

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.11425181

ENLIGHTENMENT THROUGH SIMPLICITY: CULTURAL ODOR, VALUE RESONANCE, AND THE CROSS-CULTURAL TRANSMISSION OF JAPANESE SELF-HELP IN THAILAND

Rotjaret Narongrach^{1*}, Ed Vollans², Charlin Nukul³

¹Walailak University, Thailand. nrotjare@mail.wu.ac.th, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8029-8182>

²University of Leicester, UK. ev60@leicester.ac.uk

³Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Thailand. charlin_n@rmutt.ac.th

Received: 11/11/2025

Accepted: 18/12/2025

Corresponding Author: Rotjaret Narongrach

(nrotjare@mail.wu.ac.th)

ABSTRACT

This article examines the reception of Japanese self-help books translated into Thai between 2015 and 2025 to explain the mechanisms of cross-cultural transmission and the conditions that enable their social acceptance. A qualitatively informed content analysis with light quantification was applied to a corpus of forty titles authored by Japanese and Japan-experienced writers or explicitly marketed as “Japanese.” Coding captured canonical concepts, the salience of “Japaneseness” through Iwabuchi’s cultural odor framework and adapted dimensions of Thai-value resonance. The results reveal two recurrent repertoires: a meaning-centric stream foregrounding ethical reflection and life philosophy (ikigai, wabi-sabi, ichigo-ichie, and Zen/minimalism) and an action-centric stream of operational practices (kaizen, dandori, and ganbaru/gaman). These repertoires frequently co-occur as modular bundles that couple moral orientation with routinized practice. Cultural odor is generally present in the moderate range overall. However, distribution varies by market segment: business/management and life-philosophy titles lead with pronounced Japanese frames, whereas productivity and health texts often universalize or scientize their content. Thai-value resonance is strongest where meaning- and simplicity-oriented repertoires converge with Buddhist ethics and sufficiency discourses, but less consistent for hierarchy and family/community. These findings demonstrate that Japanese self-help translations function simultaneously as ethical frames and practice templates. They travel across cultural boundaries by modulating odor balancing recognizably Japanese cues with universalist framing and by selectively aligning with local moral sensibilities.

KEYWORDS: Thai-Translated Japanese Self-Help Books, Cross-Cultural Transmission, Cultural Odor, Japanese Life Philosophy, Thai Cultural Values.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Thai editions of *keihatsubon* (啓発本, self-help books) have become increasingly visible in bookstores, online platforms, and reading communities. These texts span minimalist approaches and operational toolkits *kaizen* (continuous improvement), *dandori* (planning/sequencing), and *danshari* (decluttering/letting go) as well as philosophical frames such as *ikigai* (life purpose), *wabi-sabi* (beauty in imperfection), and *ichigo-ichie* (treasuring unique moments). Many emphasize actionable techniques designed to enhance study and work performance.

Regional studies suggest that “Japaneseness” has become embedded in Thai urban everyday life. Toyoshima (2011) documents how Thai youth consume Japan through media, food, fashion, and fan cultures, while maintaining broadly positive attitudes toward Japan. Such cultural networks, including language learning, normalize familiarity with Japan for contemporary audiences. Historically, Lomwathanacham (2018) shows how 1930s Japanese juvenile fiction projected cooperation between Japan and Siam, while subtly reinforcing hierarchical relations by positioning Japanese protagonists as superior guides. These representational patterns partly explain the legibility of Japanese proposals emphasizing ethics, order, and efficiency in Thailand.

Yet critical scholarship warns that the popularity of self-help books may reflect social tensions. Burkeman (2024) notes that booming self-help markets do not necessarily indicate happier societies; rather, such texts emerge to address perceived deficiencies. In the Japan–Thailand context, Japanese self-help is framed as offering solutions to shared modern challenges. Japan is widely viewed as a model of discipline and work efficiency, despite ongoing discourse about long hours and high stress. Accordingly, formulas blending systematization with an “ethics of simplicity” resonate with Thai readers seeking balance and productivity.

Although scholarship has examined Japanese popular culture in Thailand, little attention has been given to Japanese self-help as a social text that simultaneously constructs “Japaneseness” and proposes repertoires of practices. This study addresses that gap through a qualitatively informed content analysis, with light quantification, of 40 Thai translations of Japanese self-help books (2015–2025). **These works span seven categories** (1) philosophy/life meaning and happiness, (2) business and management, (3) learning enhancement, (4) work/time management, (5) relationship/communication skills,

(6) organization of life/home/objects/data, and (7) healthcare. The analysis focuses on Japanese repertoires including *kaizen*, *ganbaru/gaman* (perseverance/endurance), *dandori*, *danshari*, minimalism, and *nagomi* (harmony/balance) and examines the extent of cultural odor (recognizable Japaneseness) within the texts.

Three research questions guide the analysis

1. Content repertoires: What Japanese concepts and practices are emphasized, and how are philosophical frames balanced with systematizing tools?
2. Construction of Japaneseness: How is Japaneseness articulated within the texts, and to what degree is cultural odor present?
3. Value resonance: How do these contents align with or challenge Thai values such as Theravada Buddhist compassion, sufficiency, *krengjai* (consideration/face), and community orientation?

By analyzing textual construction rather than audience reception, this article clarifies how Japanese self-help editions in Thailand instantiate “Japaneseness.” It further proposes a systematic framework for mapping conceptual repertoires and value resonance in cross-cultural knowledge transfer.

1.1. Glossary of Japanese Concepts

This glossary defines and contextualizes key Japanese concepts recurring across the corpus of Thai-translated Japanese self-help books (2015–2025) analyzed in this study.

Dandori (段取り): Front-loaded planning and sequencing that organizes steps, resources, and timing before execution to minimize waste and ensure a smooth workflow.

Danshari (断捨離): A triad literally meaning “cut-discard-separate”: the practice of letting go of non-essential possessions, tasks, and mental burdens to reclaim focus and space.

Ganbaru/Gaman (頑張る/我慢): *Ganbaru* denotes disciplined perseverance and keeping at a task; *gaman* denotes endurance or forbearance in the face of hardship.

Hara hachi bu (腹八分目): A proverbial dietary guideline to “eat until the belly is eight-tenths full” (~80% satiety), emphasizing temperance, self-control, and bodily attunement; in contemporary self-help and health discourse, a shorthand for portion discipline and mindful moderation often linked (cautiously) to longevity.

Honne / Tatema (本音/建前): *Honne* is one’s true feelings or views; *tatema* is the socially

appropriate stance or presentation. The pair captures calibrated sincerity and face-saving in social communication.

Ichigo-ichie (一期一会): “Once-in-a-lifetime meeting”; the ethic of treasuring the present moment as a unique, unrepeatable encounter.

Ikigai (生きがい): “Reason for living” or life meaning; the alignment of what one loves and is good at with what is needed and can sustain one’s livelihood.

Kaizen (改善): A philosophy of continuous, incremental improvement achieved through small, disciplined changes and regular review, oriented to sustained enhancement of work or everyday life.

Kodawari (こだわり): Scrupulous attention to craft and standards an insistence on detail and finish that goes beyond “good enough” to work one can be proud to sign.

Minimalism (ミニマリズム): A way of life structured around “less is more,” reducing material and contractual load to increase clarity, attention, and quality of life.

Mottainai (もったいない): An ethic of non-wastefulness and mindful use of resources “what a waste” as a moral injunction to value things, time, and energy.

Mukokuseki / Cultural Odor (無国籍 / 文化の匂い): A paired lens for “Japaneseness” in texts and commodities: Mukokuseki names perceived nationality-neutrality or borderlessness, while cultural odor names recognizable Japan-specific cues.

Nagomi (和/和み): Harmony or gentle balance; a composure that privileges moderation and relational attunement across work, life, and social ties.

Sanpo-yoshi (三方よし): “Good in three directions”; a business ethic seeking benefit for the seller, the buyer, and society at large.

Wabi-sabi (侘び寂び): An aesthetic of imperfection, impermanence, and simplicity that finds value in patina, modesty, and the “just enough.”

Zen (禅): A Buddhist tradition emphasizing simplicity, direct practice, and mindful awareness; in contemporary usage, a shorthand for pared-down habits that cultivate inner clarity.

2. JAPAN AS A THAI DEVELOPMENT TEMPLATE: THE NARRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

A longer historical view indicates that “Japan” was progressively constituted as knowledge, model, and symbolic capital in Thailand from the early twentieth century onward. Diplomatic ties revived

under King Chulalongkorn and Emperor Meiji, and Thai elites increasingly regarded Japan as a successful exemplar of “civilization” following its modern reforms and victories over Qing China and Imperial Russia an appraisal that encouraged selective policy emulation (Methasate, 2024, p. 59). In the earliest phase of Thai access to Japanese texts (ca. 1900–1930), translations were limited and curated by individual intellectuals who financed and circulated them. Because direct expertise in Japanese was scarce, most translations were mediated through English, including some of the first Japanese novels in Thai (Methasate, 2024, pp. 57, 65). Media events such as war newsreels screened in Bangkok further amplified public curiosity and created a receptive readership (Methasate, 2024, p. 62).

By the late 1930s, translation activity shifted from private initiative to institutional sponsorship from Japan. The Institute of Japano-Thai Culture, founded in 1938, issued at least sixteen publications between 1940 and 1943, including textbooks, primers, and works on Japanese Buddhism, framed by the message that “we are in Asia together and share the same religion.” This normalized cultural proximity and goodwill (Methasate, 2024, pp. 66–67). Although later merged into a broader cultural center in 1943, the institute had already established direct channels for Japan-related knowledge production at a formative moment (Methasate, 2024, p. 70).

