From Awareness to Engagement: A Comparative Study of Public Relations Communication for Deaf Communities in China and Thailand*



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Abstract

This study examines how public relations (PR) communication supports Deaf and hard-of-hearing inclusion in China and Thailand, focusing on the pathway from awareness to participation and empowerment. Given a deliberate design imbalance, the study combines primary focus-group evidence from China with a desk-based review of publicly available Thai communication materials; therefore, the Thailand-side findings are used to interpret communication ecology and institutional/community messaging practices rather than Deaf lived experience. Specifically, it aims: 1) to study how PR campaigns, policies, and media practices shape public views of Deaf inclusion, with focus on narrative framing, representation, and accessibility features; 2) to compare institutional and community-based communication models in China and Thailand, with focus on how government agencies, NGOs, schools, and Deaf-led organizations work together or act differently when promoting media accessibility and participation; 3) to develop an easy-to-apply framework for inclusive PR in Asia that links cultural-linguistic foundations with assistive technology and institutional-community communication levels; and 4) to investigate how different national and community communication systems help turn visibility into meaningful involvement and agency among Deaf communities. Using a qualitative cross-national design, the study draws on three focus groups with Deaf community members in China and a review of publicly available Thai communication materials, supported by related academic and news sources. Data were organized through descriptive thematic comparison to identify shared and divergent patterns in policy communication, media accessibility, technology use, and sign-language-based cultural participation. A concise comparative framework was then developed and applied to interpret how institutional and community actors shape inclusive communication ecosystems across both contexts.

The research results were found as follows: 1) PR narratives and accessibility features shape public understanding of Deaf inclusion by linking representation with participation and cultural recognition. 2) China and Thailand show different multi-actor models: China emphasizes policy-led institutional coordination and scaled accessibility technologies, while

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Thailand emphasizes community-led, sign-language-centered cultural communication. 3) The proposed inclusive PR framework—connecting institutional PR, media access, and cultural participation—offers a practical lens for cross-national comparison in Asia. 4) Sustainable empowerment is strongest when structural accessibility and cultural-linguistic support develop together, enabling co-creation and Deaf agency beyond awareness.

Keywords: Public Relations; Inclusive Communication; Sign Language; Media Accessibility; Deaf Communities

Introduction

In the era of digital transformation, media accessibility and inclusive communication have become essential to social sustainability. Globally, more than 1.5 billion people experience some level of hearing loss, and a substantial proportion require rehabilitation or ongoing communication support. Yet for deaf and hard-of-hearing communities, persistent communication barriers still limit equitable participation in education, employment, and public life, showing that accessibility remains not only a technical issue but also a social inclusion challenge (Gonzalez et al., 2025).

In this context, assistive technology, captioning services, and platform-based accessibility functions have expanded rapidly. PR has become part of this shift because it shapes public images of Deaf communities and influences how inclusion is understood. Across Asia, inclusion is pushed by the state, the market, and grassroots networks, but countries are not following one shared script. China shows a strong policy-and-tech route, where government bodies and major companies often scale barrier-free communication through innovation and coordinated messaging. Thailand shows a more culture-driven route, where Deaf associations, foundations, universities, and NGOs rely on sign-language media, social platforms, and cultural events to build visibility and strengthen community voice (Sriwisathiyakun and Dhamanitayakul, 2024). Overall, this supports the view that inclusive PR can reshape public understanding and reduce stigma when technical access and cultural recognition reinforce each other. In this study, “technical access” refers to concrete provisions such as the availability and quality of captions/sign-language interpretation (e.g., accuracy), affordability, and institutional provision, while “cultural recognition” refers to observable signals such as locally appropriate sign-language presence, representation quality, and Deaf-led or co-produced communication.

Even so, research in this field often feels fragmented. Technology, policy, and Deaf cultural media are frequently discussed on their own, and we still see relatively few cross-national studies that connect institutional PR, media access, and sign-language cultural participation. Thailand provides evidence that ICT-supported learning and sign-language resources can help strengthen participation and agency (Atanan et al., 2017). In parallel,

platform-oriented studies report that captioning and multilingual accessibility options can raise engagement while supporting fairer communication access (Li et al., 2021). Therefore, this study compares China and Thailand to clarify how multi-actor communication systems are organized, why their inclusion pathways diverge, and how a concise comparative framework can inform more culturally grounded and practically scalable models of inclusive PR communication across Asian contexts.

