

# THE KNOWLEDGE LANDSCAPE OF GERMAN LINGUISTICS AND GERMAN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THAILAND: A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA

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## ABSTRACT

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This study surveys the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and the teaching of German as a foreign language in Thailand from 1957 to 2022. Despite decades of development in German language education, there has been no systematic, comprehensive survey of the research conducted in this field. The study categorizes and analyzes 173 research works across various subfields to identify prevailing research trends in German linguistics and German language teaching in Thailand. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of German linguistics and German language teaching research in Japan and South Korea from 2013 to 2022 is conducted, highlighting key similarities and differences in research methodologies, content and focus areas. The findings indicate that while Thailand encompasses a broad range of research topics in German linguistics, including grammar, phonetics, orthography, and pragmatics, the majority of studies are applied, focusing on pedagogical applications. In Japan and South Korea, however, research aligns more closely with that of German-speaking countries in terms of generating specialized knowledge in fields such as dialectology and computational linguistics. In research on German language teaching, Thailand, Japan, and South Korea demonstrate a strong focus on teaching techniques and methods, likely due to a shared emphasis on applying findings to enhance instruction in German as a foreign language.

**Keywords:** Knowledge landscape; German linguistics; German language teaching; meta study

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of German at the tertiary level in Thailand has continuously developed over the past 67 years, beginning in 1957 when the German Section at the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, introduced the first bachelor's degree program in German. This marked the beginning of German language education at the university level in Thailand. Today, German is taught at the undergraduate level at nine universities, with two master's programs (at Chulalongkorn University and Ramkhamhaeng University) and one doctoral program (at Chulalongkorn University) (Saengaramruang 2007; Watanangura 2019). Over the years, the study

and research in German language and literature have continuously evolved, with universities in Thailand supporting faculty and graduate students' research in various forms, expanding the body of knowledge in German linguistics and literature.

However, it is evident that a comprehensive and systematic survey of the knowledge in Thailand related to German linguistics and the teaching of German as a Foreign Language (GFL<sup>1</sup>) is still lacking. This research project<sup>2</sup> aims to survey the knowledge landscape of these fields from past to present. Additionally, it will examine the knowledge landscape of this discipline in internationally recognized journals to understand global research trends, which will help develop appropriate research pathways in Thailand. This will also provide clearer guidance for Thai scholars in this field to align their work with both their expertise and international trends.

To achieve this, the study has the following objectives:

1. To survey the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and the teaching of German as a Foreign Language in Thailand from 1957–2022.

2. To analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Thai research by comparing it with international studies and to suggest directions for future research development.

3. To provide a database on the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and GFL in Thailand<sup>3</sup>.

The scope of this research includes:

1. Articles, research, and theses produced by faculty and students from Thai higher education institutions, available in national databases such as the ThaiJo database, and other German language and literature journals published between 1957 and 2022.

2. Articles from leading East Asian journals on German language published between 2013 and 2022.

This comprehensive analysis aims to bridge the gap between local and international research trends, contributing to the advancement of German studies in Thailand while enhancing its global relevance.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Through a survey of the literature, four pieces of research on the knowledge landscape of the German language and GFL in higher education in Thailand were found. The earliest effort dates back to 2007, when Saengaramruang (2007) highlighted several publications and studies aimed at improving German teaching and learning in Thailand. Comparative studies on German and Thai language structures explored topics such as nominal compounds, negation, and modal particles. Research addressing learning challenges focused on issues like article usage, while curriculum development introduced innovative approaches, including distance-learning models and translation courses. Additionally, investigations into communication between Thais and Germans examined professional behaviors, media representations, and culturally specific vocabulary, offering valuable insights into intercultural interaction.

Attaviriyupap (2009) studied the knowledge landscape in the field of contrastive linguistics, examining 20 studies published between 1978 and 2008. The research primarily focused on German grammar from a Thai perspective, with most studies conducted by Thai scholars. In terms of research methodology, earlier studies were more descriptive and theory-based, while later studies, particularly in translation research, adopted corpus-based methods for greater objectivity. However, there is a general lack of comprehensive empirical data and large-scale corpora for thorough comparison between German and Thai. Key research gaps include insufficient focus on phonetics, phonology and morphosyntax. Most studies concentrate on modal particles and passive constructions, while tense and mood remain underexplored. Furthermore, contrastive studies are often aimed at supporting German language teaching for Thai learners, with less emphasis on theoretical linguistic research.

Other relevant studies focus on the knowledge landscape of GFL (Attaviriyupap 2020; Bangvichit & Attaviriyupap 2019). These studies show that research in this field is growing, particularly due to the introduction of graduate programs. Most topics address teaching methods and enhancing language acquisition

<sup>1</sup> In this article, the term German as a Foreign Language (GFL) is used to correspond to the German term Deutsch als Fremdsprache (DaF), a well-established concept in German language research and pedagogy. It encompasses both the academic discipline that examines the teaching and acquisition of German as a non-native language and the practical implementation of teaching methodologies and materials for German learners worldwide.