Domestically, after the 1932 revolution, the People’s Party advanced a nation-building agenda that sought non-Western models of development. Japan was identified as a template blending modern technoscience with cultural continuity (Chaiching, 2020, pp. 12–13, 19, 309–310). High-level study missions intensified, with ministers, MPs, and civil-military officials conducting extensive visits. Policy discussions incorporated Pridi Banomyong’s requests on finance and infrastructure, civil-service training, and groundwork toward a central bank (Chaiching, 2020, pp. 58, 61). Student mobility also rose, from around seventy Thai students in Japan in 1936/37 to 133 by 1938–41, supported by Japanese-funded visitor schemes that required reports upon return (Chaiching, 2020, pp. 91, 203).

Economic interdependence deepened as Japanese industrial goods expanded market share and Japanese firms and banks established a presence in Thailand (Chaiching, 2020, pp. 55–57, 65–66). Thai journalists and public intellectuals reinforced these encounters through reportage and books. Kulap Saipradit’s experience at the Asahi highlighted “Japanese work virtues” discipline, frugality, reading, endurance, and national purpose as assets

for Thai nation-building (Chaiching, 2020, pp. 200–203, 128–131, 142, 148, 169–170). Similarly, Luang Wichitwathakan sought to adapt Bushido into a public ethic that valorized loyalty, courage, sincerity, and self-restraint as cultural drivers of modernization (Chaiching, 2020, pp. 80–81, 90, 235, 238).

This historical background helps explain why Japanese themes of discipline, efficiency, systematization, and an “ethics of simplicity” remain readily intelligible and often attractive to Thai readers. When Japanese self-help titles later circulated widely in Thai translation, they did not enter a vacuum. Instead, they moved through interpretive frames that had long rendered “Japan” a legible and credible source of knowledge in Thailand.

2.1. Consuming Japaneseness in Contemporary Thai Society

Since the early 2000s, Bangkok has witnessed a marked expansion of “consuming Japan,” particularly among youth, encompassing Japanese-style fashion, cosmetics, anime-themed goods, and stationery (Toyoshima, 2008, p. 253). This trend paralleled regional dynamics in which J-POP, TV dramas, and manga/anime became East Asian staples during the mid-1990s. In Thailand, consumption evolved into a systematized media ecology: manga/anime shifted from piracy to licensed publishing with merchandising and fan networks, while Japanese TV content gained broader broadcast presence (pp. 260–263, 266, 270). Toyoshima identifies four drivers value proximity, mass-media influence, Japanese mobility and investment, and saturation of Japanese brands (pp. 275–276) further strengthened by internet expansion, targeted media strategies, and middle-class growth (pp. 276–277). The result is a cultural “mosaic” in which product categories reinforce one another, rendering “Japaneseness” a familiar interpretive frame (p. 279). Notably, Thai accounts of “value proximity” highlight shared Buddhism, politeness, kindness, and respect for elders (p. 275).

Within this soft-power terrain, anime plays a key role in transmitting cultural values. Saladtook and Banterng (2023) demonstrate how food-themed anime embed concepts such as *kodawari* (craftsmanship), *shun* (seasonality), cleanliness, *omotenashi* (hospitality), and family warmth, encouraging both attraction and emulation through media-mix circuits. These depictions align with “Cool Japan” strategies that mobilize pop culture for global influence. Complementing this,

Likhitbanthun and Kraipakon (2024) show how Thai idol fandoms (e.g., AKB48/BNK48) integrate online-offline practices and merchandising, further domesticating “Japan” in everyday life.

Together, these strands suggest two levels of cultural readiness in Thailand: (1) widespread familiarity with Japanese symbols and values through sustained pop-cultural exposure (Toyoshima, 2008), and (2) deep participatory engagement through fan infrastructures (Likhitbanthun & Kraipakon, 2024). Within this backdrop, Japanese self-help repertoires *kaizen* (continuous improvement), *dandori* (planning), minimalism, and an “ethics of simplicity” arrive not as alien imports but as frameworks that resonate with established value horizons and credibility cues cultivated by long-term multi-channel exposure to “Japaneseness.”

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS FOR READING “JAPAN” IN ASIA

This review synthesizes conceptual accounts of how “Japaneseness” circulates in East and Southeast Asia to clarify the conditions under which Thai readers perceive Japanese self-help as credible. Since the late 1980s, Japanese cultural commodities have been widely exported and consumed across metropolitan circuits: Japanese fashion magazines saturated Hong Kong newsstands, manga were routinely translated into Korean, Thai, Indonesian, and Taiwanese markets, and franchises such as Hello Kitty, Anpanman, and Pokémon appeared on everyday goods, with dubbed anime reaching mass audiences (Otmazgin, 2007). While extensive research in media studies and anthropology has examined these flows, much of it remains centered on global-local dynamics and text-based analysis, leaving underexplored the regional industrial and urban infrastructures that enable cross-border mobility (Otmazgin, 2007).

Iwabuchi advances this debate by theorizing “cultural odor” and *mukokuseki* (odorlessness), explaining why some Japanese products circulate as neutral while others remain recognizably Japanese even after localization (Iwabuchi, 2002, 2004). He situates Japan’s cultural power within decentered globalization. What is exported is less a fixed essence than a “Japanese experience of indigenizing the West,” whereby audiences consume hybridized “Western” forms through Japanese packaging (Iwabuchi, 2002). Ethnographic evidence presented in *Feeling Asian Modernities* illustrates how dramas encode work virtues, such as *ganbaru* (perseverance), which viewers appropriate

differently based on their age and context, thereby mediating their anxieties and aspirations toward modernity (Iwabuchi, 2004).

When compared, the concept of cultural odor both differs from and overlaps with adjacent frameworks such as Nye's soft power and Straubhaar's cultural proximity. Nye (1990, 2004) situates soft power at the macro level, defining it as "the ability to attain what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment." Its sources lie in culture, political values, and foreign policies perceived as legitimate. Nye (2004) further explains that soft power diffuses slowly through networks of media, institutions, and civil society. This dynamic is closely tied to practices of cultural and public diplomacy, long employed by great powers to disseminate ideologies and values through literature, cinema, and media. Importantly, soft power is not exercised by states alone: private actors and civil society also play crucial roles, making its effects fluid, difficult to control, and variable across different societies. Contrarily, Straubhaar (1991) focuses on audiences. His analysis of Brazilian television shows how viewers gravitate toward culturally proximate texts. However, technological infrastructures, market dependence, and class divisions mediate these preferences, fragmenting rather than uniting the audience.

In this triangulation, cultural odor occupies a distinct position. Unlike Nye's state-centered framework or Straubhaar's audience-centered approach, it interrogates the textual and semiotic construction of cultural specificity itself how "Japan" is foregrounded, muted, or reformulated within commodities. The overlap lies in how odor can underpin soft power or resonate through cultural proximity. However, the analytical focus is different: it draws attention to the mechanics of signification that make attraction possible in the first place.

The Cool Japan initiative crystallizes these tensions. Launched as a state-led branding campaign, it exemplifies soft power strategies aimed at projecting national appeal. However, scholars highlight its limits when pursued top-down. Daliot-Bul (2009) critiques Cool Japan as a selective appropriation of cultural symbols that overlooks interpretive agency abroad. Matsui (2014) similarly shows how ministries embraced previously stigmatized "low" culture for political and economic aims but paid little attention to how international audiences re-signified these exports. These critiques underscore that cultural transmission depends less on official promotion than on whether cultural commodities, with their varying degrees of odor, align with local moral economies and sensibilities.

From this perspective, the three frameworks are not synonymous but complementary. Soft power explains the strategic deployment of cultural attraction by states; cultural proximity clarifies the audience's orientation toward familiarity; and cultural odor illuminates the textual processes through which cultural specificity is encoded and negotiated. Taken together, they reveal cultural influence not as a linear imposition but as a multilayered interplay of strategy, signification, and reception.

Industry-facing accounts further clarify this logic. Allison (2000) analyzes Japan's character-goods economy, highlighting the kawaii "faceless" design that travels easily without overt national signification. Shiraishi (2000) traces Doraemon's regional circulation rights management, dubbing, licensing, and merchandising demonstrating how media mix systems coordinate characters, narratives, and goods across platforms. Read alongside Otmazgin's call for a regional paradigm emphasizing trans-metropolitan networks, middle-class consumption, and media mix infrastructures (Otmazgin, 2007), these perspectives show that "Japaneseness" circulates simultaneously as odorless design and as codified genre cues.

In Thailand, this dual circulation positions Japanese self-help repertoires kaizen (continuous improvement), dandori (planning), minimalism, and an "ethics of simplicity" not as alien doctrine but as intelligible practice. Their credibility rests on long-standing signals of "Japan" embedded in regional markets and media ecologies, which have primed Thai audiences to interpret such concepts as both familiar and authoritative.

4. RETHINKING SELF-HELP LITERATURE

Ideals of personal growth and empowerment have long been associated with self-help literature. Still, critical scholarship demonstrates that its promises cannot be separated from wider cultural and economic logics. McGee (2005), in *Self-Help, Inc.: Makeover Culture in American Life*, situates self-help at the heart of America's "makeover culture," where life itself is framed as a perpetual project of improvement. Manuals, seminars, and makeover-themed media, she argues, reflect a neoliberal turn that shifts structural problems such as inequality and job insecurity onto the individual. Success and failure thus become matters of personal discipline and self-management. This logic compels individuals to continually rebrand and upgrade themselves, producing what McGee terms "permanent insecurity," where everyday life is experienced as an

unfinished project always requiring optimization.