Objectives of the Research

1. To study how public relations campaigns, policies, and media practices shape public views of deaf inclusion, with focus on narrative framing, representation, and accessibility features.

2. To compare institutional and community-based communication models in China and Thailand, with focus on how government agencies, NGOs, schools, and Deaf-led organizations work together or act differently when promoting media accessibility and participation.

3. To develop an easy-to-apply framework for inclusive PR in Asia that links cultural-linguistic foundations with assistive technology and institutional-community communication levels.

4. To investigate how different national and community communication systems help turn visibility into meaningful involvement and agency among Deaf communities.

Research Methodology

The 1st Step: Literature Review

This study examined core theories and relevant literature on communication, accessibility, and Deaf participation in China and Thailand. It draws on three related theoretical traditions to examine how PR communication supports accessibility and inclusive participation.

Media Systems Theory helps explain why media systems differ across countries by linking them to political, economic, and cultural conditions. This theory helps show why China and Thailand use different communication approaches and how institutions manage control, participation, and representation (Hallin and Mancini, 2011).

Normative Media Theory describes the ethical duties of media to serve the public, support fairness, and ensure representation. For disability communication, this theory helps evaluate if PR and media practices meet standards of inclusion, diversity, and equity (McQuail and Deuze, 2020).

Organizational Communication Theory examines how institutions build interaction networks, manage relationships with stakeholders, and support dialogue. This lens helps explain how governments, NGOs, Deaf organizations, and schools work together to build an inclusive communication system (Heath and Johansen, 2018).

This combined theoretical base supports the study's Inclusive Communication Ecosystem Model, which shows PR as the connecting element that links policy, media, technology, and culture to promote accessibility.

The 2nd Step: Focus group discussion

This study is an asymmetric comparative qualitative study. Because the author is Deaf and uses Chinese Sign Language, direct focus-group discussions were feasible in China, but not in Thailand due to the lack of Thai Sign Language capacity. Focus groups involving 16 people (3 groups) were conducted. Due to the inability to have direct conversations with the deaf community in Thailand using Thai sign language, data collection was carried out through other means. Accordingly, cross-national claims are bounded: Thailand-side evidence is used to characterize communication ecology and institutional/community messaging practices rather than Deaf lived experience. Triangulation across focus-group themes, publicly available Thai materials, and related academic/news sources was used to mitigate bias. As shown in Table 1, the interview information was anonymized. The sample is skewed toward younger, educated, and "high-skilled" participants, which may over-emphasize technology-oriented experiences; therefore, findings are presented as indicative patterns rather than representative distributions. Ethical procedures included informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw. During the analysis process, data integration was carried out using NVivo. Coding followed an iterative thematic procedure (initial coding-focused categories-cross-group themes). Although single-coder, coding memos and an audit trail were maintained, and quoted materials were meaning-checked during translation from signed communication into written Chinese/English to reduce interpretation drift.

Table 1: Anonymous Record Form of Focus Group Respondents

Serial number	Age range	Identity category	Focus of attention
FG1-A	26-30	High-skilled talent	Promotion of innovative equipment
FG1-B	26-30	High-skilled talent	Obstacles and Misunderstandings
FG1-C	26-30	High-skilled talent	Improvement of communication efficiency
FG1-D	20-25	High-skilled talent	Scientific and technological innovation
FG1-E	26-30	High-skilled talent	Resource sharing
FG2-A	20-25	Highly educated talents	Technology for the Disabled
FG2-B	25-30	Highly educated talents	Barrier-free construction
FG2-C	31-35	Highly educated talents	Equality of rights
FG2-D	25-30	Highly educated talents	Media publicity

Serial number	Age range	Identity category	Focus of attention
FG2-E	20-25	Highly educated talents	Technology promotion
FG3-A	25-30	Youth organizer	Social responsibility and communication bridge
FG3-B	25-30	Youth volunteer	Convenience of life and economic compensation
FG3-C	31-35	Youth organizer	Word-of-mouth promotion and public relations
FG3-D	31-35	Youth organizer	Barrier-free social collaboration
FG3-E	25-30	Youth volunteer	Confidence and family Support for the hard of hearing
FG3-F	25-30	Youth volunteer	Medical insurance centralized procurement and media marketing

The 3rd Step: Data collection

This study employed the following methods for data collection.