<sup>2</sup> This research paper is part of the project "Surveying the Knowledge Landscape of German Language and Literature in Thailand," funded by the Program Management Unit for Human Resources & Institutional Development, Research and Innovation (PMU-B).

<sup>3</sup> The resulting database from this research project also features the knowledge landscape of German literature, culture and translation (<https://harrt.in.th/>).

for Thai students, with grammar teaching receiving the most attention, as Thai learners find German grammar challenging. Innovative grammar teaching methods such as group work, multimedia tools and engaging activities like games and songs have been explored to improve learning outcomes.

Apart from these three research studies, a systematic study specifically examining the landscape of German linguistics in Thailand has yet to be conducted.

Regarding South Korea, Kimura (2010) provides an explorative bibliographical overview of German studies in East Asia, drawing from a wide range of sources, including academic journals, conference proceedings, and edited volumes. Among the identified themes, contrastive linguistics is a significant area of focus. In the context of GFL, Kwan (2014) found that, between 1999 and 2012, the majority of Korean publications focused on teaching methodologies. In Japan, research in linguistics and language teaching similarly centers on contrastive linguistics, particularly analyzing differences and similarities between German and Japanese in grammar, phonology, syntax, and semantics (Shigeto, 2002). Additionally, historical linguistics is another major area of interest within Japanese German studies (Kozo, 2002).

### 3. METHODOLOGY AND CORPUS

Articles and research were initially searched in the library databases of Chulalongkorn University and Ramkhamhaeng University, both of which offer graduate programs in German language and literature. Additionally, the central electronic journal database of Thailand (ThaiJo), the journal of the German Language Teachers' Association of Thailand (*TDLV-Forum*) and the journal *Die Brücke*, published by the Division of German Language at the Faculty of Humanities, Ramkhamhaeng University, were explored. Information on the academic work and research of faculty members teaching German at higher education institutions across nine universities in Thailand was also collected from personal and academic profiles. The abstracts of the academic works found were reviewed, relevant ones were selected, and a database was created by downloading or scanning research papers and theses, which were then stored in electronic file format.

Internationally, German language and literature journals from Japan and South Korea were explored, as both countries in East Asia have extensive German language teaching as a foreign language and widely recognized research in German language and literature at the international level. Journal titles were retrieved from academic databases in both countries, comparable to Thailand's TCI database, by using Japan's *J-Stage* database and South Korea's *DBpia* database. The journal *Neue Beiträge zur Germanistik* (formerly ドイツ文学, *doitsu bungaku*), which regularly publishes works and is produced by the Japanese Society for German Language and Literature (*Japanische Gesellschaft für Germanistik*), was selected due to its high national and international reputation, with a history spanning over 50 years and more than 2,400 members today. The South Korean journal, *Deutsche Sprache und Literatur* (독일언어문학), published by the Korean Association for German Language and Literature (한국독일언어문학회, *Koreanische Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache und Literatur*), was selected due to its similar reputation to that of the Japanese journal. The journal's database has been accessed over 4,000 times in the past three years. The focus on the period from 2013 to 2022 was based on its status as the most recent decade, allowing for an analysis that is both current and relevant, providing insights into the latest trends and developments within the field.

The articles were categorized according to research areas, research topics, subtopics and research methodologies. The content and methodologies that were commonly and less frequently found in both Thai and international research were analyzed. Additionally, the strengths and weaknesses of Thai research were assessed through comparisons with international research. The research corpus comprises the following components:

1. Articles, research and theses produced by faculty staff and students from Thai higher education institutions, available in national databases such as the ThaiJo database and other German language and literature journals published between 1957 and 2022.
2. Articles from leading East Asian journals on German language and literature published between 2013–2022.

As stated in the objectives, this research aims to survey the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and the teaching of German as a Foreign Language (GFL) in Thailand from the beginning of German language education at the university level to the present (1957–2022). Additionally, it seeks to provide a comprehensive database on the knowledge landscape of German language studies in Thailand. Therefore, the corpus for Thai research spans this entire period to capture its historical development comprehensively.

In contrast, the corpus for the compared counterparts—Japanese and South Korean linguistic and GFL articles—covers only a ten-year period (2013–2022). This is because the comparative analysis focuses on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Thai research in relation to international studies and suggesting

directions for future research development. The limited timeframe ensures that the comparison remains manageable and reflects the most recent global trends and standards.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Research on German language and teaching in Thailand

#### 4.1.1 Overview

Information was searched and recorded from various sources covering the period from 1957 to 2022, resulting in the documentation of a total of 173 research works related to German linguistics and German language teaching. The details are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Number of research works in German linguistics and GFL in Thailand from 1957–2022

Period	German linguistics	GFL	Total
1957–1969	-	-	0
1970–1979	-	3	3
1980–1989	-	-	0
1990–1999	9	11	20
2000–2009	31	39	70
2010–2022	39	41	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>173</b>

The period 1957–1979 was determined based on significant milestones in the history of German language education in Thailand. The year 1957 marks the establishment of the first bachelor's degree program in German at Chulalongkorn University, marking the inception of German language education at the university level.