Illouz (2008), in *Saving the Modern Soul: Therapy, Emotions, and the Culture of Self-Help*, extends the critique by analyzing the rise of therapeutic discourse. She shows how psychology permeates manuals, media, and organizations, transforming emotions into cultural capital that individuals are expected to regulate. While this framing democratizes access to emotional care and validates practices of self-reflection, it also commodifies feelings and embeds them within consumerist logics. Self-help thus functions less as a neutral guide to growth than as a cultural apparatus that redefines identity in therapeutic terms, encouraging people to narrate their aspirations and failures through the vocabulary of psychology.

Coeckelbergh (2022), in *Self-Improvement*, turns to the contemporary industry of workshops, apps, and life hacks, asking whether these platforms genuinely deliver empowerment or instead deepen cycles of anxiety and inadequacy. He warns that the pursuit of perpetual optimization risks creating a paradox: the more people strive to improve, the more they internalize a sense of never being "enough." His analysis foregrounds the emotional and existential costs of improvement culture, highlighting the burdens that accompany its promises of freedom and self-realization.

Collectively, these three contributions foreground the ambivalent status of self-help as both empowering and disciplining. They reveal how the genre embeds neoliberal and therapeutic ideologies into everyday life, requiring individuals to self-manage not only work and productivity but also emotions, identity, and aspirations. This body of critical scholarship provides a crucial comparative lens for the Thai case. Japanese self-help texts framed around Zen aesthetics, wabi-sabi, or kaizen import these global imperatives of self-discipline and emotional regulation but refract them through

culturally specific signifiers of "Japaneseness." In Thailand, these refracted discourses gain further legitimacy by aligning with Buddhist ethics, sufficiency discourse, and local understandings of balance and simplicity, thereby producing a hybrid framework of self-cultivation that is simultaneously global and locally resonant.

5. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitatively informed content analysis with light quantification of a purpose-built corpus of 40 Thai translations of "Japanese" self-help/life-advice books published between 2015 and 2025. Titles qualify as "Japanese-referenced" if they (a) are authored by Japanese writers, (b) are authored by non-Japanese writers with demonstrable experience or professional engagement in Japan, or (c) are explicitly positioned and marketed as "Japanese" (e.g., the Japanese way). The corpus spans multiple Thai publishers and the major market segments for this genre: philosophy/life orientation, business/management, study skills, work/productivity and time management, home/possession/information organization, and health.

The unit of analysis is one book per record. For each book, both text and paratext are analyzed, including titles, covers, introductions/prefaces, blurbs, endorsements, end matter, interior flaps, and key visual elements.

To ensure transparency in the sampling frame, Table 1 enumerates the complete corpus of forty Japanese-referenced self-help titles analyzed in this study (2015–2025). For each title, the table reports the Thai title (in romanized Thai), English title (translation), author, translator, publisher, category, and a consolidated year field presented at the end as Thai (Original).

Table 1: Corpus of Japanese-Referenced Self-Help Titles Translated into Thai and Analyzed (2015–2025).

Thai Title	English Title (translation)	Author	Translator	Publisher	Category	Publication Year
Chiwit di kheun thuk thuk dan duai kan chat ban khae khrang diao	The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up	Kondo, M.	Yosuke & Tangchakravanon, P.	WeLearn Publishing	Home / Possessions / Information organization	2015 (2011)
Chong thai ekasan na saraban Lao khun cha rian keng	Take Photos of Table of Contents Pages and You'll Study Better	Ito, M.	Yosuke & Suksawat, P.	WeLearn Publishing	Study skills	2015 (2011)
Kae cha long nae khae ploi hai thong hui	Age Slower Just by Letting Yourself Get Hungry	Nagumo, Y.	Yosuke	WeLearn Publishing	Health	2015 (2012)
108 Wethamon haeng kan chat ban	108 Magic Spells of Home Organization: Move Things Once, Transform Your Life	Kondo, M.	Naksawat, A.	WeLearn Publishing	Home / Possessions / Information organization	2016 (2014)

Thai Title	English Title (translation)	Author	Translator	Publisher	Category	Publication Year
Ikigai	Reason for Being: The Japanese Art of Living	Garcia, H.& Miralles, F.	Sriwaranat, P.	Nation Book	Philosophy / Life orientation	2018 (2016)
Ikigai	Reason for Being: The Japanese Art of Living	Mogi, K.	Kritsanaprakornkit, W.	Move Publishing	Philosophy / Life orientation	2018 (2017)
Loek pen khon di laeo cha mi khwam suk	Stop Being Good and You'll Be Happy	Godo, T.	Rattanaphirat, A.	Amarin Howto	Relationship / Communication development	2018 (2016)
Theknik sarup baep Yipun	Japanese Summarization Techniques	Homma, M., & Ukishima, Y.	Yosuke	WeLearn Publishing	Study skills	2019 (2015)
Khamphit chut thurakiit pakhaew hai fuen khuen chip	The Manual for Rescuing Businesses from the Brink	Yoshihiro, S.	Phenaram, K.	Sukkhapabjai Publishing	Business / Management	2019 (2018)
Chot not baep ni samong chop chang	Note-Taking That Your Brain Really Loves	Konishi, T.	Pahanit, T.	WeLearn Publishing	Study skills	2019 (2016)
Anti-Aging Insights Dek kwa ayu ching duai hasisip et withi kin yisip hok withi ok kamlang kai	Anti-Aging Insights: Look Younger Than Your Age with 51 Eating Methods and 26 Exercise Methods	Aimi, K.	Gamephaophon, A.	Amarin Howto	Health	2020 (2019)
Ichigo Ichie La liat patchuban Duem dam chiwit	Ichigo Ichie: Savoring the Present, Immersing in Life	Garcia, H., & Miralles, F.	Aekyanat, P.	Nanmeebooks	Philosophy / Life orientation	2021 (2019)
An baep Todai	Reading Like a Todai Student	Nishioka, I.	Sonpraphan, P.	WeLearn Publishing	Study skills	2021 (2018)
Tham baep Yipun Samret baep Yipun: Kan damnoenkitchakan 100 pi thi yangyuen	Do Like the Japanese, Succeed Like the Japanese: 100-Year Sustainable Business Operations	Shiozawa, M.	Thomya, C.	Gypsy Publishing	Business / Management	2021 (2013)
Theknik rian keng duai kratatno Chabap dek Todai	Study Excellence Techniques with Note Paper: Todai Student Style	Akihiro, S.	Gamephaophon, A.	Amarin Howto	Study skills	2021 (2020)
Sakin khan thep khong nak borihan wela thi ru chai samong	Divine-Level Skills of Time Managers Who Understand the Brain	Kabasawa, S.	Khuairaksa, P.	Amarin Howto	Work productivity / Time management	2021 (2017)
Fuek tua eng hai pen khon thi thing pen	Training Yourself to Be Someone Who Can Let Go	Shiihara, T.	Sophitachasak, S.	Biblio	Philosophy / Life orientation	2021 (2018)
Hua chai Phalang thi pen khwam mai khong chiwit	Heart: The Power That Gives Meaning to Life	Inamori, K.	Singkhanat, W.	WeLearn Publishing	Philosophy / Life orientation	2022 (2019)
Nagomi Suk Sangop Samadun	Nagomi: Happiness, Peace, Balance	Mogi, K.	Deepravat, K.	Amarin Howto	Philosophy / Life orientation	2022 (2022)
Wabi Sabi Khwam ngot ngam nai khwam mai sombun baep	Wabi Sabi: Beauty in Imperfection	Suzuki, N.	Wannangkung, S.	Nation Book	Philosophy / Life orientation	2022 (2020)
Sing thi tong mai tham khong khon thi long mue tham	Things That Doers Must Never Do	Tsukamoto, R.	Kansomchai, P.	WeLearn Publishing	Work productivity / Time management	2022 (2020)
Phro mai mi arai Chueng mi arai MUJI	Because There's Nothing, There's Something: MUJI	Matsui, T.	Phonsaen, T.	Amarin Howto	Business / Management	2022 (2015)
Loek pen khon di	Stop Being a Good Person	Mogi, K.	Klinakesorn, P.	Se-Education	Relationship / Communication development	2023 (2021)
Dae khun thi klua kan plian plaeng ma talot chiwit	To You Who Have Been Afraid of Change Your Whole Life	Daigo, M.	Phonsaen, T.	Amarin Howto	Work productivity / Time management	2023 (2015)
Ok baep chiwit duai theknik patithin 100 pi	Designing Life with the 100-Year Calendar Technique	Riki, O.	Khieo-urai, N.	Amarin Howto	Philosophy / Life orientation	2023 (2021)