1. Content analysis, which included media content such as official promotional activities and online public videos from China Central Television, news channels, Thai Public Broadcasting Service, Bangkok Post, etc., as well as reports and press releases from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and companies. The unit of analysis was each distinct communication item (e.g., one video segment, one post/page, or one press-release/campaign item). Materials were selected using transparent inclusion rules (items explicitly addressing Deaf inclusion, sign language, captioning/accessibility, or disability-related communication) within a defined time window, and coded with a shared scheme across countries (accessibility features, representation/framing, and actor roles/partnerships) to support comparability.

2. Case studies, including Silent Coffee in China; China Tencent Accessibility Innovation Laboratory; China's World Deaf Day activities; Thai Deaf Coffee House; Thailand's National Deaf Day and International Deaf Week; Thai Full-Screen Sign Language Channel, etc. Case selection followed a maximum-variation rationale across institutional, corporate, and community-led settings; cases are treated as illustrative communication configurations rather than as representative of nationwide accessibility conditions, reducing cherry-picking risk.

Research Results

The 1st objective is to clarify how accessibility narratives and representational strategies in PR shape public understanding of Deaf inclusion, it was found that:

Media accessibility is defined as the degree to which media environments offer fair access through captioning, sign-language interpretation, haptic feedback, and visual interfaces (Peacock, 2019). Accessibility also includes cognitive, linguistic, and cultural aspects, so representation becomes important for shaping public views of Deaf inclusion. Strong, active

portrayals of Deaf individuals can reduce stereotypes and support everyday normalization. In contrast, weak or scarce representation often reinforces marginalization.

Digital platforms are creating new opportunities for Deaf-led media production. This development supports the idea of “Deaf digital empowerment,” driven in part by auto-captioning, multimodal design, and AI translation tools. However, issues of accuracy, algorithmic bias, and the dominance of spoken-language standards remain persistent challenges. From the perspective of cultural citizenship, inclusive media help Deaf individuals secure civic presence by connecting representation with identity formation and social participation. These ideas together suggest that PR and media practices play an active role in shaping public understandings of Deaf inclusion (Couldry, 2006).

FG1-A states that even though technology advertisements are not made specifically for the deaf, the functions shown still attract deaf users: "During the advertisement of the smart glasses launched by Meizu, it was not clearly said that it was for the hard of hearing, but the functions like Chinese and English transcription, meeting records, and map navigation are very useful to us."

FG2-D explains that the media has increased social attention and cultural representation: "Many deaf people now create their own media, and there are celebrities and movies that talk about it. Able-bodied people can see our lives, which helps break stereotypes."

FG3-F says that medical reports have changed the expectations of the deaf for future technology: "A friend shared news about a new gene-restoration surgery for deafness in Shanghai. It made me feel excited. It gives a new sense of hope."

FG3-C points out the problems in policy promotion: "Policy announcements often come only in written form, and there are no sign language videos. It is hard for the hard of hearing to get complete information."

The interviewer’s notes show how media stories build trust in technology, how self-media increases visibility and representation for the deaf community, how poor communication formats limit access to policies, and how public relations activities help increase cultural understanding and reduce prejudice.

From the research result, China builds Deaf inclusion mainly through a policy-driven and technology-focused story. Accessibility is placed inside national modernization plans. PR campaigns such as Barrier-Free China help increase visibility through centralized media. Technological projects, including AI captions, sign-language avatars, and digital interpreters used during the 2022 Winter Olympics, show a state-led social and technical approach.

