education Act B.E. 2542 and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002)), which includes a chapter on educational standards and quality assurance in Thai education. The Act defines "educational standards" as specifications of educational characteristics, quality desired, and proficiency required of all educational institutions. They serve as guidelines for achieving equivalency in enhancement and monitoring, checking, evaluation, and quality assurance in the field of education. A definition of "quality assurance" as assessment and monitoring of the educational quality and standards of the institutions, which comprises both internal and external quality assurance, is also provided in the Act (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003, pp. 2-3). To comply with the Act, academic institutions are required to conduct an assessment of their quality assurance systems in order to ensure the achievement of the desired quality as well as to stimulate further improvement in quality and standards. Such outcomes assist institutions in gaining the acceptance and confidence of current and prospective students as well as members of the public in relation to their capacity to produce quality graduates to meet the country's needs.

The criteria and procedures for enhancing, supporting, and developing both the internal and external quality assurance processes for Thailand's higher education institutions were devised by the Committee for the Quality Assurance. However, it is noticeable that in the quality assurance handbooks, students are referred to as "customers." Such usage may result in the concept of "students-as-customers" emerging in Thai society. If this is the case, such a concept would reflect current changes occurring throughout the entire education system in Thailand. It is known that Thai society values the teaching profession. There is a

saying: "Teachers are second parents." Teacher's Day is also celebrated every year in order to permit students to express their gratitude toward teachers. The highlight of the ceremony is the presentation of trays of flowers arranged by students and the recitation of a traditional poem dedicated to teachers.

As students are a part of the education system, if they were compared with customers, instructors and academic institutions, which are also parts of the education system, might be compared with other concepts as well. And if such comparisons were made, some metaphors used to refer to these elements may relate to each other, for example, the metaphors of students as customers and of instructors as sellers. This research aims to study concepts in contemporary Thai education by analyzing linguistic evidence. In order to fulfil the aims of this study, metaphorical expressions used to refer to elements of education are investigated within the framework of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to reveal concepts emerging from the language used in quality assurance handbooks that may affect the development of educational quality.

Background

Thai education and the quality assurance system

After the National Education Act 1999 came into effect, the Office of the Higher Education Commission (formerly known as the Ministry of University Affairs), as the governing authority of higher education institutions, suggested quality assurance guidelines for consideration by the Cabinet. The Cabinet approved the guidelines, announcing systems, regulations, methods, and measures for internal quality assurance in higher education institutions in 2002. Internal quality assurance has been conducted in higher education institutions since then (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2014).

The quality assurance process was developed to help higher education institutions achieve four main missions: produce graduates, conduct research, provide academic services to society, and preserve arts and culture. Higher education institutions are required to meet quality assurance standards, due to both internal and external factors. Internal factors include the promulgation of the National Education Act of 1999 (Second Amendment in 2002), the announcement of Higher Education

Standards in 2006 by the Commission on Higher Education, and the announcement of the Thai Qualification Framework for Higher Education of 2009 by the Ministry of Education. The Higher Education Standards and the Thai Qualification Framework for Higher Education require higher education institutions to maintain education standards in order to gain the confidence of society by showing that they can produce capable graduates, develop a body of knowledge to compete with international institutions, provide opportunities for the participation of stakeholders, and create transparency and accountability according to the principles of good governance. The main external factor is globalization, particularly the establishment of the ASEAN community, which necessitates the mobility of students and graduates, and the provision of cross-border educational services. In a globalized environment, guarantees of educational quality are essential.

The higher education institutions apply nine indicators for internal assessment, covering input, processes, and output/outcomes. These indicators are: (1) philosophy, commitments, objectives, and implementation plans; (2) graduate production; (3) student development activities; (4) research; (5) academic services to the community; (6) the preservation of arts and culture; (7) administration and management; (8) finance and budgeting; and (9) systems and mechanisms for quality assurance. After the higher education institutions have completed their internal quality evaluations, they are required to submit annual internal quality assessment reports to the institutions' councils and the public. These reports, known as Self-Assessment Reports (SARs), contain the results of the internal quality assurance evaluations. (Office of Higher Education Commission, 2008b, 2014).

Education Criteria for Performance Excellence (EdPex)

Since 2002, Thai education has also applied the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence in order to reinforce the quality assurance system. The criteria were developed with reference to the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, and the National Institution of Standards and Technology (NIST), the United States Department of Commerce. The Baldrige Program is a member of the Global Excellence Model (GEM) Council, made up of the chief executives of national

excellence models and award programs throughout the world. The EdPex Criteria view students as key customers of the academic institutions.

In the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, the concept of excellence includes three components: (1) a well-conceived and well-executed assessment strategy; (2) year-to-year improvement in key measures and indicators of performance, especially the student learning; and (3) leadership in performance and improvements in performance relative to comparable organizations and appropriate benchmarks.

The requirements of the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence are embodied in seven categories: 1) leadership; 2) strategic planning; 3) customer focus; 4) measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; 5) workforce focus; 6) process management; and 7) results. The scoring system is divided into two evaluation dimensions: process and results. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009a).