Thai Title	English Title (translation)	Author	Translator	Publisher	Category	Publication Year
Theknik loek khit yo laeo tham than thi	Techniques to Stop Overthinking and Act Immediately	Tsukamoto, R.	Sirisathian, N.	WeLearn Publishing	Work productivity / Time management	2023 (2017)
Output Thinking	Output Thinking	Kakiuchi, T.	Vanichyanon, R.	WeLearn Publishing	Work productivity / Time management	2023 (2020)
Tha ik 1 pi chan cha tong tai	If I Had One More Year to Live	Ozawa, T.	Singkhanat, W.	WeLearn Publishing	Philosophy / Life orientation	2023 (2021)
Chitwitthaya ti nian (Phuea chatkan khon na ramkhan)	Cunning Psychology (For Dealing with Annoying People)	Inoue, T.	Phenaram, K.	Amarin Howto	Relationship / Communication development	2023 (2021)
Withi khit khong khon kha tua phaeng	The Mindset of High-Value People	Kitano, Y.	Rattanaphirat Kudo, K.	Amarin Howto	Work productivity / Time management	2023 (2018)
Chang man thoe Ik mai ki pi rao ko pen thao thuli kan mot laeo	Never Mind, In a Few Years We'll All Be Dust Anyway	Tomoya, F.	Phenaram, K.	Amarin Howto	Philosophy / Life orientation	2024 (2023)
Joy at Work Nam khwam suk ma su ngan duai kan chatkan singkhong lae khomu	Joy at Work: Bringing Happiness to Your Job Through Organization and Information Management	Kondo, M., & Sonenshein, S.	Leelanuch, O.	Nanmeebooks	Home / Possessions / Information organization	2024 (2024)
Loek pen manut tuen sai klai pen manut tuen chao	Stop Being a Late Riser, Become an Early Riser	Tsukamoto, R.	Sonpraphan, P.	WeLearn Publishing	Health	2024 (2019)
Cha kin Pudding chin ni loei mai Rue cha thon wai kon	Will You Eat This Pudding Now or Wait?	Kakiuchi, T.	Vanichyanon, R.	Amarin Howto	Work productivity / Time management	2024 (2024)
Khon thi khrai khrai rak ko mak pen baep ni lae	People That Everyone Loves Are Usually Like This	Inoue, H.	Vanichyanon, R.	Amarin Howto	Relationship / Communication development	2025 (2024)
Withi chai kham phut chueat nim nim satai phu di Kyoto	How to Use Gentle Sharp Words in Kyoto Elite Style	Nakano, N.	Warasak, C.	WeLearn Publishing	Relationship / Communication development	2025 (2023)
Theknik Tham Ngan 1 Wan Hai Sret Nai 3 Chumong	Techniques to Finish a Day's Work in 3 Hours	Yamamoto, N.	Khieo-urai, N.	Amarin Howto	Work productivity / Time management	2025 (2019)
Lap di mi khunphap duai khletlap chabap Stanford	Quality Sleep with Stanford Tips	Nishino, S.	Gamephaophan, A.	Amarin Howto	Health	2025 (2017)
Kitchawat sang khwam ruai thi khon ruai laeo mai khoei bok khun	Wealth-Building Routines That Rich People Never Tell You	Yuichiro, N.	Somrangsang, P.	Amarin Howto	Business / Management	2025 (2024)
Work Priority Tham ngan nai kon di Phro ton ni thuk yang du duan pai mot	Work Priority: What Work to Do First When Everything Seems Urgent	Tanaka, T.	Vanichyanon, R.	Amarin Howto	Work productivity / Time management	2025 (2023)

5.1. Variables and Operationalization

5.1.1. Japanese Concepts (Binary, 1 = Present, 0 = Absent)

Ten theoretically derived indicators capture canonical ideas associated with contemporary "Japaneseness" in self-help discourse

- Ikigai (life purpose/meaning)
- Kodawari (fastidious craftsmanship; exacting standards)

- Kaizen (continuous improvement)
- Dandori (front-loaded planning and sequencing of work)
- Ganbaru/gaman (perseverance/forbearance; "not giving up")
- Zen / minimalism (mindful simplicity; reduction of excess)
- Ichigo-ichie (treasuring the once-in-a-lifetime moment)
- Danshari (decluttering; discard-separate-

reduce)

- Hara hachi bu (eating to ~80% satiety; moderation)
- Sanpo-yoshi (three-way benefit: seller-buyer-society)

Operational definitions, decision rules, and illustrative textual/visual cues for edge cases are specified in the codebook.

5.1.2. Japanese Cultural Odor (ordinal, 1-3)

Drawing on Iwabuchi's cultural odor/mukokuseki framework (2002, 2004), odor indexes the salience of "Japaneseness" across text and paratext, supported by subsidiary indicators (Japanese terms, settings, narrative values, media-mix/brand-character linkages): 1 = scarcely Japanese/universal; 2 = moderate (intermittent Japanese indices without framing the core message); 3 = pronounced (Japan frames titles, visuals, settings, and core value system).

5.1.3. Resonance with Thai Values (ordinal, 0-3)

To assess cultural fit, the study adapts Komin's Thai "nine value clusters" (1990a, 1990b) to four analytical dimensions appropriate to self-help materials

- Buddhist (Theravada ethics/compassion);
- Sufficiency (sufficiency/simple living);
- Krengjai/face (krengjai, face-saving, sensitivity to status/hierarchy);
- Family/community (familial/community interdependence).

Scoring rubric (per dimension): 0 = not present; 1 = occasional/implicit mention; 2 = clear across multiple sections; 3 = book-level framing principle.

5.2. Instruments

A theory-driven codebook is used in tandem with a content-analysis coding sheet that records bibliographic metadata, operational definitions for all variables, examples, edge-case rules, and evidence fields (page citations/visual references) to maintain an auditable trail and ensure replicability.

5.3. Procedure and Quality Assurance

1. Preparation and tool development. Corpus selection ($n = 40$), database construction (metadata + coding matrix), and codebook design anchored in Iwabuchi (odor-mukokuseki) and Komin (Thai values).
2. Pilot. A pilot coding of 5 books (12.5%) tests clarity and reliability; revisions refine definitions, examples, and edge-case decision rules.

3. Full coding and reliability. Two coders independently double-code at least 10 books (25%). Interrater reliability is assessed using Cohen's κ for binary/categorical variables and quadratically weighted κ for ordinal variables (odor). Acceptance thresholds are $\kappa \geq 0.80$ (binary/categorical) and weighted $\kappa \geq 0.70$ (ordinal). Disagreements are resolved through adjudication; all amendments are logged. To mitigate coder drift, an additional random subset is rechecked near the end of coding.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

We employ quantitative methods, combining descriptive and exploratory analyses. Frequencies and percentages of Japanese concepts are tabulated, and odor distributions are summarized using mean, median, and standard deviation. Mean scores for the four Thai-value dimensions are also reported. Bivariate associations rely on non-parametric tests suited to ordinal data: Spearman's ρ for correlations, Mann-Whitney U for binary contrasts (e.g., concept presence), and Kruskal-Wallis for multi-group comparisons (e.g., categories, odor levels), followed by Dunn's Benjamini-Hochberg adjusted pairwise tests. To address multiplicity, we apply the Benjamini-Hochberg false-discovery rate (q threshold specified) and report effect sizes (r for U/Kruskal-Wallis, ρ for correlations, with 95% CIs where appropriate). Exploratory stratifications by *honne/tatemae*, scientization, work-wellbeing, self-optimization, and self-compassion probe possible moderation.

Complementing this, a theory-guided abductive thematic analysis identifies how "Japaneseness" is constructed across text and paratext and how meaning anchors in Thai cultural frames. Coding and memoing proceed iteratively with constant comparison and negative-case checks. Exemplar case studies, selected via maximum variation across odor levels and categories, explicate mechanisms of credibility and acceptance.

7. RESULTS

7.1. Conceptual Frameworks and Practices in Translated Japanese Self-Help Books

The corpus comprises 40 Thai translations of "Japanese-referenced" self-help/life-advice titles distributed across seven market categories (see Table 2). The largest segment is philosophy/life-orientation (10/40; 25.0%), followed by work/productivity & time management (9/40; 22.5%). The remaining categories relationship/communication and study skills (each 12.5%), business/management and health (each

10.0%), and home/possession/information organization (7.5%) are less represented. A qualitatively informed synthesis of the coded materials identifies two recurrent repertoires that partially overlap. The meaning-centric/life-stance repertoire foregrounds ethical reflection and mindful awareness *ikigai* (life purpose), *ichigo-ichie* (treasuring the unrepeatable moment), *wabi-sabi* (beauty in imperfection), *nagomi* (balance/accord), and Zen/minimalism. The action-centric/execution repertoire supplies operational scripts for disciplined practice *kaizen* (continuous improvement), *dandori* (front-loaded planning and sequencing), and *ganbaru/gaman* (perseverance/forbearance). Together, these repertoires link ethical values with routinized practices that can be enacted in work, study, and everyday life.

Table 2: Frequencies of Japanese Concepts in the Corpus (n = 40).

Concept	n (present)	Percent	95% CI (Lower)	95% CI (Upper)
Kaizen	18	45.0	30.7	60.2
Ganbaru/gaman	16	40.0	26.3	55.4
Danshari	13	32.5	20.1	48.0
Zen /Minimalism	12	30.0	18.1	45.4
Dandori	9	22.5	12.3	37.5
Ikigai	6	15.0	7.1	29.1
Ichigo-ichie	6	15.0	7.1	29.1
Kodawari	5	12.5	5.5	26.1
Hara hachi bu	5	12.5	5.5	26.1
Sanpo-yoshi	3	7.5	2.6	19.9

Note. Percentages are based on n = 40 titles. Confidence intervals were computed using the Wilson method. Coding is binary per concept (1 = present, 0 = absent).

Table 2 reports the frequencies of concepts across the corpus. *Kaizen* (45.0%) and *ganbaru/gaman* (40.0%) appear most frequently, followed by *danshari* (32.5%) and *Zen/minimalism* (30.0%). Concepts such as *ikigai* and *ichigo-ichie* occur less often (15.0% each), with *kodawari* (12.5%), *hara hachi bu* (12.5%), and *sanpo-yoshi* (7.5%) at the lower end. Confidence intervals, calculated via the Wilson method, are wide in some cases due to the relatively small sample, and these estimates should therefore be regarded as approximate indicators rather than precise population parameters. This uneven distribution highlights promising trends but should be interpreted with caution.