However, during this period, research in German linguistics and the teaching of German as a Foreign Language (GFL) in Thailand was virtually non-existent. The first research works in this field were published between 1976 and 1978, focusing on "Fehleranalyse" (error analysis). Consequently, no research output in these fields is recorded between 1957 and 1975.

It is worth noting that the few academic works produced during this early period were primarily in the field of German literature, totaling seven publications. These do not fall within the scope of this study, which focuses specifically on German linguistics and GFL. This justifies the lack of research works in the corpus for the sub-periods 1957–1969 and 1970–1975 and highlights the emergence of linguistics and GFL research starting in the mid-1970s.

Trends in German linguistics and German language teaching research in Thailand from 1957 to 2022 can be summarized as follows:

**1957–1979:** In 1974, the only graduate program in German language and literature in Thailand was introduced at the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. The total number of research works published during this period was three. All of them were related to the teaching of German, published between 1976 and 1978. These studies focused on error analysis (Fehleranalyse) in the context of German language teaching and presented solutions for correcting these errors to improve teaching.

**1980–1989:** No research in German linguistics or German language teaching was found in Thailand during this decade.

**1990–1999:** Research in both German language teaching and linguistics increased significantly during this period, with a total of 20 research works. Among them, 11 were related to teaching and nine to linguistics. The increase in research output was largely driven by graduate students writing theses on German language teaching, aiming to apply the knowledge gained from their master's degrees to their teaching careers while also drawing upon their own teaching experience. During this period, only one publication was exclusively dedicated to German linguistics, without any emphasis on language teaching. This was a contrastive study on syntax by Wilita Sriuranpong (1997).

2000–2009: Research on German language teaching grew during this period due to the introduction of a graduate program in German as a Foreign Language at the Faculty of Humanities, Ramkhamhaeng University. This program was supported by faculty members who had completed their studies in Germany in the late 1990s. In the field of linguistics, it was observed that pragmatic theories were utilized in research, alongside the application of contrastive analysis methods and discourse analysis. During this period, one meta-study was identified: the first comprehensive synthesis of contrastive linguistic research between German and Thai, conducted by Korakoch Attaviriyayanupap (2009).

2010–2022: There were a total of 39 research works in German linguistics and 41 in German language teaching. In linguistics, there was an increase in contrastive studies in various fields, such as morphology and pragmatics. The contrastive studies were not limited to Thai and German but also included Vietnamese (Nguyễn, 2010), as students from neighboring countries enrolled in the graduate program in German as a Foreign Language at Ramkhamhaeng University.

#### 4.1.2 Subfields and content

**Table 2:** Number of research works in the field of German linguistics in Thailand from 1957–2022, categorized by subfields<sup>4</sup>

Period	1957–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2009	2010–2022	Total
Grammar	-	-	1	13	13	27
Pragmatics	-	-	1	3	5	9
Morphology	-	-	-	1	5	6
Second language acquisition	-	-	1	5	-	6
Phraseology	-	-	-	-	5	5
Sociolinguistics	-	-	2	1	2	5
Syntax	-	-	1	4	-	5
Lexicology	-	-	-	1	3	4
Stylistics	-	-	-	-	4	4
Orthography	-	-	2	1	1	4
Phonetics/phonology	-	-	1	-	1	2
Lexicography	-	-	-	1	-	1
Meta study	-	-	-	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>79</b>

Table 2 presents that from the time when German language teaching began in Thailand in 1957 until 1989, no research in German linguistics was found. This was due to the fact that most scholars and researchers in this field at the higher education level were still pursuing further studies. It wasn't until the period between 1990 and 1999 that research in various subfields of German linguistics began to emerge. Specifically, there were two studies on German orthography, two on sociolinguistics and one each on grammar, phonetics, second language acquisition, pragmatics and syntax, totaling nine studies during this period.

From 2000 to 2009, the number of research studies in German linguistics more than tripled, reaching a total of 31 studies. The most extensively researched subfield was German grammar, with 13 studies, followed by five studies on second language acquisition, four studies on syntax and three studies on pragmatics. Other subfields included morphology, sociolinguistics, lexicology, orthography and lexicography as well as a meta study. Additionally, there was one study that surveyed the knowledge landscape of contrastive linguistic studies between German and Thai in Thailand. In the period from 2000 to 2009, linguistic research topics in Thailand focused primarily on contrastive studies between German and Thai, examining various linguistic structures, grammatical elements, and language functions. For example, studies explored sentence structure similarities and differences between German and Thai (Laisanitsereekul, 2003), as well as the use of negation in both languages (Ralugmool, 2001). Other research focused on the roles of specific linguistic elements, such as the word "es" in German and its functions (Benjawathananant, 2007). Pragmatic studies were also prevalent, including politeness strategies in German and Thai (Loto, 2006). Additionally, gender-specific language use in discussions, both in Germany and Thailand, was analyzed, along with interference issues in German language acquisition, particularly among Thai immigrants in German-speaking regions in Switzerland (Attaviriyayanupap, 2004).