Although the EdPex criteria are not mandatory, many higher institutions enthusiastically apply them, aiming to perform at the 'excellence' level, successfully compete with other institutions, and gain international acceptance.

Previous research on education-related metaphors

Cook-Sather (2003, as cited in Botha, 2009) notes two root metaphors concerning education: "education as production" and "education as cure". In the former metaphor, the academic institution is seen as a factory, the curriculum as a guideline for production, the student as raw material, teaching and learning as processes aimed at achieving efficient production, and teachers as factory workers and machines. In the latter metaphor, the academic institution is visualized as an institution charged with the task of diagnosing and curing the ills of the society, the teacher as a therapist, and students and members of society as sick patients in need of treatment. However, these two different metaphors lead to similar effects in the learning processes of students, both resulting in students being kept passive and controlled by teachers. She suggests that education must be guided by "life-affirmed creative metaphors" which enable students to explore and invent what they do not yet know. Examples that embody this approach includes concepts such as education as growth, learning as participation, and teacher as gardener.

Studies on education-related metaphors in Thai are limited to the study of metaphors used in Thai science textbooks (Wisanuvekin, 2007) and the study of instructors in Thai songs (Noyjarean, 2015). In Wisanuvekin's study, the researcher studied the characteristics and functions of metaphors used in thirty-seven Thai science textbooks used by high school students and undergraduate students. The study found various scientific concepts in the textbooks. The characteristics of the target domain of science metaphors were less concrete, more complicated, and more difficult to understand, while those of the source domain were more concrete, related to bodily experience, and easier to understand. The two main functions of metaphors in the science textbooks were ideational function, which refers to the communication of ideas, and textual function, which provides cohesion to facilitate the flow of discourse.

The study of instructor metaphors in Thai songs found that teachers were referred to metaphorically as illuminating objects, builders, moulds, and hired boats. These metaphors reflect Thai perceptions of teachers as knowledge providers, good role models, and individuals who can assist students and help them to succeed. However, the data used in this study was restricted to songs composed to praise teachers. The metaphors used definitely show the dedication of teachers and their determination to help their students. While the use of such metaphors might reflect the thinking of people in the past, many of whom praised this occupation, they may no longer align with the current views. It is, therefore, essential to examine what people today think about teachers, instructors, and other elements of the current education system.

Beside the two works mentioned above, no research exists concerning the use of education-related metaphors in the Thai context. What can be found, however, are studies concerning the desirable characteristics of teachers (Leawwarin, 2013; Sathtrukram, 2017; Siphai, 2019) and the development of teachers' attitudes towards good teacher characteristics (Jantarakantee, 2014).

Theoretical frameworks of Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Reviewing the quality assurance handbooks and those dealing the EdPex criteria, metaphors were found referring to elements of the

education system. Adopting the foundational assumption of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), metaphors are not a purely literary trope, but can also reflect cognition. This theoretical view of the metaphor is different from the traditional one, according to which the metaphor is considered an anomaly – an unusual and deviant way of using language. Its use is restricted to literature, rhetoric, and art. On the contrary, the cognitive view of metaphors that is applied in this study considers them an indispensable component of language and thought. (Goatly, 2000, pp. 1-2)

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claimed that metaphors are pervasive, that they occur in our speech in everyday life. They are not restricted to poetry or other types of rhetorical devices, but are used widely in our conversation without our awareness. Moreover, they are also considered as a tool to reflect our cognition. In this capacity, they are called 'conceptual metaphors.' Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 47) provide examples of the conceptual metaphor [IDEAS ARE PLANTS] as follows.

It will take years for that idea to come to *full flower*.

Mathematics has many *branches*.

The *seeds* of his great ideas were *planted* in his youth.

Kövecses (2010) elaborates on the way we understand conceptual metaphors, formulating a set of mappings or correspondences between two conceptual domains, a source domain and a target domain. He claims that a source domain is more concrete, and is derived from our bodily experiences, while a target domain is more abstract. The source domain is used to understand the target domain. Applying this explanation to the above examples, the source domain would be the plant and the target domain would be the idea. The mappings between elements of the target domain and the source domain in this case are: the reference to the development of ideas as the growth of plants; the description of subfields of ideas as branches of plants, origins of ideas as seeds of plants. The words and phrases that are used metaphorically are referred as 'metaphorical linguistic expressions' (italicized in the above examples). He also proposes the use of small capital letters to indicate concepts indicated through the use of metaphorical expressions. (p. 4)

The framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is used in this study because it aligns well with the study's objective: to reveal concepts

emerging from the language used in the quality assurance handbooks currently used by academic institutions throughout Thailand.

The study also applies the Metaphorical Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by Pragglejazz (2007), which provides the systematic methods for the identification of metaphorical linguistic expressions. The steps used in this process are as follows:

1. Read the entire text to understand the overall meaning.

2. Determine the lexical units in the text.

3. Determine the basic meaning of each lexical unit if it has other contexts than the present one. If the lexical unit has basic meanings in other contexts, decide whether the contextual meanings contrast with the basic meaning but can be understood by comparison with it.

4. If the contextual meanings of the lexical unit contrast with the basic meaning but can be understood by comparison with it, the lexical unit would be considered as a metaphorical linguistic expression.