As summarized in Table 3, co-occurrence patterns delineate two functional clusters while highlighting asymmetric dependencies between concepts. On the execution side, *kaizen-ganbaru/gaman* appears in 13 titles; notably, 72% of *kaizen* texts also invoke *ganbaru/gaman*, and 81% of *ganbaru/gaman* texts

reference *kaizen*, suggesting a strong coupling between incremental improvement and perseverance. *Dandori-ganbaru/gaman* co-occurs in eight titles; 89% of *dandori* texts include *ganbaru/gaman*, but only 50% of *ganbaru/gaman* texts include *dandori*, implying that discipline and effort represent a broader ethic into which planning is selectively nested. *Kaizen-dandori* further connects planning with stepwise improvement (six titles). On the meaning/simplification side, *Zen/minimalism-danshari* co-occurs in six titles ($\approx 50\%$ of both), indicating that mindful simplicity is frequently bundled with decluttering. *Ikigai-Zen/minimalism* also co-occurs in six titles; all *ikigai* texts (100%) pair with *Zen/minimalism*, though only half of minimalist texts invoke purpose discourse, suggesting that minimalist scripts often scaffold life-purpose framings. *Ikigai-ichigo-ichie* appears in five titles and is symmetric ($\approx 83\%$), pointing to a relatively stable meaning-centric bundle linking purpose with present-moment salience. Bridge concepts link moral ethos, craft, and commerce. On the business/ethics axis, *ganbaru/gaman-kodawari* co-occurs in five titles; all *kodawari* texts pair with *ganbaru/gaman* (100%), but only 31% of *ganbaru/gaman* texts include *kodawari*, showing that craftsmanship narratives are moralized by perseverance. Similarly, *ganbaru/gaman-sanpo-yoshi* co-occurs in three texts; all *sanpo-yoshi* cases pair with *ganbaru/gaman*, aligning three-way benefit with an ethic of effort. These asymmetries underscore how *ganbaru/gaman* and *Zen/minimalism* function as “semantic glue” across bundles. Nevertheless, the small number of cases in certain pairings (e.g., *sanpo-yoshi*) limits the stability of the observed proportions. These findings should therefore be read as indicative patterns rather than definitive evidence of structural relationships.

Table 3: Top Co-Occurring Pairs of Concepts Across Titles.

Concept A	Concept B	Co-occurrence (n titles)
Kaizen	Ganbaru/ Gaman	13
Dandori	Ganbaru/ Gaman	8
Zen /Minimalism	Danshari	6
Kaizen	Dandori	6
Danshari	Kaizen	6
Ikigai	Zen /Minimalism	6
Ikigai	Ichigo-ichie	5
Ganbaru/ Gaman	Kodawari	5
Danshari	Ganbaru/ Gaman	5
Ichigo-ichie	Zen /Minimalism	5
Danshari	Dandori	5
Ganbaru/ Gaman	Sanpo-yoshi	3

Note. Co-occurrence is defined as both concepts coded as present (1) in the same title; the table lists the most frequent pairs.

Table 4: Counts of Concepts by Book Category.

Category	Ikigai	Kodawari	Kaizen	Dandori	Ganbaru/Gaman	Zen/Minimalism	Ichigo-ichie	Danshari	Hara hachi bu	Sanpo-yoshi
Business/management	0	3	3	2	3	1	0	2	0	3
Home/organization	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0
Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Philosophy/life-orientation	6	0	4	0	2	8	5	3	2	0
Relationship/communication	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Work/productivity & time management	0	2	6	5	8	0	1	4	0	0
Study skills	0	0	5	2	3	0	0	1	0	0

Note. Cells show counts of titles within each category that were coded as having the concept (1). Categories follow the study codebook; English labels are provided for readability.

Table 4 synthesizes recurring concept–practice bundles that couple existential framings with routinized practices: a meaning-centric bundle (ikigai, ichigo-ichie, wabi-sabi, nagomi, and Zen/minimalism), an action-centric bundle (kaizen, dandori, and ganbaru/gaman), a domain-ethics bundle (kodawari and sanpo-yoshi), and a simplicity–health bridge (danshari and hara hachi bu). Taken together, these bundles form a modular architecture in which values and scripts reinforce one another and recombine across titles and market segments. Yet, because some categories (e.g., health, business/management) contain relatively few texts, these category-level concentrations should be regarded as suggestive tendencies rather than conclusive distributions.

First, their internal logics are complementary rather than redundant. Meaning-centric titles establish vocabularies of well-being moderation, ethical calm, attentiveness to the present that authorize self-understandings and provide moral purpose for change. Action-centric texts operationalize that stance: kaizen routinizes incremental improvements, dandori sequences work up front, and ganbaru/gaman moralize effort as endurance.

The domain-ethics bundle legitimates craft and commerce through kodawari (standards of workmanship) and sanpo-yoshi (seller-buyer-society reciprocity). The simplicity–health bridge advances restraint through decluttering and dietary moderation as everyday disciplines. Second, inter-bundle pathways confirm this typology. On the execution side, kaizen–ganbaru/gaman and dandori–ganbaru/gaman pairings show perseverance as a general ethic into which improvement and planning are nested. On the meaning/simplification side, Zen/minimalism – danshari and ikigai – Zen/minimalism sequences link mindful valuation to concrete reduction of

excess. Category concentrations further reinforce these associations: meaning-centric concepts cluster in philosophy and life-orientation, action-centric repertoires dominate work and study skills, domain ethics anchor business/management, and simplicity–health scripts align with organization and health. Third, the bundles illuminate cultural fit. Meaning and simplicity resonate with Thai discourse, privileging Buddhist virtues of calm, compassion, and sufficiency. Domain ethics aligns with relational reciprocity in commerce. Action-centric repertoires supply managerial grammar without displacing local frames, being moralized by ganbaru/gaman and anchored by kodawari and sanpo-yoshi. This layered architecture explains the corpus’s ability to travel across categories while retaining both a recognizable “Japanese” odor in paratext and a locally acceptable moral tone in text. Even so, these interpretations should be read as preliminary evidence due to uneven cell sizes. Table 5 consolidates the typology into four bundles with typical operational anchors.

The meaning-centric bundle cultivates awareness, balance, and ethical calm; the action-centric bundle routinizes continuous improvement and disciplined effort; the domain-ethics bundle legitimates craft and trade through reciprocity; and the simplicity–health bridge embeds moderation into everyday practice. Together, these bundles illustrate how translated Japanese self-help assembles values and scripts into reproducible repertoires that move readers from meaning to method across domains of life, study, and work.

However, because some categories contain relatively few titles, the observed patterns should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive. The bundles are best understood as heuristic frameworks that clarify how values and practices are paired in processes of cultural translation.

Table 5: Concept-Practice Bundles and Typical Evidence Anchors.

Bundle (Function)	Core Concepts	Operational Script	Typical Evidence Anchors
Meaning-centric (life stance)	Ikigai; Ichigo-ichie; Wabi-sabi; Nagomi; Zen/Minimalism	Cultivates awareness, balance, and ethical calm; frames life purpose and present-moment salience	E.g., philosophy/life-orientation titles; paratext emphasizing mindful simplicity
Action-centric (execution)	Kaizen; Dandori; Ganbaru/Gaman	Continuous improvement, front-loaded planning, disciplined effort	E.g., work/productivity; study skills; business/management
Domain ethics (craft/trade)	Kodawari; Sanpo-yoshi	Craftsmanship standards and three-way benefit (seller-buyer-society)	E.g., brand/craft narratives; business ethics framing
Simplicity-health bridge	Danshari; Hara hachi bu	Decluttering and moderation as routinized self-regulation	E.g., home/organization; health titles stressing moderation

7.2. Cultural Construction of “Japaneseness” in Thai Translations of Japanese Self-Help Books

The salience of “Japaneseness” at the levels of text and paratext indexed by cultural odor averages in the moderate range (Mean = 1.98, SD = 0.89; Median = 2).

The distribution across the three ordinal levels is mixed: Odor 1 = 40.0%, Odor 2 = 22.5%, and Odor 3 = 37.5%. This pattern indicates that many titles are not uniformly “very Japanese,” but rather mobilize Japan as a value frame that intermittently structures messaging (from moderate to pronounced framing) rather than serving only as an aesthetic backdrop (see Table 6). Interrater reliability met a priori thresholds: Cohen’s κ (binary concept codes) and the quadratically weighted κ (three-level odor index) both satisfied the study’s acceptance criteria.

Paratextual packaging and intratextual embedding jointly construct “Japaneseness” along two planes. On the paratextual plane, high-odor titles employ explicit Japanese semiotics romaji/kanji, brush-script typefaces, Kyoto or tea-aesthetic imagery and invoke authorial or institutional authority (e.g., “the Todai method,” “centenarian firms”). Case vignettes tied to Japanese places and companies further authenticate cultural specificity. This strategy is prominent in meaning-centric lines (ikigai, ichigo-ichie, wabi-sabi, nagomi, Zen/minimalism), in Marie Kondo’s corpus, and in

etiquette/communication texts addressing honne/tatemae or “Kyoto rhetoric.”

Table 6: Distribution of Cultural Odor Levels (Iwabuchi Index).

Odor level	n	Percent
1 (scarcely Japanese/universal)	16	40.0
2 (moderate)	9	22.5
3 (pronounced)	15	37.5

Note. n = 40. Descriptives: Mean = 1.98, SD = 0.89; Median = 2. Odor was coded on a 1-3 ordinal scale following Iwabuchi’s odor/mukokuseki framework.

On the intratextual plane, Japanese concepts are stabilized through moralized narratives of work and family life: ganbaru/gaman in schools and workplaces, kodawari in production and craft, and sanpo-yoshi in commerce. By contrast, scientized books using neuroscience or medical frames downplay cultural markers, even when authored by Japanese writers, yielding lower odor scores. Thus, “Japaneseness” strengthens when values are anchored in recognizable Japanese settings and weakens when legitimacy shifts to universal science.