In the following years, research in German linguistics continued to grow, as evidenced by the increase to 39 studies in the period from 2010 to 2022, covering various subfields. These included 13 studies

<sup>4</sup> One study may address multiple aspects and therefore be classified under more than one category, which explains the discrepancy between the total number of studies and the number of categorizations.

on grammar, followed by five studies each on morphology, phraseology and pragmatics. There were also four studies on stylistics, two studies on sociolinguistics and one study each on phonetics and orthography. Between 2010 and 2022, linguistic research in Thailand focused heavily on contrastive studies, particularly between German and Thai. For example, significant work was done on German and Thai verbs, examining grammatical categories and aspect markers (Attaviriyayanupap, 2012a). The structure of noun compounds in both languages was also a recurring topic (Sirisubsatid & Sriuranpong, 2012). Additionally, cultural comparisons in language use were explored through studies like one on job advertisements in German and Thai (Ampornklinkaew, 2011). German grammar from the perspective of Thai learners was another prevalent theme, with research tackling areas such as the use of the pronoun "man" in both languages (Attaviriyayanupap, 2012b). Contrastive analyses extended to idiomatic expressions between the two cultures, focusing on body parts like "Hand" (hand) and "Fuß" (foot) in idiomatic contexts (Poolsawadhi & Attaviriyayanupap, 2016). Moreover, studies on politeness systems and metaphors in both languages added depth to the growing body of contrastive linguistic research, such as an analysis of metaphors related to refugees (Jamjumrus, 2018).

It can be observed that research on grammar remains the most popular subfield, as was the case in previous decades. Over the past two decades, grammar research has been the most prevalent in the field of German linguistics in Thailand. The number of studies in this subfield far exceeds those in pragmatics, with a ratio of 27:9 – three times as many. The next most popular subfields were morphology and second language acquisition, each with six studies. These research topics are linguistic subfields directly related to language teaching and can therefore be readily applied in teaching practice.

**Table 3:** Number of research studies in the field of German language teaching as a foreign language in Thailand from 1957–2022, categorized by content

Period	1957–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–2009	2010–2022	Total
State of German language education	1	-	3	6	7	17
Teaching techniques and methods	-	-	4	24	23	51
Textbook and teaching material analysis	-	-	2	3	4	9
Assessment and evaluation	-	-	-	1	2	3
Factors related to the learning process	2	-	2	5	5	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>94</b>

Table 3 shows that research on the teaching of German as a Foreign Language has been conducted since the early stages of German language education in Thailand. Specifically, during the period from 1957 to 1979, three research works were published, likely reflecting the need to apply findings to enhance German language teaching in the country. However, during the decade from 1980 to 1989, no research was found on the teaching of German as a foreign language, as most scholars and researchers in this field at the higher education level were still pursuing further studies. In the following decade, from 1990 to 1999, a number of research works were produced, both as part of academic studies and as independent research in fields where scholars had expertise. These research works covered four main topics: teaching techniques and methods (4 works), the state of German language education in Thailand (3 works), the analysis of textbooks and teaching materials (2 works) and factors related to the learning process (2 works).

During the period from 2000 to 2009, the number of research studies on the teaching of German increased more than threefold. Most of these studies focused on teaching techniques and methods, comprising 24 works. This area was followed by six studies on the status of German language teaching, five studies on factors related to the learning process, three studies on the analysis of textbooks and teaching materials and one study on assessment and evaluation. Examples include the use of regional textbooks like *Viel Spaß mit Deutsch* and *Lesen macht Spaß* in fostering student engagement (Chunnasart & Sukruen, 2000), as well as studies on autonomous learning (Kusolrod, 2000) and the use of images in teaching (Boonchim, 2000). Several studies examine intercultural competence, such as the portrayal of German culture in textbooks and software (*Einblicke*) (Kaewwipat, 2004). Research also highlights vocabulary acquisition and grammar teaching strategies, alongside innovative approaches like using caricatures or fairy tales for beginner language instruction (Kusolrod, 2005a). The role of technology in language teaching is also explored, with studies on the use of computer-assisted learning and online resources like German newspapers (Kusolrod, 2005b). Additionally, studies focus on error analysis, such as mistakes in past tense usage by Vietnamese learners (Phan, 2003), and methods to enhance reading comprehension (Wagner, 2001) and listening skills in the classroom (Kusolrod, 2005c).