Thailand builds inclusion mainly through community-driven and cultural-linguistic stories. PR and media practices focus on storytelling, identity, and sign language culture. The Malai sign-language avatar shows a form of representation based on local culture. Because Thailand-side evidence in this study is materials-based (rather than participant-derived), this

characterization refers to institutional/community messaging patterns and communication ecology, not Thai Deaf lived experience.

The 2nd objective is to identify how multi-actor communication networks operate differently across national contexts, it was found that:

Asian communication systems differ widely because of political structures, institutional frameworks, and cultural norms. China uses a state-led media model in which communication follows national development goals and public-service tasks. Government bodies, technology companies, and public institutions work to promote accessibility through AI captioning, machine translation, and assistive devices (Cui et al., 2019). PR campaigns highlight modernization, technological progress, and the national goal of "barrier-free development."

Thailand adopts a hybrid, participatory approach in which community media, civil society, and cultural diversity all play an active role. In practice, Deaf associations, the Deaf Foundation, universities, and various NGOs collaborate to produce sign-language media, organize cultural activities, and advocate for linguistic rights. What stands out is Thailand's tendency to treat sign language not merely as a communication aid but as a cultural expression in its own right, reflecting an anthropological perspective on Deaf identity and community.

FG1-C points out structural problems: "Hardware is too expensive. Sign language recognition devices cost around 50,000 yuan, which makes it impossible for small schools to use them. Policy subsidies are also not enough."

"Many institutions see technology promotion as the job of the technical department. There is no cooperation between educators, deaf students, and engineers."

FG1-B pointed out a practical barrier: "Teachers need to buy real-time captioning software by themselves and renew the subscription every month."

FG2-B highlights the lack of accessibility support in regular schools: "Regular schools almost have no captioning equipment or sign language translators, and deaf students often cannot follow the classes."

FG3-A describes a community-based learning network: "In the sign language club, able-bodied people learn sign language through translation software. We can also make friends and help each other."

FG3-E and FG3-G explain the role of online communities: "Platforms like Zhihu and Douban let us exchange experiences and share which technologies are more suitable for the deaf community."

The interview revealed significant differences in the technical promotion approaches, resource allocation, and communication models between the institutions and the schools.

As shown in Table 2, this study does not attempt to cover all higher education institutions for the deaf in China and Thailand. Instead, following the principles of theoretical representativeness and communication-mode differentiation, six universities were selected as

illustrative cases. They are not meant to fully represent either system; instead, they are used as examples that help show differences in language policy, technology use, institutional support, and cultural priorities. Beyond these cases, many other institutions also play important roles through accessibility programs, teacher training, assistive technology development, and inclusive education, all of which shape the wider communication ecosystem.

Table 2: A comparison of some universities related to deaf people in China and Thailand

Country	University and Establishment time	Educational positioning	Main features	Dissemination mode
China	Technical College for the Deaf, Tianjin University of Technology. 1991 (admissions); 1997 (formal naming)	It is the first higher engineering special education college in China and the fourth in the world to recruit deaf people nationwide	Research and development of sign language recognition technology; Intelligent multi-functional classroom; Inclusive education	Tech-mediated
	Special Education College Changchun University 1987	The first higher special education college in China and also the first in Asia	Comprehensive disciplines; Sign language teacher/translation base; Equal emphasis on rehabilitation and education	Language-Culture
	Special Education College of Beijing Union University 2000	China's first comprehensive special education college that integrates the disabled and the able-bodied	Language and Character Promotion base; Special Education Resource Center; Campus barrier-free system	Organizational-Policy Communication

Country	University and Establishment time	Educational positioning	Main features	Dissemination mode
Thailand	Faculty of Medicine Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University Ratchasuda Institute 1992	Established in accordance with the generous mercy of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindorn, daughter of HM the King of Thailand	Multi-camera mode sign language class; Training for deaf sign language teachers; Deaf culture orientation	Deaf Cultural Communication
	Graduated School of Srinakharinwirot University (Graduate Diploma Program in Special Education and Care) Founded in 1974; project start date unknown	Practice-oriented learning with real-world application in working with and caring for individuals with special needs.	Mature special education; Emphasize integration and multilingual learning; Well-developed teacher training system	Inclusive-Educational Communication
	Disability Support Services of Chiang Mai University Founded in 1965; project start date unknown	The initiative aims to support students with disabilities by creating inclusive living and learning environments that facilitate access to higher education.	Sign language interpretation support; Subtitle/note-taking clerk; Learning support service system	Inclusive Support Communication