Category-level patterns clarify where odor concentrates. Business/management averages near the top (mean \approx 3.00; median = 3), consistent with domain-ethics bundles and brand/craft narratives. Relationship/communication is also high (mean \approx 2.40; median = 3), framing advice through relational values such as ichigo-ichie and Zen/minimalism. Philosophy/life-orientation lies in the mid-to-high range (mean \approx 2.30), emphasizing meaning-centric vocabularies.

Study skills average around 2.00 with wide variation, mixing high-odor and universalist approaches. Work/productivity is lower (mean \approx 1.56; median = 1), where kaizen and dandori often appear in scientized managerial frames. Health (mean \approx 1.25) and home/organization (mean \approx 1.00) record the lowest scores, where hara hachi bu and danshari are universalized as moderation or decluttering rather than explicitly Japanese practices

At the category level, central-tendency and dispersion estimates clarify where odor concentrates (see Table 7). Given the ordinal scale (1-3), medians and IQRs are primary indicators, with means and SDs provided for comparability. Business/management centers at 3 (IQR = 0), indicating consistently high-odor profiles; relationship/communication also centers at 3 (IQR = 1). Philosophy/life-orientation lies in the mid-to-high range (median \approx 2.5, IQR = 1).

Table 7: Cultural Odor by Category: Descriptive Statistics.

Category	n	Mean	SD	Median	IQR	Min	Max
Business/Management	4	3.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	3	3
Relationship/Communication	5	2.4	0.89	3.0	1.0	1	3
Philosophy/Life-Orientation	10	2.3	0.82	2.5	1.0	1	3
Study Skills	5	2.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	1	3
Work/Productivity & Time Management	9	1.56	0.73	1.0	1.0	1	3
Health	4	1.25	0.5	1.0	0.25	1	2
Home/Possession/Information Organization	3	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1	1

Note. Odor is an ordinal 1-3 index (1 = scarcely Japanese/universal; 3 = pronounced). Means and SDs are reported alongside medians and IQRs given ordinal scaling; small and uneven category sizes warrant cautious interpretation.

Study skills averages around 2 with wide dispersion, reflecting mixed positioning. Work/productivity & time management centers at 1 (IQR = 1), health at 1 (IQR \approx 0.25), and home/organization at 1 (IQR = 0), consistent with universalized framings.

Within-category distributions sharpen this picture. Business/management is entirely Odor 3 (100%). Relationship/communication is majority Odor 3 (~60%), while philosophy/life-orientation places ~50% at Odor 3. Study skills splits across Odor

1-2-3 (40%-20%-40%). Work/productivity skews to Odor 1 (~55.6%) despite including Japanese operational tools. Health is strongly Odor 1 (~75%). Home/organization is entirely Odor 1 (100%).

In sum, high-odor categories “lead with Japan” as an explicit cultural frame, whereas low-odor categories universalize practices into scientific, managerial, or organizational registers, diluting Japanese specificity while maintaining market applicability.

Table 8: Cultural Odor Levels by Category: Counts and Within-Category Percentages.

Category	Odor 1	Odor 2	Odor 3	Row total	Odor 1 (%)	Odor 2 (%)	Odor 3 (%)
Business/Management	0	0	4	4	0.0	0.0	100.0
Relationship/Communication	1	1	3	5	20.0	20.0	60.0
Philosophy/Life-Orientation	2	3	5	10	20.0	30.0	50.0
Study Skills	2	1	2	5	40.0	20.0	40.0
Work/Productivity & Time Management	5	3	1	9	55.6	33.3	11.1
Health	3	1	0	4	75.0	25.0	0.0
Home/Possession/Information Organization	3	0	0	3	100.0	0.0	0.0

Note. Percentages are row-wise within each category; n = row total.
Kruskal-Wallis: $H(6) = 15.96$, $p = 0.014$, $\epsilon^2 = 0.30$; no pairwise MWU remained significant after BH ($\alpha = .05$).

Within-category compositions clarify the distribution of cultural odor (see Table 8). Business/management is entirely Odor 3 (100%). Relationship/communication places a majority at Odor 3 (~60%), while philosophy/life-orientation has about half at Odor 3 (~50%). Study skills split across Odor 1-2-3 (40%-20%-40%). Work/productivity & time management skew to Odor 1 (~55.6%) despite embedding Japanese operational tools. Health leans strongly to Odor 1 (~75%), and home/organization is entirely Odor 1 (100%). Collectively, high-odor segments “lead with Japan” as a cultural frame, whereas low-odor categories universalize practices into scientific, managerial, or organizational tropes.

The Kruskal-Wallis test confirms category-level variation, but small and uneven cell sizes limited

pairwise significance after Benjamini-Hochberg correction. As a robustness strategy, contrasts are interpreted primarily through medians, IQRs, and within-category shares (Tables 7-8), with claims qualified for categories where $n \leq 4$. Larger future samples could stabilize pairwise estimates and allow multivariate controls.

Overall, the evidence shows that Japaneseness in Thai translations is neither monolithic nor superficial. It is actively constructed across two planes paratextual packaging and intratextual embedding with concentrations varying by market segment. Cultural odor peaks when books foreground Japan as a value frame (business/management, relationship/etiquette, life philosophy) and weakens under scientized or universalized registers (health, home/organization)

(see Tables 6–7). Building on these patterns, the analysis turns to how translated Japanese self-help resonates with Thai value clusters Buddhist ethics, sufficiency, *krengjai/face*, and family/community interdependence.

7.3. Thai Cultural Values through Translated Japanese Self-Help Books

This section examines how Thai cultural values are made legible in translation by analyzing not only counts but also the ways books stage practices and meanings for readers. Building on Komin's nine value clusters ego orientation, grateful relationship orientation (*bun khun*), smooth interpersonal relations (*krengjai/jai yen*), flexibility and adjustment, religio-psychical orientation (Theravada Buddhism and local beliefs), education and competence, interdependence, fun/pleasure (*sanuk/sabai*), and achievement/task orientation we operationalize four analytically tractable dimensions: Buddhist ethics/compassion, sufficiency/simple living, *krengjai/face* and hierarchy, and family/community interdependence.

These dimensions are coded on a 0–3 scale across 40 titles. Rather than reporting raw frequencies, we foreground textual and paratextual mechanisms, using Tables 9–10 as interpretive anchors. Descriptively, Thai value frames are mobilized selectively (with medians of zero on several dimensions), reflecting a genre that alternates between moral stance and technical procedure. At the descriptive level, family/community interdependence averages 0.68 (median = 0.00, IQR = 1.00), sufficiency/simple living 0.38 (median = 0.00), Buddhist ethics/compassion 0.33 (median = 0.00), and *krengjai/face* and hierarchy 0.20 (median = 0.00). The concentration at zero underscores selective activation of Thai value frames rather than a consistent book-level orientation.

The reduction from Komin's nine clusters to four dimensions was motivated not only by the need for parsimony but also by the interpretive demands of analyzing translated Japanese self-help. This reframing reveals how specific Thai values are reconfigured in cross-cultural translation. Ego orientation, for instance, is seldom articulated as individualism in isolation. Instead, expressions of self-interest are consistently refracted through relational contexts: when moderated by deference, politeness, or the preservation of face, they are classified under *Krengjai/Face* and Hierarchy; when embedded in obligations to kin or reciprocal ties within households or villages, they fall within

Family/Community Interdependence. This redistribution underscores that Thai understandings of the self are relational, situated within networks of reciprocity and respect rather than atomistic individualism.

A similar realignment occurs with achievement-task orientation. While Komin initially identified this cluster with diligence and striving, its translation into Japanese self-help texts introduces new inflections. When achievement is framed as simplifying routines, reducing stress, or maintaining a balanced pace of work, it aligns with the concept of sufficiency/simple living. Conversely, when it emphasizes perseverance, honesty, and the ethical quality of labor echoing Buddhist notions such as wholesome desire and perseverance it resonates more closely with Buddhist ethics/compassion. These dual allocations reflect how work-related values in Thailand move between pragmatic sufficiency and moral striving.

The category of fun-pleasure (*sanuk/sabai*) illustrates a significant reconfiguration in meaning. Komin presented this cluster as central to Thai sociability, emphasizing humor, play, and conviviality. However, within Japanese self-help texts, *sabai* shifts away from amusement toward comfort, ease of mind, and inner balance. In books on *ikigai* and *wabi-sabi*, the emphasis falls on serenity in imperfection and tranquility in daily routines. Similarly, workplace manuals describe "happy work" not as collective playfulness but as mindful productivity and the avoidance of excessive pressure. In this reframing, *sanuk/sabai* is transformed from social playfulness into a more introspective register of simplicity and contentment, aligning more closely with Buddhist-inflected ideals of composure and balance.

This two-plane account clarifies why cultural odor aligns with Buddhist framing, while operational scripts without explicit Japanese semiotics tend to be read as universal techniques (see Tables 9–10). For example, a life-orientation title uses Japanese characters along the cover margin, prints the author's Japanese name, and foregrounds "Kyoto" in the Thai title. Minimalist red-white vector imagery (e.g., a fan silhouette) further signals a Japanese frame, while the opening chapter narrates quiet attentional routines as compassionate self-care - cues that elevate both odor and the Buddhist ethics score.

A decluttering title that emphasizes *danshari* likewise prints Japanese characters in a narrow vertical band with the author's name, translating simplicity into sufficiency-tinged moderation.

Table 9: Association Between Cultural Odor and Thai Value Dimensions (Spearman).