In the period from 2010 to 2022, research on the teaching of German continued to increase. The popular research topics remained similar to those of the previous decade. Specifically, the majority of studies continued to focus on teaching techniques and methods, accounting for 23 studies, followed by additional

research on the state of German language education (7 studies), factors related to the learning process (5 studies), the analysis of textbooks and teaching materials (4 studies), and assessment and evaluation (2 studies). This totals 41 studies. Notably, the number of studies on these topics increased proportionally, in line with the research output from the previous decade. In the period covered, a variety of topics were found with a strong focus on integrating culture, innovative teaching methods, and improving language skills through interactive techniques. For example, studies examined the integration of Thai cultural elements, such as Likay and Lukthung (Attaviriyayanupap, 2012c), and role-playing games (RPGs) to teach cultural vocabulary and boost student engagement (Phoosita & Attaviriyayanupap, 2021). Additionally, research on improving German language skills through group activities and creative approaches was also identified, such as the use of Buddhist aphorisms or poetry in lessons to create a more dynamic learning environment (Kusolrod, 2021). Other studies focused on enhancing text competence in both argumentative and narrative writing (Jennasombut, 2015, 2021), as well as on improving listening comprehension (Pham, 2018) and grammar skills through targeted exercises (Sirisubsatid, 2018).

#### 4.1.3 Research methodologies

In terms of the research methodologies used in German linguistics and German language teaching research in Thailand, a variety of methods were employed across both fields, including document analysis, corpus-based research, and experiments with learners. The details regarding the types and number of research methodologies used are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Types and number of research methodologies found in Thailand

Type of research methodology	Number of research methods found <sup>5</sup>	Percentage <sup>6</sup>
<b>German linguistics</b>		
Document analysis	39	48
Corpus-based research	23	28
Research from translated works	8	10
Experiments with learners	5	6
Questionnaires	2	2
Interviews	2	2
No research methodology specified	2	2
<b>German language teaching</b>		
Document analysis	56	55
Experiments with learners	14	14
Questionnaires	11	11
Interviews	4	4
Analysis using data from learners	2	2
Corpus-based research	1	1
Film analysis	1	1
No research methodology specified	13	13

Table 4 shows that the most used research methodology in both German linguistics and German language teaching research is document analysis, accounting for 48% in German linguistics and 55% in German language teaching. Some studies may employ more than one research method, such as combining document analysis with the use of questionnaires. Conversely, there were some works, especially in the field of German language teaching, that did not specify the research methodologies used.

#### 4.2 Research on German linguistics and German language teaching in Japan and South Korea

##### 4.2.1 Overview

A database was created by surveying research in Japan (Table 5) and South Korea (Table 6) on German linguistics and German language teaching, using the journal *Neue Beiträge zur Germanistik* from Japan and *Deutsche Sprache und Literatur* from South Korea, covering the years 2013–2022. The results are as follows: The survey of academic works in *Neue Beiträge zur Germanistik* identified 32 studies on German linguistics and 22 studies on the teaching of German as a foreign language. Similarly, the survey of *Deutsche*

<sup>5</sup> The number of research methodologies does not directly correspond to the number of studies found, as a single study may employ multiple methodologies.

<sup>6</sup> The percentage provided here is calculated based on the relative distribution of methodologies within each respective field.

*Sprache und Literatur* revealed 76 studies on German linguistics and 34 studies on the teaching of German as a foreign language.

**Table 5:** Number of research works in German linguistics and GFL in Japan from 2013–2022

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
German linguistics	-	2	10	-	2	7	5	2	1	3	32
GFL	7	2	1	-	1	2	1	-	8	-	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>

**Table 6:** Number of research works in German linguistics and GFL in South Korea from 2013–2022

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
German linguistics	11	12	14	4	7	6	5	5	5	7	76
GFL	5	4	3	2	5	5	1	3	3	3	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>109</b>

#### 4.2.2 Subfields and content

In Japan, German linguistics research primarily focused on sociolinguistics, with nine studies, and historical linguistics, with eight studies closely following (Table 7). In the realm of German language teaching, the key area of interest was the factors influencing teaching and learning, reflected in eight studies, while teaching techniques and methods accounted for seven studies (Table 8).

In South Korea, text linguistics emerged as the leading research topic in German linguistics, with 13 studies, followed by German grammar, which was explored in 10 studies. Semantics and German phonetics shared the position of the third most researched areas, with eight studies each (Table 9). For German language teaching, teaching techniques and methods dominated the field, with 20 studies dedicated to this topic (Table 10).

**Table 7:** Number of research works in the field of German linguistics in Japan from 2013–2022, categorized by subfields

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Sociolinguistics	-	1	5	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	9
Historical linguistics	-	1	4	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	8
Grammar	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	4
Syntax	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	3
Semantics	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Pragmatics	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Second language acquisition	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Ethnolinguistics	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Text linguistics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Discourse analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Conversation analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 8:** Number of research works in the field of GFL in Japan from 2013–2022, categorized by subfields

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Factors related to the learning process	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	8
Teaching techniques and methods	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	-	7
State of German language education	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	5
Assessment and evaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>

**Table 9:** Number of research works in the field of German linguistics in South Korea from 2013–2022, categorized by subfields

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Text linguistics	4	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	3	13
Grammar	2	1	2	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	10
Semantics	-	1	3	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	8
Phonetics/phonology	1	-	1	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	8
Pragmatics	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	6
Computational linguistics	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	4
Syntax	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	3
Sociolinguistics	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	3
Second language acquisition	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Discourse analysis	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Languages for specific purposes	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	3
Lexicology	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Orthography	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Corpus linguistics	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Morphology	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Psycholinguistics	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Historical linguistics	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	11	12	14	4	7	6	5	5	5	7	76