China operates through state-led institutional coordination, where government agencies, state media, and technology corporations collaborate to scale nationwide accessibility infrastructures. This model centralizes authority and standardizes accessibility, producing a cohesive but top-down communication ecosystem. Thailand uses regulatory facilitation combined with bottom-up collaboration, where NGOs, universities such as Mahidol University, and Deaf associations co-develop media accessibility initiatives. This creates a decentralized, community-participatory model aligned.

The 3rd objective is to synthesize a concise comparative lens that links policy, media practice, technology, and Deaf cultural participation, it was found that:

Public relations in this study is understood as a critical mechanism for disability inclusion. It increases public awareness of accessibility and communication rights and encourages two-way engagement that allows marginalized groups to inform and influence institutional decisions. From this perspective, inclusive PR must emphasize not only communication with Deaf communities but also communication by Deaf communities, treating Deaf people as active agents rather than passive audiences.

Within the framework of this study, Deafness is approached primarily as a cultural-linguistic identity rather than only a medical condition. Sign language functions as a marker of belonging, shared memory, and community continuity. When signed languages are recognized and meaningfully integrated into media, education, and public communication, Deaf participation and identity affirmation are strengthened. This emphasis on Deaf agency—understood as the capacity to shape communication environments, create cultural content, and advocate for equal rights—aligns with dialogic and co-creative approaches in inclusive PR.

Assistive technologies constitute the technological dimension of the framework developed in this study. Captioning systems, mobile speech-to-text services, AI translation, and smart wearable tools can reduce everyday communication barriers and expand access to digital participation. At the same time, this study recognizes that over-reliance on speech-centered AI may unintentionally sideline sign-language users or reinforce hearing-centered norms if cultural-linguistic needs are not equally prioritized. Sign language is a key marker of belonging and community continuity. When it is meaningfully integrated into media, education, and public communication, Deaf participation, identity, and agency are strengthened, aligning with dialogic and co-creative inclusive PR.

FG2-C points out the deficiencies of public cultural products in sign language: "The sign language translation at the Spring Festival Gala is in international sign language, which is incomprehensible. We hope to use natural sign language." This directly supports the "cultural language adaptation" dimension in the framework.

FG1-E presents a typical multi-level communication ecosystem: "There is a gap between policy standardization and the individualized needs of the deaf. It requires coordination across policy, technology, and society."

FG1-A / FG2-D highlights the role of smart glasses, phone-based translation, and captioning tools in daily interactions: "Smart glasses allow you to communicate more naturally without constantly staring at your phone." "Call assistants can speak on behalf of me and the other party, solving the difficulties in telephone communication."

The respondents constantly emphasize the interweaving of cultural language (sign language), technological innovation, and institutional structure, which provides raw materials for constructing the communication framework.

The comparative findings enabled the construction of a framework linking policy foundations, media practices, educational-employment pathways, and cultural representation. China's plan is socio-technical, and it relies on modernizing institutions and making assistive technologies more widely available to support communication for everyone. Thailand's approach is cultural-linguistic and uses sign language, participatory storytelling, and community-led cultural expression to keep people included. The resulting framework brings together different levels of elements, including technology, cultural identity, institutional structure, and community agency. This shows that PR communication in Asia needs to be both

easy to reach and culturally and linguistically appropriate. This creates a two-part model: technological efficiency on one side and identity-based agency on the other. This helps create a simple way to compare different communication ecosystems.

The 4th objective is to examine how PR ecosystems translate awareness into durable participation and empowerment, it was found that:

Empowerment seems most likely when media and institutions stop relying only on one-way messaging and instead build ongoing, shared forms of engagement. From an inclusive PR angle, dialogic and more symmetrical communication creates room for co-creation, allowing Deaf communities to move from being talked about to speaking with and for themselves. Seen this way, advocacy communication is not only a strategy for being seen. It also pushes back against exclusion and opens space for fuller public recognition of marginalized groups.