Dimension	Spearman ρ	p-value
Buddhist ethics/compassion	0.46	0.003
Sufficiency/simple living	0.07	n.s.
Krengjai/face and hierarchy	0.02	n.s.
Family/community interdependence	0.24	n.s.

Note. Cultural odor coded 1-3; value dimensions coded 0-3 (0 = not present; 3 = book-level framing). Two-tailed tests; n = 40 with pairwise deletion as needed. "n.s." indicates $p \geq .05$.

By contrast, a productivity title introduces kaizen science evidence rather than Japanese exemplars, through Gantt-style checklists and cites cognitive-dampening odor and muting Thai relational cues.

Table 10: Concept-Value Associations (Mann-Whitney U with Benjamini-Hochberg Adjustment) Significant Results Only.

Thai value (0-3)	Japanese concept	n (concept=1)	n (concept=0)	Effect size r	p	q _{BH}	Mean (present)	Mean (absent)
Buddhist ethics/compassion	<i>Ikigai</i>	6	34	0.60	0.000000	0.00000	1.83	0.06
Buddhist ethics/compassion	<i>Ichigo-ichie</i>	6	34	0.48	0.000018	0.00009	1.50	0.12
Buddhist ethics/compassion	<i>Zen/minimalism</i>	12	28	0.44	0.000069	0.00023	1.00	0.04
Family/community interdependence	<i>Ichigo-ichie</i>	6	34	0.40	0.004480	0.04480	1.83	0.47
Sufficiency/simple living	<i>Zen/minimalism</i>	12	28	0.52	0.000002	0.00002	1.25	0.00
Sufficiency/simple living	<i>Ikigai</i>	6	34	0.35	0.001724	0.00862	1.33	0.21

Note. Rows report contrasts of value scores (0-3) between titles with vs. without each concept. Entries are shown only if the BH-adjusted q within a value dimension is $< .05$. Effect size r is computed from the normal approximation to U.

Relational deference and kinship appear selectively. Etiquette and communication titles that thematize *honne-tatemae* or what publishers frame as "Kyoto rhetoric" model indirect refusals, status-sensitive phrasing, and turn-taking; endorsements from teachers, seniors, or master craftsmen legitimate advice as relational inheritance. Across the broader corpus, however, such frames are not default scaffolds: pairwise contrasts for *krengjai/face* and *family/community* rarely survive Benjamini-Hochberg adjustment (see Table 10). Interdependence is cued most clearly where narratives locate practice in households or teams, or where commerce is framed through communal fairness (*sanpo yoshi*). Uneven cell sizes limit pairwise power; interpretation thus privileges effect sizes and qualitative convergence alongside adjusted contrasts.

In summary, Thai resonance is strongest when translation ties Japanese concepts to ethical calm and sufficiency, and when examples are situated in recognizable social settings. It weakens when

legitimation shifts toward universal technical registers. Translation thereby exceeds simple transfer, aligning Japanese repertoires with Thai moral sensibilities and rendering them actionable in everyday life.

8. DISCUSSION

Our results demonstrate that Thai translations of Japanese self-help systematically pair ethical value frames with routinized practices. Meaning-centric repertoires *ikigai*, *wabi-sabi*, and *Zen/minimalism* coexist with execution-oriented scripts such as *kaizen*, *dandori*, and *ganbaru/gaman*. Quantitatively, cultural odor concentrates in business/management and life philosophy (high-odor profiles) and attenuates in health and home/organization (low odor), signaling selective deployment of "Japan" as a value frame across market segments (see Tables 7-8). Odor correlates positively with Buddhist coding (Spearman's $\rho = .44$, 95% CI [.15, .66], $p = .004$) and differs significantly across categories (Kruskal-Wallis $H(6) = 15.96$, $p =$

.014).

Mechanistically, “Japaneseness” is constructed along two planes. In paratext, titles frequently employ Japanese semiotics kanji/romaji typography, Kyoto aesthetics, and references to institutions such as the University of Tokyo (Todai) and insert overt “Japanese-style” wording in subtitles or blurbs. In text, culturally specific vignettes stabilize these cues: ganbaru/gaman in classrooms or workplaces, kodawari in craft and production, and sanpo-yoshi in commerce. Meaning-centric repertoires resonate with Thai Buddhist sensibilities. Wabi-sabi and ichigo-ichie affirm imperfection and impermanence, aligning with anicca, while ikigai provides purpose amid change. Kokoro links competence with compassion, encouraging meticulous effort (kodawari) without attachment to flawless outcomes. On the execution side, kaizen and dandori supply operational scripts, danshari promotes decluttering, and hara hachi bu renders moderation as embodied self-regulation. Even time management advice often functions as mindfulness consonant with ichigo-ichie.

Odor modulation aligns with Iwabuchi’s theorization of cultural odor and mukokuseki. Where paratext “leads with Japan,” odor is high, and values remain salient (life philosophy; etiquette). Where legitimation shifts toward universal scientific or managerial discourse especially productivity and health odor attenuates, even for Japanese-authored texts. Neuroscience frames and multinational citations “scientize” content, rendering it portable and culturally neutral. This dual circulation reconciles how ikigai and Zen maintain cultural odor while kaizen and dandori are framed as universally applicable techniques.

Historical and media layers further clarify reception. Since the early twentieth century, Thai elites saw Japan as evidence that technoscientific progress could coexist with cultural continuity. After 1932, study missions and educational exchanges anchored Japan as a model for finance, administration, and industrial practice. Shared constitutional-monarchy symbolism in both countries reinforced decorum, restraint, and social order as public virtues. From the 1990s, licensed manga/anime, dramas, and character goods normalized “consumption of Japan,” broadening familiarity with politeness, compassion, and respect for elders. These developments primed Thai audiences to interpret meaning-centric repertoires as proximate rather than exotic.

Contemporary mobility has reinforced these perceptions. Visa exemption for Thai citizens since

2013, combined with the presence of low-cost carriers, has boosted arrivals from 140,000 in 2011 to 1.32 million in 2019, with many repeat visitors. First-hand experiences with cleanliness, efficiency, seasonal foodways, and longevity among elders heightened expectations of “authentic Japan,” lending credibility to book-level scripts as lived practice. Travel-related paratexts (“Japanese-style,” Todai references) further raise the threshold for authenticity, rewarding titles that integrate value cues with practicable scripts.

While these travel-related encounters heighten perceptions of authenticity and reinforce cultural odor in Japanese self-help, a broader perspective from global self-help scholarship adds another interpretive layer. McGee (2005) interprets the rise of self-help in the United States as integral to a “makeover culture,” where neoliberal imperatives compel individuals to improve, adapt, and rebrand themselves continually. In this framework, success and failure are reframed as matters of personal responsibility, producing what she terms a condition of “permanent insecurity.” From a different angle, Illouz (2008) situates the self-help industry within the broader “therapeutic discourse,” demonstrating how emotions are transformed into cultural capital and how individuals are required to manage their feelings through the language of psychology.

Taken together, these perspectives suggest that the appeal of Japanese self-help in Thailand cannot be reduced solely to cultural proximity or the semiotic markers of “Japaneseness.” Instead, it reflects participation in a global regime of advice literature that normalizes endless self-improvement, emotional regulation, and the optimization of everyday life. What differentiates the Japanese corpus is its capacity to repackage these global imperatives through culturally resonant symbols - Zen-inspired tranquility, the wabi-sabi embrace of imperfection, and the kaizen ethic of continuous refinement. Such framing renders the global injunctions of neoliberal self-help more intelligible and credible for Thai readers, particularly when these scripts converge with Buddhist ethics, sufficiency discourse, and the moral economy of everyday life.

Two implications follow. For translators and editors, calibrated paratext - judicious use of “Japanese-style” language, institution/place cues, and intratextual anchoring in work or family scenes - sustains odor and ethical salience while retaining portability. For publishers, category strategies matter: business/management and philosophy gain from foregrounding Japan, whereas productivity and

health perform better when techniques are sufficiently mukokuseki to feel universal while still traceable to a Japanese repertoire. Limitations remain: odor was coded on a 1–3 ordinal scale, and category sizes were small and unequal; although omnibus tests indicate differences, pairwise contrasts rarely survive correction. We thus triangulate descriptives, effect sizes, and qualitative exemplars, distinguishing interpretive repertoires from binary-coded indicators.

In sum, Japanese self-help in Thai translation operates simultaneously as a value frame and a practice template. Meanings (ikigai, wabi-sabi, kokoro, Zen/minimalism) are rendered actionable through scripts (kaizen, dandori, danshari, hara hachi bu), with odor modulated by paratextual signaling versus scientized universalization. The genre's appeal lies in offering modernity with roots practical improvement anchored in ethical calm rather than cultural dissonance.

9. CONCLUSION

This study examined Japanese self-help books translated into Thai between 2015 and 2025, focusing on how repertoires of concepts and practices are articulated, how “Japaneseness” is constructed in textual and paratextual forms, and how these elements resonate with Thai cultural values. Using a qualitatively informed content analysis with light quantification of forty titles, the findings indicate that such works function not only as vehicles of technical advice but also as cultural texts negotiating meanings across contexts.

Three major insights emerge. First, the corpus reveals two recurrent repertoires: a meaning-centric stream emphasizing ethical reflection and life

philosophy (ikigai, wabi-sabi, ichigo-ichie, Zen/minimalism) and an action-centric stream oriented toward disciplined operational practices (kaizen, dandori, ganbaru/gaman). These repertoires frequently co-occur, forming modular bundles that couple moral orientation with routinized practice, enhancing credibility and applicability for Thai readers.