**Table 10:** Number of research works in the field of GFL in South Korea from 2013–2022, categorized by subfields

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Teaching techniques and methods	3	3	1	1	3	4	1	1	1	2	20
State of German language education	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	6
Factors related to the learning process	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	4
Textbook and teaching material analysis	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Assessment and evaluation	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>	5	4	3	2	5	6	1	3	2	3	34

#### 4.2.3 Research methodologies

In Japan, the predominant research methodology in the field of German linguistics was document analysis, utilized in 16 studies. Similarly, in the field of German language teaching, document analysis was the most frequently employed methodology, appearing in 8 studies, followed by interviews with learners, which were used in 4 studies (Table 11).

In South Korea, corpus-based research emerged as the most commonly used methodology in German linguistics, with 38 studies, followed by document analysis, which was utilized in 33 studies. In the field of German language teaching, document analysis was the leading methodology, featured in 22 studies, while experimental studies with learners ranked second with 8 studies. Corpus-based research was the third most frequently employed approach, appearing in 4 studies (Table 12).

**Table 11:** Types and number of research methodologies found (Japan)

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
<b>German linguistics</b>											
Document analysis	-	-	7	-	1	2	4	-	-	2	16
Corpus-based research	-	1	2	-	1	2	1	2	1	1	11
Analysis using data from learners	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Questionnaires	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
Interviews	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	3
<b>Total</b>	0	2	10	0	2	7	5	2	1	3	32

**Table 11:** Types and number of research methodologies found (Japan) (continued)

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
<b>GFL</b>											
Document analysis	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	8
Interviews	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	4
Experiments with learners	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	4
Lehrertagebuch (Teacher diary)	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Behavior observation	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Corpus-based research	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Analysis using data from learners	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Longitudinal analysis	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
No research methodology specified	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	7	2	1	0	1	2	1	0	8	0	22

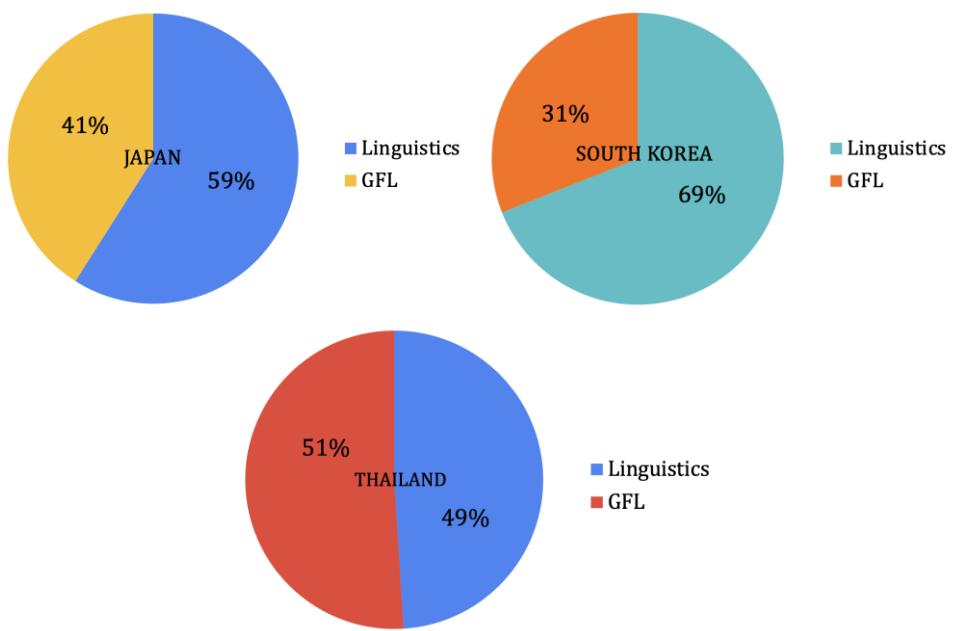
**Table 12:** Types and number of research methodologies found (South Korea)

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
<b>German linguistics</b>											
Corpus-based research	5	6	6	3	2	2	2	4	3	5	38
Document analysis	4	4	8	1	5	4	3	-	2	2	33
Experiments with learners	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Data collection from language informants	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>	11	11	14	5	7	6	5	5	5	7	76
<b>GFL</b>											
Document analysis	4	3	2	1	3	2	-	3	2	2	22
Experiments with learners	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	7
Corpus-based research	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	4
Questionnaires	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	5	4	3	2	5	5	1	3	3	3	34

#### 4.3 Comparative study of the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and German language teaching in Thailand, Japan and South Korea

The following comparison among the three countries focuses on a decade-long period from 2013 to 2022. This timeframe was deliberately selected to enable a focused analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Thai research in relation to international studies, while also providing a foundation for proposing potential directions for future research development. By concentrating on recent years, the scope remains both manageable and reflective of contemporary global trends and academic standards.

Figure 1 compares the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and German language teaching in Thailand, Japan and South Korea between 2013–2022.