This study understands Deaf agency as a key driver of empowerment. Agency here means having the capacity to influence communication environments, advocate for equal rights, and produce cultural narratives based on sign-language lived experience. Deaf-led media production, festivals, and digital storytelling demonstrate that active participation can strengthen identity and build a more visible and confident collective presence.

AI captioning and speech recognition can help across education, work, and daily life, but only when they are accurate, affordable, and accessible. More importantly, this study views technology as support, not replacement: it should be designed to match cultural-linguistic needs rather than override sign-language-centered communication. From this comparative perspective, China's stronger technology-driven orientation tends to improve efficiency and scale accessibility, while Thailand's cultural-linguistic orientation more often nurtures community identity, narrative ownership, and participatory confidence. Together, these patterns suggest that progress from awareness to participation and empowerment depends on how well institutions connect technology, culture, and community roles within a single communication ecosystem. Given the cross-sectional qualitative evidence and the materials-based Thailand data, this should be read as a proposed mechanism supported by illustrative examples, rather than a measured transition over time.

The respondents demonstrated a dynamic change from "passively accepting technology" to "actively using it and offering suggestions" in multiple interviews.

FG1-C: "Healthy students use translation software to learn sign language with us. Over time, they can understand us without translation, and communication relies on patience and attention."

FG2-D: "Foreign countries hold world deaf people events. I think that kind of international exchange is particularly attractive to us."

FG1-D: "Technology should evolve from being an 'auxiliary tool' to a natural extension of equal participation in society."

FG2-E pointed to a practical problem with translation apps in real life: "In noisy environments, iFLYTEK's recognition errors are more frequent."

FG3-F explained how a simple medical situation can quickly become stressful when communication breaks down: "When going to the hospital, the doctor wore a mask and couldn't see the patient's mouth movements or understand their words, which made him very anxious."

More broadly, China appears to raise awareness and expand participation through a strong institutional presence, nationwide accessibility technologies, and relatively structured education and employment support (e.g., AI captioning systems, quota-based hiring, and CSR programs). In this model, empowerment grows mainly through large-scale socio-technical inclusion, supported by community-facing complements such as the Silent Cafe. Thailand, by contrast, appears to move from awareness toward empowerment through bottom-up, community-led communication—sign-language media, Deaf-run businesses (such as Thai Deaf Cafe), and cultural events that strengthen identity, expand participation, and give Deaf communities greater ownership of their own stories.

The New Body of Knowledge

As shown in the Figure 1, this study demonstrates that China and Thailand promote inclusive communication among the deaf through two distinct but complementary approaches: China focuses on policy-driven technology to enhance communication efficiency, while Thailand emphasizes cultural co-creation driven by the sign language community. Although they focus on different aspects, both advance along the common arc from awareness to participation and empowerment.

The inclusive ecological communication system model in this paper brings these dynamics together. This shows that accessibility works best when it is not only efficient, but also caring and collaborative. When that happens, inclusive communication becomes a dynamic system where deaf people are no longer just receiving messages—they are creating them too. This shift increases visibility, participation, and cultural belonging.