Method

Data collection

The data used in this study is from handbooks for quality assurance in education published on the website of the Bureau of Higher Education Standards and Evaluation, the Office of the Higher Education Commission and a website administered by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Education Criteria for Performance Excellence. Fourteen handbooks were found: twelve on the former website and two on the latter one. All data in these handbooks is in Thai.

Procedure

For the purpose of this research, textual data was collected and analyzed. All data was systematically analyzed under the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and the Metaphorical Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by Pragglejazz (2007). Metaphorical expressions related to education used in the handbooks were identified and selected. To avoid one common criticism of metaphor analysis concerning subjectivity in the

interpretation process, the analysis was also triangulated by having another coder conduct checks in order to validate the results.

After analyzing the data according to the frameworks mentioned above, categorization of the concepts used to understand each element of the education system was undertaken.

Results

The research found that elements of the Thai education system were portrayed metaphorically. Details of metaphors concerning students, instructors, and academic institutions are presented below.

Student Metaphors

The findings reveal five conceptual metaphors used to refer to students: customers, products, business persons, resources, and engines.

[STUDENTS ARE CUSTOMERS]

The customer metaphor reflects the conceptual metaphor [STUDENTS ARE CUSTOMERS]. The metaphorical linguistic expressions used in this metaphor are "customers" and "service recipients".

Example 1

*สถาบันได้นำเทคโนโลยีใหม่ ๆ ความรู้ของสถาบัน ความเป็นเลิศด้านหลักสูตรและบริการ คุณค่าในมุมมองของ**ลูกค้า** และความคล่องตัวที่อาจจำเป็นต้องมี มาพิจารณาในการออกแบบหลักสูตร บริการ และกระบวนการเหล่านี้อย่างไร*

Translation: How do institutions incorporate new technology, their own knowledge, excellence in their programs and services, values in the eyes of **customers** and the agility which may be needed into their consideration when designing these programs, services, and processes? (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 49)

Example 2

*นิสิตนักศึกษาในฐานะ**ผู้รับบริการ**และเป็นผลผลิตที่สำคัญของสถาบันอุดมศึกษา และเป็นผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียโดยตรงของสถาบันอุดมศึกษา นับเป็นพลังสำคัญในการผลักดันให้งานประกันคุณภาพการศึกษามีประสิทธิภาพและประสิทธิผลมากขึ้น*

Translation: Students, as **service recipients**, important products, and direct stakeholders of the academic institutions, are an important

factor driving the quality assurance to be more effective and efficient. (Sub–Commission on Developing Components and Indicator for the Internal Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institution and Sub–Commission on Training to Promote the Internal Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institutions, 2009, p. Preface)

The set of mappings between the elements of the CUSTOMER conceptual domain to the elements of the STUDENT conceptual domain is STUDENTS AS CUSTOMERS, ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS SERVICE PROVIDERS, ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AS PRODUCTS OR SERVICES, and REGISTRATION FEE PAYMENTS AS AN EXCHANGES.

[STUDENTS ARE PRODUCTS]

Students are understood as products of the academic institutions. This is reflected in the use of the following metaphorical linguistic expressions: "products," "shape," "sharp," and "mould".

Example 3

อุดมศึกษาไทยในสองทศวรรษที่ผ่านมามีการขยายตัวเชิงปริมาณอย่างรวดเร็ว   มีผลต่อคุณภาพ **_ผลผลิต_** โดยเฉพาะที่เกี่ยวกับคุณภาพของบัณฑิต

Translation: Higher education in Thailand during the past two decades developed the quantitative expansion rapidly, affecting the quality of **products**, especially the quality of graduates. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2008a, p. 20)

Example 4

ไม่มีใครเกินหมอนี่ อาจารย์**_ปั้น_**อย่างไรถึง**_คม_**ขนาดนี้

Translation: There is no one better than this guy. How do the instructors **shape** him to be so **sharp**?" (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009b, p. 40)

Example 5

เวลาครูหมดแล้ว อนาคตของประเทศไทยทิ้งไว้กับผู้ที่เราจะ**_หลอหลอม_** คือผู้เรียน

Translation: Teachers are running out of time. The future of Thailand is left to those we are **moulding**, which are our students. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009b, p. 75)

The set of mappings between the elements of the PRODUCT conceptual domain to the elements of the STUDENT conceptual domain is STUDENTS AS PRODUCTS, INSTRUCTORS OR ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

AS PRODUCERS OR TECHNICIANS. A similar inference involved in the case of the conceptual metaphor [INSTRUCTORS AS ARTISANS] below.

[STUDENTS ARE BUSINESS PERSONS]

This conceptual metaphor is reflected in the use of the metaphorical linguistic expression "cost".