**Figure 1:** Proportion of research in Japan, South Korea and Thailand between 2013–2022, categorized by research fields

Figure 1 indicates that, between 2013 and 2022, a greater volume of research was published on German linguistics than on German language teaching in the selected journals of Japan and South Korea. In contrast, during the same period in Thailand, research predominantly focused on German language teaching rather than linguistics, as evidenced by the slightly higher proportion of publications on language teaching (51%) compared to linguistics (49%), despite the marginal difference.

Between 2013 and 2022, research output in German linguistics and German language teaching varied significantly across Japan, South Korea and Thailand.

In Japan, a total of 54 studies were conducted, with 32 focused on linguistics and 22 on German language teaching. The peak year for research output was 2015, with 11 studies.

The linguistic research topics found in the Japanese journal cover a wide range of subfields, with a primary focus on sociolinguistics, historical linguistics, phonetics, syntax, and language comparison between German and other languages. Sociolinguistics was the most frequently studied area (9 studies), followed by historical linguistics (8 studies), with document analysis being the most commonly used methodology (16 studies). The sociolinguistic research notably includes studies on dialect shifts, such as the ai/ei change in German dialects around 1500 (Fujii, 2015), and phonetic shifts in Luxembourgish (Nishide, 2014). Language evolution and the interaction between different linguistic systems are explored in studies like the comparison of verbal prefixes in Old High German and Gothic (Nozoe, 2022). Additionally, sociolinguistic studies address multilingual contexts like Luxembourg in the 1970s and 1980s (Ogawa, 2015). Syntax and grammatical research topics, including negation and modal verbs, are frequently explored, often with contrastive studies between German and other languages like Japanese, Latin, or Greek.

In GFL research, various aspects of language acquisition, motivation, and teaching methodologies were explored, with attention given to both digital learning environments and traditional classroom settings. The most researched topics were factors affecting teaching and learning (8 studies) and teaching techniques and methods (7 studies), with document analysis (8 studies) and interviews with learners (4 studies) as the primary methodologies. Some studies examine how digital tools can support learning during study abroad programs, such as digital platforms aiding learners in daily language use. Other research investigates the role of error correction in language interaction and cognition, as well as the use of native language (L1) in task-based partner work. Furthermore, studies on learner motivation, such as a longitudinal analysis of university students' motivation based on Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory (Fujiwara, 2013), reflect Japan's focus on fostering communicative competence and cultural integration. Additionally, evaluations of programs and materials, such as vocabulary tests on core German verbs and the effectiveness of teaching strategies during study abroad, are prominent.

In South Korea, a total of 110 research studies were produced between 2013 and 2022, divided into 75 on linguistics and 35 on German language teaching. The most productive year was also 2015, with 17 studies.

The linguistic research featured in the Korean journal spans a wide range of topics: Syntax and German grammar (14 studies), along with discourse analysis (13 studies), were the most popular topics in German linguistics. Semantics and phonetics followed closely with eight studies each. Corpus-based research was the most frequently used methodology (38 studies), followed by document analysis (33 studies). Notable trends include the use of advanced computational methods, such as machine learning and sentiment analysis, as well as more traditional linguistic inquiries into syntax and morphology. For instance, studies on automated classification of sentence meanings and term extraction from German technical texts highlight the integration of technology, while contrastive analyses of case structures and sentence moods between German and Korean focus on grammatical and semantic differences. Moreover, there is a clear interest in how language intersects with social and cultural contexts, evidenced by research on media language in sports and intercultural communication through online reviews and virtual interactions.

In German language teaching, teaching techniques and methods were the most prominent topics (20 studies), with document analysis (22 studies) the most commonly used methodology, followed by experiments with learners (8 studies) and corpus-based research (4 studies). Examples of research topics include teaching models such as flipped learning, hybrid teaching, and the use of digital tools like *Google Earth* for cultural studies (Lee, 2014) or *Deutsche Welle* content in language lessons (Namyong & Sung, 2018). There is also significant emphasis on developing intercultural communicative competence through media, including fictional films and online content. Traditional language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are frequently addressed, with examples like the integration of literature and grammar in lessons and the development of a model for improving listening and speaking for the B1 certification. Additionally, a recurring theme is the analysis of teaching materials, exams, and curricula, such as the evaluation of the *Suneung-Prüfung im Fach Deutsch (Aufnahmeprüfung)* (Sung, 2017) or the analysis of practical texts like mobile phone manuals used in class (Cho, 2017).

In Thailand, a total of 59 research studies were identified during this period, with 30 focused on German language teaching and 29 on linguistics. The year 2018 had the highest output, with 16 studies. In German language teaching, teaching techniques and methods were the most researched topic (13 studies), followed by the status of German language teaching (7 studies) and factors related to teaching and learning (5 studies). Document analysis (15 studies) was the most frequently used methodology, followed by experiments with learners (6 studies) and surveys (4 studies). In linguistics, the most researched topics were German grammar (8 studies), German phraseology (5 studies) and stylistics (4 studies). Corpus-based research (17 studies) and document analysis (7 studies) were the most common methodologies used. The linguistic research topics in the Thai journal primarily focus on contrastive studies between German and Thai, examining language structure, pragmatics, and cultural comparisons. The GFL research topics from Thailand during this period deal with approaches to language teaching, emphasizing pronunciation, cultural integration, and curriculum development (See 4.1.2 for examples of research topics found).