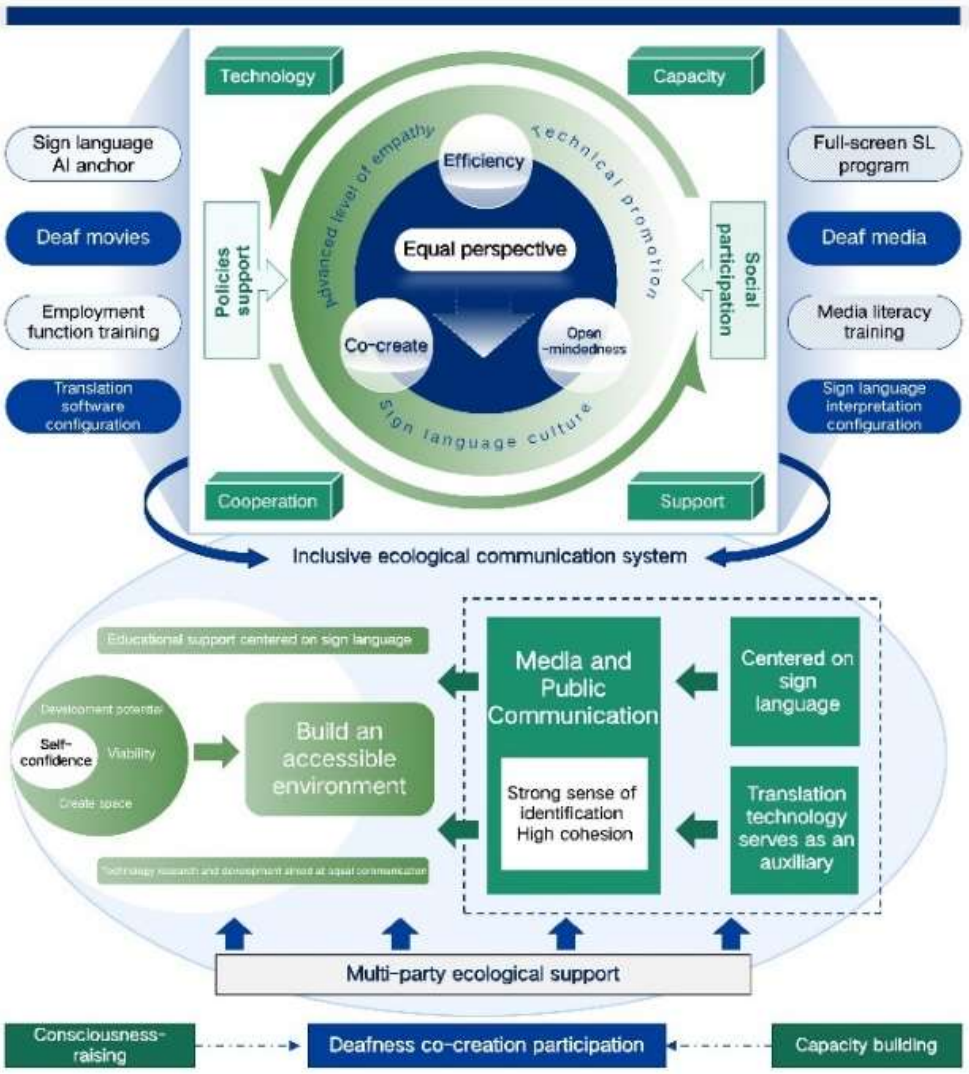


Figure 1: Inclusive Communication Model

Discussion of Research Results

From the research result of the 1st objective, it was found that China builds Deaf inclusion through technology-driven efficiency, while Thailand focuses on cultural-linguistic empathy and community storytelling. This is because China tends to place accessibility within institutional agendas and large-scale technological rollout, whereas Thailand more often advances inclusion through sign-language visibility, cultural self-representation, and community-led media activity. This is consistent with the concept, theory, and research work of Suwansa-ard (2025).

From the research result of the 2nd objective, it was found that China leans toward state coordination and technological partnerships, while Thailand leans toward decentralized teamwork among NGOs, universities, and Deaf associations. This is because China's model commonly relies on policy-driven coordination and corporate capacity to expand accessibility

at scale, while Thailand's model depends more on networked cooperation across education, civil society, and Deaf-led organizations to sustain participation and everyday access. This is consistent with the concept, theory, and research work of Atanan et al. (2017).

From the research result of the 3rd objective, it was found that the Inclusive Ecological Communication System Model brings together efficiency, empathy, and co-creation as the main parts of accessible communication. This is because accessibility outcomes improve when technical solutions are matched with cultural-linguistic respect and when Deaf communities are involved in planning, production, and evaluation, rather than being consulted only after tools or campaigns are launched. This is consistent with the concept, theory, and research work of Zhao and Zhang (2018) and Servaes (2022).