Example 6

สถาบันการศึกษาต้องสร้างให้นักศึกษามี**ต้นทุน**ที่ดีในตนเอง ประกอบด้วยการทำให้นักศึกษารู้จักและเข้าใจตนเอง การเสริมสร้างทักษะการเรียนรู้ ทักษะการแสวงหาความรู้ และทักษะการคิดเพื่อการเรียนรู้

Translation: The academic institutions must develop students to have a good <u>cost</u> in themselves by helping them know and understand themselves, and by enhancing their learning skills, knowledge-seeking skills, and learning-oriented thinking skills. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009b, pp. 138-139)

The set of mappings between the elements of the BUSINESS PERSONS conceptual domain to the elements of the STUDENT conceptual domain is STUDENTS AS BUSINESS PERSONS, KNOWLEDGE OR SKILLS GAINED FROM LEARNING AS COST, APPLYING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING A LIVING AS MAKING AN INVESTMENT.

[STUDENTS ARE RESOURCES]

Students are also understood as resources that are important for the organization to function effectively. This is shown in the use of the metaphorical linguistic expressions "resources" and "capital."

Example 7

โครงการบัณฑิตอุดมคติไทยได้รับการสนับสนุนและดำเนินการอย่างเป็นรูปธรรมตั้งแต่ปี 2540 เพื่อการเร่งรัด พัฒนาศักยภาพนิสิตนักศึกษาซึ่งเป็น**ทรัพยากร**บุคคลที่สำคัญยิ่งให้มีความรู้ควบคู่กับการมีคุณธรรมจริยธรรม

Translation: The Thai Ideal Graduates Program has been supported and been in operation in concrete form since 1997 to accelerate the development of students, who are important human <u>resources</u> to be equipped with both knowledge and morals. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2008a, p. 1)

Example 8

ระบบการศึกษาขาดพลังเพียงพอที่จะสร้างนักศึกษาให้เป็น**ทุน**มนุษย์ที่ดีและพลเมืองที่ดีของประเทศ

Translation: The education system lacks sufficient power to develop students into good human **capital** and good citizens of the country. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009b, p. 138)

The set of mappings between elements of the RESOURCE conceptual domain to the elements of STUDENT conceptual domain is STUDENTS AS RESOURCES, THE NATION AS THE USERS OR OWNERS OF SUCH RESOURCES.

[STUDENTS ARE ENGINES]

Engines are used to refer to students in the Thai education system through the use of the metaphorical linguistic expression "competency."

Example 9

ปัญหาคือทำอย่างไรบัณฑิตจึงจะมี***สมรรถนะ***ทางภาษา ทั้งภาษาไทยและภาษาสากลได้มาตรฐาน

Translation: The question is how to enable graduates to possess a standard level of **competency** in both Thai and international languages. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2008a, p. 19)

In Example 9, the original word "สมรรถนะ" in Thai literally means ability, specifically in relation to engines.

The set of mappings between the elements of the ENGINE conceptual domain to the elements of STUDENT conceptual domain is STUDENTS AS ENGINES, STUDENTS' ABILITY AS ENGINES' ABILITY.

Among five metaphors used to refer to students, three suggest inanimacy. The engine, product and resource metaphors portray the inactive and passive aspects of students, suggesting that they have no ability to think or feel. These metaphors also highlight the importance of instructors and academic institutions in developing and supporting students to acquire knowledge and skills at the standard level, as well as keeping them updated on rapid changes in order to help them survive. Those who gain benefits from the students' ability are the organizations hiring the graduates and the nation.

Instructor Metaphors

The findings show two metaphors being used for instructors, that of the instructor as engine and that of the instructor as artisan.

[INSTRUCTORS ARE ENGINES]

The concept of the engine is not only used metaphorically to refer to students, but also to refer to instructors. By this metaphor, the conceptual metaphor [INSTRUCTORS ARE ENGINES] is constituted. The metaphorical linguistic expression used in this metaphor is "competency."

Example 10

การพิจารณา*สมรรถนะ*ของอาจารย์ควรพิจารณาในภาพรวม   เป็นการส่งเสริมและสนับสนุนให้อาจารย์มี*สมรรถนะ*และประสิทธิภาพในการจัดการเรียนการสอน

Translation: Instructors' **competency** should be considered in the overall picture in order to support and promote instructors' **competency** and efficiency in teaching. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2018, p. 6)

The set of mappings between the elements of the ENGINE conceptual domain to the elements of the INSTRUCTOR conceptual domain is INSTRUCTORS AS ENGINES, INSTRUCTORS' TEACHING EFFICIENCY AS ENGINE'S ABILITY.

Although the Thai education sector conceptualizes students and instructors using the same metaphor, it perceives the abilities of these two parties differently. While students are expected to master languages to a standard level and keep up with changes, instructors are expected to teach efficiently.

[INSTRUCTORS ARE ARTISANS]

Instructors are also conceptualized as artisans by being compared to blacksmiths as seen in Example 11.