Comparatively, in the field of linguistic research, studies from Japan and South Korea exhibit a focus similar to that of German linguistic research in German-speaking countries. These investigations predominantly aim to generate specialized knowledge, such as in the areas of dialectology and computational linguistics. By comparison, linguistic research in Thailand tends to emphasize the application of the research findings to strengthen the teaching of German as a foreign language. A shared characteristic between Thailand and South Korea is the strong focus on grammar research, with discourse analysis being similarly prevalent in South Korea. Both countries favor corpus-based research methodologies in linguistic studies. In Japan, linguistic research is centered on sociolinguistics, historical linguistics, syntax and grammar, with document analysis being the predominant research methodology. Japan also shows occasional studies in applied linguistics, such as psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, discourse analysis and pragmatics, which similarly use corpus-based research.

When examining research on German language teaching in Thailand, Japan and South Korea, it is clear that teaching techniques and methods dominate in all three countries. In Thailand and South Korea, studies on teaching techniques were twice as numerous as studies on other topics. In Japan, the number of studies on factors affecting teaching and learning was nearly equal to those on teaching techniques and methods, possibly due to a shared emphasis on applying research findings to enhance German language teaching as a foreign language. The most frequently used research methodology in all three countries for German language teaching was document analysis, likely because many studies draw on existing theories and research findings to discuss their applicability in teaching German as a foreign language. Experiments with learners were the second most used methodology, as they are well-suited to studies in this field.

In the field of linguistics, Thailand has demonstrated relatively extensive and diverse research in both system linguistics and applied linguistics. This includes areas such as German grammar, phonetics, orthography, morphology, German phraseology, lexicology, stylistics and pragmatics. Moreover, a relatively modern research methodology has been employed, with an emphasis on corpus-based research. However, there is a noticeable lack of research in modern linguistic fields related to technology, such as computational linguistics, due to the absence of specialists in this area.

In Japan, strengths in linguistic research are evident in sociolinguistics, particularly in the study of German dialects, as well as in historical linguistics and German grammar. In applied linguistics, there are few studies in psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, discourse analysis and pragmatics.

South Korea has conducted comprehensive research in both system and applied linguistics, covering German grammar, orthography, phonetics, morphology, semantics, lexicology, specialized language, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and corpus-based linguistics. Furthermore, there are studies in modern German linguistics, including computational linguistics. The research methodology employed in German linguistic studies in South Korea is also quite modern, with a primary focus on corpus-based research.

In the field of GFL, research in Thailand covers all aspects, including the status of language teaching, teaching techniques and methods, factors affecting teaching and learning, the analysis of textbooks and teaching materials, as well as assessment and evaluation. A variety of research methodologies have been employed beyond document analysis, such as experiments with learners, interviews, surveys, learner corpus analysis, language corpus-based research and studies using films. However, the research methodologies used in Thailand are not as diverse as those in Japan and South Korea. For instance, no studies in Thailand have utilized teacher diaries, behavioral observations, or longitudinal studies.

In Japan, a wide range of research methodologies has been employed beyond document analysis. These include experiments with learners, learner testing, interviews, teacher diaries, behavioral observations, real-life situation analysis, surveys, learner corpus analysis, language corpus-based research and longitudinal studies of learners.

Similarly, in South Korea, research on German language teaching as a foreign language covers all aspects, including the status of language teaching, teaching techniques and methods, factors affecting teaching and learning, the analysis of textbooks and teaching materials, assessment and evaluation, as well as second language acquisition.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study of the knowledge landscape of German linguistics and German language teaching in Thailand reveals that research topics and methodologies in the country lack the necessary diversity and comprehensiveness. To address these weaknesses and strengthen research in Thailand, strategies in the following areas are recommended:

1. Creating partnerships with universities in German-speaking countries: This involves inviting guest lecturers or experts to conduct training, seminars, or special lectures, thereby enhancing faculty members' knowledge in under-researched areas and ensuring their expertise remains current with developments in the field.

2. Promoting research collaboration among faculty members at various universities in Thailand: This strategy focuses on linking the expertise of faculty across institutions to foster interdisciplinary research and innovation.

3. Encouraging interdisciplinary research: Fostering connections between different fields, whether within the same faculty, across departments, or between institutions. Promoting interdisciplinary research will yield diverse findings and broader applications, particularly in language teaching, while deepening and expanding knowledge in relevant areas.

4. Utilizing findings from the knowledge landscape study on German linguistics and German language teaching in Thailand: Using the insights gained to inform curriculum development, update course content, and ensure that programs remain contemporary, enabling learners to apply their knowledge in both academic and professional contexts.

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