From the research result of the 4th objective, it was found that both countries support shifts from awareness to participation and empowerment, but they use different paths. This is because empowerment is more likely to last when Deaf people move beyond receiving accessible information to shaping messages, platforms, and cultural narratives within supportive systems; China typically advances this through institutionalized socio-technical arrangements, while Thailand more often advances it through sign-language-centered cultural practice and community participation. This is consistent with the concept, theory, and research work of Suwansa-ard (2025) and Jones et al. (2021).

Conclusion

The Inclusive Ecological Communication System shows three main insights. China's strength is efficiency, which creates large-scale structural accessibility. Thailand's strength is empathy, which supports sign-language culture and participatory representation. Co-creation is the meeting point, which allows a mixed model that fits wider Asian contexts. This comparison suggests that neither pathway is sufficient on its own: policy-led scale needs community feedback to stay responsive, while community-led cultural work benefits from stable institutional and technological support.

By bringing together technology, cultural identity, and multi-party collaboration, the model presents accessibility as a living ecosystem, not a single action. This ecosystem grows through interaction, participation, and shared meaning-making. It also reminds practitioners to avoid treating AI tools as a universal fix; accessibility improves most when technologies are affordable, culturally aligned, and designed with Deaf stakeholders from the start.

Suggestions

From the results of the research, the researcher has the following suggestions:

1. The suggestions from the research

From the research result of the 1st objective, it was found that public awareness is the starting point for building inclusive communication systems. It shapes public views of

accessibility and supports Deaf participation. Relevant agencies should move beyond simple awareness campaigns and use evidence-based communication strategies that change how stories are framed. This includes: (1) Embedding sign-language representation and Deaf culture in mainstream media production, not as extra features but as central parts of the story. (2) Creating accessibility checks for all public communication materials to make sure they follow international accessibility standards. (3) Developing cross-border awareness programs between China and Thailand to support shared learning about inclusive storytelling. These actions support a shift from symbolic inclusion to real visibility.

From the research result of the 2nd objective, it was found that capacity building is a structural need for long-term empowerment. It shapes individual competencies, institutional preparedness, and the sector's overall capacity. Relevant institutions should: (1) develop a full capacity-building ecosystem for Deaf media workers and interpreters that links training, mentorship, certification, and clear job pathways. (2) offer interdisciplinary programs that integrate technology, communication, and Deaf studies, so institutions can adopt an approach that is both culturally grounded and technologically capable. (3) Support exchanges between Chinese and Thai institutions, using China's technological strengths and Thailand's cultural-linguistic strengths. These steps help turn capacity building into a sustainable institutional practice.

From the research result of the 3rd objective, it was found that co-creation is necessary for helping Deaf individuals move from passive recipients to active communicators and cultural co-creators. Relevant organizations should: (1) Build co-creation governance systems that require Deaf representatives to take part in planning, design, testing, and evaluation. (2) Create long-term "Deaf–hearing collaborative labs" with universities, NGOs, government agencies, and tech companies to test and improve inclusive communication tools.

From the research result of the 4th objective, it was found that co-creation supports sustainable empowerment by strengthening agency, authorship, and cultural ownership among Deaf communities. Relevant organizations should: Use participatory evaluation models that measure not only accessibility outcomes but also agency, authorship, and cultural ownership among Deaf communities. This step helps co-creation go from "small experiments" to something that can benefit everyone.

2. The suggestions for future research

The future research should involve the following issues:

2.1 Future research should study how the awareness–capacity–co-creation process changes over time. It should check if communication systems support stable empowerment or create new types of inequality.

2.2 Future studies can explore how different governance models influence the effectiveness of accessibility technologies, the shape of narrative representation, and the strength of community agency in inclusive PR.

2.3 Researchers could develop stronger multi-country comparative frameworks to explore how cultural-linguistic identities interact with emerging tools such as AI sign language and real-time captioning. More attention is also needed on ethics, cultural authenticity, and user acceptance.

2.4 More attention is needed on practical affordability and long-term sustainability—especially funding models and cost–benefit arrangements that can strengthen regional, large-scale co-creation projects.

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