Example 11

นี่เป็นคำพูดของพระพุทธเจ้านะครับ   แต่พระเจ้าอยู่หัวเอามาเล่าให้ฟังว่า เหล็กเข้ามาก็ไม่มีอะไรหรอก เหมือนกับเด็กที่ไร้วินัย มันเป็นท่อนเหล็กไม่ได้มีคุณค่าอะไร แต่ถ้าผ่านเตาหลอม ผ่านความร้อนผ่านค้อนตีแต่งให้เป็นมีด ติดประดับด้ามเข้าไปให้เรียบร้อย ก็จะออกมามีคุณค่ามาก แต่ถ้าตีแล้วมันบิ่นมันแตกมันกระเด็นไป   ไม่เข้าร่อยรอยมือของ*ช่าง*ก็จะกลายเป็นเศษเหล็กก็ยิ่งค่าเสื่อมลงไปอีก   แต่ทั้งนี้ไม่ได้แปลว่าจะไปโทษแต่เหล็กอย่างเดียวต้องโทษ*ช่างตีเหล็ก*ด้วยว่ามีฝีมือหรือเปล่า

Translation: These are the words of Lord Buddha. However, His Majesty the King took them, stating that steel was worthless, like undisciplined children. As iron rods, they have no value. When heated in a furnace, fashioned by a hammer into knives with handles, they become of great value. If they spin off, splinter, or bounce away when hit by

blacksmiths, they might end up as scrap and of even less value. However, this doesn't mean that we should place all the blame on the steel. We must also question whether or not the blacksmiths possess expertise. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009b, pp. 41-42)

The set of mappings between the elements of the ARTISAN conceptual domain to the elements of the INSTRUCTOR conceptual domain is INSTRUCTORS AS ARTISANS, INSTRUCTORS' EXPERTISE AND TEACHING ABILITIES AS ARTISANS' SKILLS, and STUDENTS AS PRODUCTS CRAFTED BY ARTISANS.

This conceptual metaphor also emphasizes the inanimate nature of students. These inanimate objects become worthy and beneficial through the abilities of instructors to transfer knowledge and skills to them.

Academic institution metaphors

The findings show five metaphors used for academic institutions, service industry organizations, producers, engines, depositories of wisdom, and combat units.

[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE SERVICE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS]

Academic institutions are referred as service industry organizations through the use of the following linguistic expressions: "annual report," "cost," "customer, " "income, " "investment, " "loyalty," "market, " "marketing, " "market share, " "partner, " "product, " "risk management plan," "risk management system," "level of risk," "partner," "revenue," "stakeholders," "service," "service provider," "supply chain," and "competition".

Referring to academic institutions as service industry organizations suggests that the main function of academic institutions is to provide academic services. They also undertake management-related activities, namely academic affairs administration, teaching management, risk management, cost control, marketing management, activities promoting student loyalty and engagement, and the production of annual reports as shown in the following examples.

Example 12

อธิบายวิธีการที่สถาบันใช้ใน<u>**การควบคุมต้นทุน**</u> บริหาร<u>**ห่วงโซ่อุปทาน**</u> ทำให้สถานที่ ทำงานมีความปลอดภัย มีการเตรียมพร้อมรับภาวะฉุกเฉินที่อาจเกิดขึ้น

Translation: Explain the methods that the institutions use to <u>control costs</u>, administer the <u>supply chain</u>, make the workplace safe, and prepare to deal with possible emergencies. (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 51)

Example 13

เพื่อให้สถาบันอุดมศึกษามี<u>**ระบบบริหารความเสี่ยง**</u> โดยการบริหารและควบคุมปัจจัย กิจกรรมและกระบวนการดำเนินงานที่อาจเป็นมูลเหตุของความเสียหาย (ทั้งในรูปของตัวเงินหรือไม่ใช่ตัวเงิน เช่น ชื่อเสียงและการฟ้องร้องจากการไม่ปฏิบัติตามกฎหมายระเบียบข้อบังคับประสิทธิภาพ ประสิทธิผล หรือ ความคุ้มค่า) เพื่อให้<u>**ระดับความเสี่ยง**</u>และขนาดของความเสียหายที่จะเกิดขึ้นอยู่ในระดับที่ยอมรับและควบคุมได้

Translation: In order [to ensure] that academic institutions have <u>risk management systems</u> for the administration and control of factors, activities, and work processes which may cause damage (in both monetary and non-monetary forms, such as [damage to] reputation and claims resulting from failures to act in accordance with legal requirements concerning effectiveness, efficiency or worthiness) in order to maintain the <u>level of risk</u> and the extent of damage at an acceptable and controllable level. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2011, p. 86)

Example 14

เป้าประสงค์ที่สำคัญที่สุดของวัตถุประสงค์เชิงกลยุทธ์เหล่านั้นมีอะไรบ้าง มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงสำคัญใดที่สถาบันได้วางแผนไว้ (หากมี) ในด้านหลักสูตรและ<u>**บริการ ลูกค้า**</u>และ<u>**ตลาด ผู้ส่งมอบ**</u>และ<u>**คู่ความร่วมมืออย่างเป็นทางการ**</u> และการปฏิบัติการของสถาบัน

Translation: What are the most important goals of these strategic objectives? Are there any important changes that institutions have planned (if any) in relation to aspects of their programs, <u>services</u>, <u>customers</u>, <u>markets</u>, <u>suppliers</u>, <u>partners</u> and operations? (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 21)

Example 15

การจะทำให้มั่นใจได้ว่าจะมีความสำเร็จอย่างต่อเนื่อง ต้องมีการจัดการความไม่แน่นอนในสภาพแวดล้อม และการสร้างความสมดุลระหว่างความต้องการระยะสั้นของ<u>**ผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสีย**</u>กับความจำเป็นใน<u>**การลงทุน**</u>เพื่อความสำเร็จระยะยาวของ<u>**ผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสีย**</u>และของสถาบัน

Translation: In order to be confident of continued success, uncertainty in the environment must be managed, and a balance must be

achieved between the short-term demands of **stakeholders** and the need to make **investments** for long-term success of **stakeholders** as well as of the institutions. (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 87)

Example 16

*ความเข้าใจว่า**คู่แข่ง**คือใคร มีจำนวนกี่ราย และมีคุณลักษณะที่สำคัญอย่างไร เป็นสิ่งจำเป็นอย่าง ยิ่งในการกำหนดความได้เปรียบ**เชิงการแข่งขัน**ของสถาบันในแวดวงการศึกษาและตลาด*

Translation: An understanding of who the **competitors** are, how many of them exist, and what their attributes are, is very necessary for determining the **competitive** advantages of institutions in the domain of education and in the market. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2009a, p. 121)

Example 17

*สถาบันการศึกษามักจะอยู่ในสภาพแวดล้อมที่มี**การแข่งขัน**สูง นอกเหนือจาก**การแข่งขัน**โดยตรง เพื่อให้ได้ผู้เรียน สถาบันเหล่านี้มักจะต้อง**แข่งขัน**เพื่อให้เกิดความมั่นคงด้านการเงิน การได้มาซึ่งอาสาสมัคร และบุคลากร*

Translation: Academic institutions tend to be in highly **competitive** environments. Besides direct **competition** to get students, they also **compete** with each other to build financial security as well as to attract volunteers and staff. (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 10)

The set of mappings between the elements of the SERVICE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION conceptual domain to the elements of the ACADEMIC INSTITUTION conceptual domain is ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS SERVICE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS, STUDENTS AS CUSTOMERS; STUDY PROGRAMS AS PRODUCTS; TEACHING, ADVISING, LIBRARIES, AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AS SERVICE TYPES; REGISTER FEES AS REVENUE; AN IMPLEMENTATION ON TEACHING AS A MANAGEMENT; DAMAGE ON FINANCE OR REPUTATION AS RISK; ORGANIZATIONS HIRING GRADUATES AS MARKET; STUDENTS, STUDENTS' PARENTS, GRADUATE USERS, SOCIETY AS STAKEHOLDERS; PARTIES INVOLVED IN TEACHING AND PRODUCTION OF GRADUATES AS A SUPPLY CHAIN; REPORTS ON THE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AS ANNUAL REPORTS; OTHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS COMPETITORS, GETTING MORE STUDENTS AND STAFF, ACHIEVING A LARGER BUDGET, IMPROVING HIGHER QUALITY OF TEACHING, AND HIGHER QUALITY OF GRADUATES AS COMPETITION.

[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE PRODUCERS]

The academic institution is also understood as a producer. The metaphorical linguistic expressions used here are: "produce," "create products," and "the production process".

Example 18

*ภารกิจหลักที่สถาบันอุดมศึกษาจะต้องปฏิบัติมี 4 ประการ คือ <u>**การผลิต**</u>บัณฑิต การวิจัย การให้บริการทางวิชาการแก่สังคม และการทำนุบำรุงศิลปะและวัฒนธรรม*

Translation: There are four core missions that academic institutions must undertake: <u>produce</u> graduates, conduct research, provide academic services to the community, and preserve the arts and culture. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2011, p. 1)

The set of mappings between the elements of the PRODUCER conceptual domain to the elements of the ACADEMIC INSTITUTION conceptual domain is ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS PRODUCERS; STUDENTS, STUDY PROGRAMS, RESEARCH, AND ACADEMIC SERVICES AS PRODUCTS; TEACHING METHODS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS AS PRODUCT PROCESSES.

[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE ENGINES]

Academic institutions are understood in terms of engines through the use of the following linguistic expressions: "drive," "capacity," and "mechanism."

Example 19

*ในมหาวิทยาลัยเกษตรศาสตร์เกิด<u>**การขับเคลื่อน**</u>หลายด้าน ที่เห็นได้ชัดเจนก็คือการเพิ่มจำนวนบุคลากรด้านกิจการนิสิตให้มีครบทุกคณะวิชา*

Translation: At Kasetsart University, there have been many <u>drives</u> implemented in many areas. This has been seen most clearly in the increase in the number of the student affairs personnel, who are now present in all faculties. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2008a, p. 14)

Example 20

*พันธกิจ วิสัยทัศน์ และค่านิยมของสถาบันที่ได้ประกาศไว้คืออะไร <u>**สมรรถนะ**</u>หลักของสถาบันคืออะไร และมีความเกี่ยวข้องอย่างไรกับพันธกิจของสถาบัน*

Translation: What are missions, the visions, and values of institutions that have been announced? What are their core

<u>competencies</u> and how do these relate to the institutions' missions? (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 6)

Example 21

*มีระบบและ**กลไก**การเปิดหลักสูตรใหม่และปรับปรุงหลักสูตรตามแนวทางปฏิบัติที่กำหนดโดย*
คณะกรรมการการอุดมศึกษา และดำเนินการตามระบบที่กำหนด

Translation: (The institution) has a system and a **mechanism** for launching new programs and modifying programs in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Office of the Higher Education Commission as well as implementing such programs in accordance with the prescribed guidelines. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2011, p. 98)

The set of mappings between the elements of the ENGINE conceptual domain to the elements of the ACADEMIC INSTITUTION conceptual domain is ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS ENGINES; INSTITUTIONS' EXPERTISE AND ACADEMIC IDENTITY AS ENGINES' ABILITIES; INSTITUTIONS' IMPLEMENTATION BY INSTITUTIONS AS ENGINES' DRIVE; IMPLEMENTATION METHODS AS ENGINES' MECHANISM.

It can be seen that the engine metaphor is used for conceptualizing the elements of the education system, which are students, instructors and academic institutions. However, it is used to highlight different aspects of these elements. While students and instructors are highlighted only in relation to their ability to perform teaching and learning activities, academic institutions are referred to with respect to their capacity and drive as well as their mechanisms for developing and implementing programs, achieving missions, attracting and retaining excellent personnel, and undertaking academic activities to meet the nation's needs.

[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE DEPOSITORIES OF WISDOM]

The findings also show that academic institutions are understood in terms of depositories containing wisdom. The metaphorical linguistic expression used here is " depository of wisdom."

Example 22

สถาบันอุดมศึกษาถือเป็น**<u>ขุมปัญญา</u>**ของประเทศและมีความรับผิดชอบที่จะต้องส่งเสริมให้อาจารย์ในสถาบันทำการศึกษาวิจัยเพื่อแสวงหาและพัฒนาองค์ความรู้ในศาสตร์สาขาวิชาต่าง ๆ อย่างต่อเนื่อง เพื่อนำไปใช้ในการเรียนการสอนรวมถึงการแก้ไขปัญหาและพัฒนาประเทศ

Translation: Academic institutions are considered as the <u>depositories of wisdom</u> of the nation, responsible for encouraging their instructors to carry out research in order to continuously seek and develop the body of knowledge in the various disciplines in order to apply the knowledge gained in teaching and solving the nation's problems. (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2011, p. 54)

The set of mappings between the elements of the DEPOSITORY OF WISDOM conceptual domain to the elements of the ACADEMIC INSTITUTION conceptual domain is AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION AS A DEPOSITORY OF WISDOM, INSTRUCTORS' RESEARCH AS A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE.

[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE COMBAT UNITS]

In this conceptual metaphor, academic institutions are referred as combat units. This is reflected in the use of following linguistic expressions :c "strategy," "strategic plan," and "alliance."

Example 23

สถาบันมีวิธีการอย่างไรใน**<u>การวางแผนกลยุทธ์</u>** ขั้นตอนที่สำคัญของกระบวนการจัดทำ**<u>แผนกลยุทธ์</u>**มีอะไรบ้างและผู้เกี่ยวข้องที่สำคัญมีใครบ้าง

Translation: What method is used by the academic institution for the <u>strategic planning</u>? What are the important stages of the <u>strategic planning</u> process? Who are the important parties involved? (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 20)

Example 24

การสร้างความสัมพันธ์กับผู้เรียนและลูกค้ากลุ่มอื่นอาจจะรวมถึงการพัฒนาความเป็นคู่ความร่วมมือหรือการเป็น**<u>พันธมิตร</u>**กัน

Translation: Building relationships with students and other customer groups may include the development of partnerships and <u>alliances</u>. (Sub–Commission on Developing Education for Performance Excellence, 2016, p. 33)

The set of mappings between the elements of the COMBAT UNITS conceptual domain to the elements of the ACADEMIC INSTITUTION conceptual domain is AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION AS A COMBAT UNIT,

INSTRUCTORS AS SOLDIERS, THE PLANNING OF TEACHING AS A STRATEGIC PLANNING, ASSOCIATION AMONG ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, STUDENTS, PARENTS, EMPLOYERS AS FIGHTING ALLIANCES; OTHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AS ENEMIES.

The conceptual metaphors and the number of metaphorical linguistic expressions found in the data are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Conceptual Metaphors and Number of Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions

Elements of education system	Conceptual metaphors	Number of metaphorical linguistic expressions
Students	[STUDENTS ARE CUSTOMERS]	2
	[STUDENTS ARE PRODUCTS]	4
	[STUDENTS ARE BUSINESS PERSONS]	1
	[STUDENTS ARE RESOURCES]	2
	[STUDENTS ARE ENGINES]	1
Total		10
Instructors	[INSTRUCTORS ARE ENGINES]	1
	[INSTRUCTORS ARE ARTISANS]	1
Total		2
Academic institutions	[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE SERVICE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS]	21
	[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE PRODUCERS]	3
	[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE ENGINES]	3
	[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE DEPOSITORIES OF WISDOM]	1
	[ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE COMBAT UNITS]	3
Total		31

It can be seen that students and academic institutions are referred to metaphorically in the largest number of ways, with five metaphors each. Those in relation to whom the smallest number of metaphors is used are instructors, with only two. It is interesting to note that some conceptual metaphors relate to each other. Those are [STUDENTS ARE CUSTOMERS] and [ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE SERVICE INDUSTRIES],

[STUDENTS ARE PRODUCTS] and [INSTRUCTORS/ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE PRODUCERS], and [STUDENTS ARE PRODUCTS] and [INSTRUCTORS ARE ARTISANS]. These findings correspond with what was proposed in the introduction part of this paper that if students, which are a part of the education system, are compared with customers, instructors and academic institutions, might be compared with other concepts as well, and that if this were so, some metaphors used to refer to these elements may relate to each other too.

Discussion

The research found the engine metaphor used in relation to every element of the education system. This usage reflects the inanimacy of students, instructors, and academic institutions. They are viewed as non-human, composed of inanimate parts, having no thoughts or feelings. This metaphorical practice corresponds with mind-body dualism, as proposed by René Descartes (1596-1650), which separates the body from the mind or thought. While a mind is responsible for perception and reasoning, a body works as a medium for the perception of experiences. When elements in the education system are understood in terms of engines, it means that those elements function as human bodies with no feelings and with no ability to think and reason.

However, Randolph Nesse from the Center for Evolution and Medicine, Arizona State University (as cited in Livni, 2017) proposes that engines are the results of design, but bodies are the results of the natural selection. This makes engines and bodies distinct from each other. Engines are composed of various parts with specific functions which relate to each other in a straightforward way. Human bodies, on the contrary, are composed of fuzzy boundaries between various parts. These parts function and relate to each other in the most complicated way imaginable. The idea of the human body as engine, and that of organs as being transferrable, accelerates the development of science and medicine. If we replace a damaged organ, our body will still function. This idea does not align with the true nature of our bodies.

When applying Nesse's proposal to the research results, it appears that the Thai education system tries its best to develop people in the country, helping them stay up-to-date in the current highly

competitive world, with the goal of raising the country's performance to an internationally accepted level. Therefore, it is not surprising that the elements of the education system are compared with engines. The country needs people with high levels of proficiency and accuracy. However, all of these requirements cannot be fulfilled by human beings, who are triggered by feelings and emotions. They cannot work all day and night with the same level of efficiency as engines, without the need for rest.

Among all of the conceptual metaphors found in this research, the conceptual metaphor [ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS ARE SERVICE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS] is found most frequently with the most metaphorical linguistic expressions. This reveals the penetration of business ideas into the education sector. The findings support the new concept of "students-as-customers" emerging in Thai education. The findings also make us realize that this idea has expanded into other elements of education, and not only those involving students. The evidence from documents related to quality assurance in education implies the spread of this idea, and its ultimate acceptance by the public. However, this conceptualization might affect the self-realization of elements in education, causing them to differ from the past. A previous study on teacher metaphors found references to teachers as candles, candlelight, moulds, and hired boats. Being conceptualized using those metaphors, teachers tried their best to teach students, devoting themselves to their students. Therefore, student-teacher relationships were tight and close, like those between family members. As concepts have changed, teachers have become service providers, getting paid by students. This turns their relationships into ones of buyers and sellers.

As Scott (1999, as cited in Liang & Liang, 2016, p. 43) proposes, the use of the "student-as-customer" metaphor may trigger the notion of "the customer is always right." Teachers must try their best to please students with the best services to make them satisfied and make themselves worthy of their pay. Historic practices whereby students engaged with and honored teachers may disappear from Thai society.

Moreover, the concept of business emerging in Thai education may cause the degradation of the education system. Students may think that once they have paid, they must receive the best services without needing to make an effort to develop themselves. They might push the burden onto the instructors and academic institutions to draw out their

talents. This would cause instructors to dedicate their time, knowledge, and skills making students more efficient and preparing them to meet the needs of the job markets, and the nation.

It is also noticeable that some concepts found in this study might be influenced by the translations from English-language material, as the notion of quality assessment in Thailand has developed through the cooperation with international networks. For example, the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence were developed from the field of commerce in the United States. This may have led to documents on educational quality assurance in Thailand containing metaphors from the domain of business, and such ideas have spread out throughout the country.

Conclusion

It has been claimed that the expectations towards instructors and academic institutions are to make students more efficient, help them to earn a living, be good and ethical citizens, equip them with the 21st century skills, keep them updated with respect to global changes, and be able to compete with others in international contexts, as is also mentioned in the documents on quality assurance in education. However, all of those missions are hard to achieve, especially when students are perceived as customers and products, as the results of this study have revealed. As customers, they have a right to demand the best service in order to achieve satisfaction, but not in order to achieve high educational standards. As inanimate objects, they wait to be fed by instructors, ready to follow commands with no creativity or feelings.

The results of this study shed light on possible outcomes resulting from language use in public documents related to quality assurance in education. As such documents are considered to be reliable sources and as they are widely used throughout the nation, the concepts that they use when referring to elements of the education system have been widely disseminated among the public who will finally be unaware to perceive these ideas. To create a positive environment in which Thai academic institutions can compete more effectively with others in both national and international contexts, the concepts used to refer to elements of the education system need to be revised. Agencies in charge

of monitoring the quality of higher education in Thailand should examine this study's findings and take these issues as their concerns.

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