Second, “Japaneseness” is modulated through cultural odor. High-odor texts explicitly mobilize Japanese semiotics, settings, and institutional references, particularly in business/management and life-philosophy categories. By contrast, productivity and health texts often adopt universalized or scientized registers, downplaying explicit cultural markers while highlighting portability. This dual strategy reflects Iwabuchi's theorization of odor and mukokuseki, demonstrating how repertoires travel by balancing cultural distinctiveness with perceived universality.

Third, resonance with Thai values is selective. Strongest alignments appear in Buddhist ethics, sufficiency-oriented simplicity, and compassion, particularly in meaning-centric texts. In contrast, values related to hierarchy, kengjai, and familial interdependence are mobilized less consistently. Cross-cultural fit thus arises through targeted points of convergence rather than wholesale integration.

Overall, Japanese self-help translations operate as ethical frames and practice templates, mediating modernity in ways that are culturally distinctive yet locally adaptable. For Japanese studies and cross-cultural communication, this highlights the significance of paratextual strategies, category-specific positioning, and value framing in shaping transnational knowledge transfer.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Walailak University International Mobility Fund for Research Collaboration, contract no. WU CIA 05608/2024, which provided funding essential to the successful conduct and completion of this research.

REFERENCES

- Aimi, K. (2020). *Anti-Aging Insights เด็กกว่าอายุจริงด้วย 51 วิธีกิน 26 วิธีออกกำลังกาย* [Anti-Aging Insights: Look Younger Than Your Age with 51 Eating Methods and 26 Exercise Methods]. (Gamephaophon, A, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2019).
- Akihiro, S. (2021). *เทคนิคเรียนเก่งด้วยกระดาษโน้ต ฉบับเด็กโหด* [Study Excellence Techniques with Note Paper: Todai Student Style]. (Gamephaophon, A, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2020).
- Alison, A. (2000). Can popular culture go global? How Japanese ‘scouts’ and ‘rangers’ fare in the U.S. In D. Slaymaker (Ed.), *A century of popular culture in Japan*. Edwin Mellen Press.
- Burkeman, O. (2025). *คู่มือถอนพิษโลกสวย: นึกทุกตำรา self-help คิดบวก พลิกพลังลบสู่ความสุขที่ยั่งยืน* [The Antidote: Happiness for People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking]. (Khunawong, W., Trans.). Bookscape. (Original work published 2012).
- Chaiching, N. (2020). *ตามรอยอาทิตย์อุทัย: แผนสร้างชาติไทยสมัยคณะราษฎร* [Following the Rising Sun: Thailand's

- nation-building plan under the People's Party]. Matichon.
- Coeckelbergh, M. (2022). *Self-improvement*. Columbia University Press.
- Daigo, M. (2023). *แต่คุณที่กลัวการเปลี่ยนแปลงมาตลอดชีวิต [To You Who Have Been Afraid of Change Your Whole Life]*. (Phonsaen, T, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2015).
- Dalio-Bul, M. (2009). Japan brand strategy: The taming of "Cool Japan" and the challenges of cultural planning in a postmodern age. *Social Science Japan Journal*, 12(2), 247–266. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ssjj/jyp016>
- Garcia, H., & Miralles, F. (2021). *Ichigo Ichie ละเลียดปัจจุบัน ดื่มด่ำชีวิต [Ichigo Ichie: Savoring the Present, Immersing in Life]*. (Aekyanat, P, Trans.). Nanmeebooks. (Original work published 2019).
- Garcia, H., & Miralles, F. (2018). *อิชิโก [Reason for Being: The Japanese Art of Living]*. (Sriwaranat, P, Trans.). Nation Book. (Original work published 2016).
- Godo, T. (2018). *เลิกเป็นคนดีแล้วจะมีความสุข [Stop Being Good and You'll Be Happy]*. (Rattanaphirat, A, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2016).
- Homma, M., & Ukishima, Y. (2019). *เทคนิคสรุปแบบญี่ปุ่น [Japanese Summarization Techniques]*. (Yosuke, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2015).
- Illouz, E. (2008). *Saving the modern soul: Therapy, emotions, and the culture of self-help*. Univ of California Press.
- Inamori, K. (2022). *หัวใจ พลังที่เป็นความหมายของชีวิต [Heart: The Power That Gives Meaning to Life]*. (Singkhanat, W, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2019).
- Inoue, H. (2025). *คนที่ใครๆ รัก ก็มักเป็นแบบนี้แหละ [People That Everyone Loves Are Usually Like This]*. (Vanichyanon, R, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2024).
- Inoue, T. (2023). *จิตวิทยาตีเนียน (เพื่อจัดการคนน่ารำคาญ) [Cunning Psychology (For Dealing with Annoying People)]*. (Phenaram, K, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2021).
- Ito, M. (2015). *จงถ่ายเอกสารหน้าสารบัญ แล้วคุณจะได้เรียนเก่ง [Take Photos of Table of Contents Pages and You'll Study Better]*. (Yosuke & Suksawat, P, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2011).
- Iwabuchi, K. (2002). *Recentering globalization: Popular culture and Japanese transnationalism*. Duke University Press.
- Iwabuchi, K. (Ed.). (2004). *Feeling Asian modernities: Transnational consumption of Japanese TV dramas*. Hong Kong University Press.
- Kabasawa, S. (2021). *สกิลขั้นเทพของนักบริหารเวลาที่รู้ใจสมอง [Divine-Level Skills of Time Managers Who Understand the Brain]*. (Khuaikaksa, P, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2017).
- Kakiuchi, T. (2023). *Output Thinking [Output Thinking]*. (Sirisathian, N, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2020).
- Kakiuchi, T. (2024). *จะกินพุดดิ้งชิ้นนี้เลยไหม หรือจะหนไว้ก่อน? [Will You Eat This Pudding Now or Wait?]*. (Vanichyanon, R, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2024).
- Kitano, Y. (2023). *วิธีคิดของคนค่าตัวแพง [The Mindset of High-Value People]*. (Rattanaphirat Kudo, K, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2018).
- Komin, S.(1990a). Culture and work-related values in Thai organizations. *International Journal of Psychology*, 25(5–6), 681–704. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207599008247921>
- Komin, S. (1990b). *Psychology of the Thai people: Values and behavioral patterns*. Research Center, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA).
- Kondo, M. (2016). *108 เวทมนตร์ แห่งการจัดบ้าน: ขยับข้าวของหนึ่งครั้ง เปลี่ยนได้ทั้งชีวิต [108 Magic Spells of Home Organization: Move Things Once, Transform Your Life]*. (Naksawat, A, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2014).
- Kondo, M. (2015). *ชีวิตดีขึ้นทุกๆด้านด้วยการจัดบ้านแค่ครั้งเดียว [The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up]*. (Yosuke & Tangchakravanon, P, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2011).
- Kondo, M., & Sonenshein, S. (2024). *Joy at Work นำความสุขมาสู่งานด้วยการจัดการสิ่งของและข้อมูล [Joy at Work: Bringing Happiness to Your Job Through Organization and Information Management]*. (Leelanuch, O, Trans.). Nanmeebooks. (Original work published 2024).
- Konishi, T. (2019). *จดโน้ตแบบนี้สมองชอบจัง [Note-Taking That Your Brain Really Loves]*. (Pahanit, T, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2016).
- Likhitbanthun, J., & Kraipakon, D. (2024). *วัฒนธรรมของแฟนคลับไอดอลสไตร์ญี่ปุ่นในสังคมไทยช่วงกลางทศวรรษ 2000–ค.ศ. 2020: กรณีศึกษาแฟนคลับไอดอล AKB48 และแฟนคลับ BNK48 Fan club culture of Japanese-style idols in*

- Thai society during the mid-2000s to 2020: A case study of AKB48 and BNK48 fan clubs]. *Journal of History Srinakharinwirot University*, 49(1), 7–34.
- Lomwattthanatham, C. (2018). ภาพความสัมพันธ์ไทย-ญี่ปุ่นในวรรณกรรมเยาวชน: เรื่อง “นิฮอนจิน โอะอิน” (1932) และ “นิตโต โนะ โบเก็นโอะ” (1937) [Images of Thai-Japanese relations in children’s literature: “Nihonjin o in” (1932) and “Nittō no Bōken-ō” (1937)] [Master’s thesis, Chulalongkorn University].
- Matsui, T. (2014). Nation branding through stigmatized popular culture: The “Cool Japan” craze among central ministries in Japan. *Hitotsubashi Journal of Commerce and Management*, 48(1), 81–97. [https://hermes-ir.lib-hit-u.ac.jp/hermes/ir/re/26980/HJcom0480100810.pdf](https://hermes-ir.lib.hit-u.ac.jp/hermes/ir/re/26980/HJcom0480100810.pdf)
- Matsui, T. (2022). เพราะไม่มีอะไร จึงมีอะไร MUJI [Because There's Nothing, There's Something: MUJI]. (Phonsaen, T, Trans.). *Amarin Howto*. (Original work published 2015).
- McGee, M. (2005). *Self-help, Inc.: Makeover culture in American life*. Oxford University Press.
- Methasate, N. (2024). การแปลวรรณกรรมเกี่ยวกับญี่ปุ่นในไทย ช่วงทศวรรษ 1900–1940 [Translation of literature about Japan in Thailand, 1900–1940] *JSN Journal*, 14(1), 55–74.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. (2013, June 25). Exemption of visas for nationals of the Kingdom of Thailand. https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press6e_000126.html
- Mogi, K. (2018). อธิปไตย [Reason for Being: The Japanese Art of Living].
- Mogi, K. (2022). นาโงมิ สุข สงบ สมดุล [Nagomi: Happiness, Peace, Balance]. (Deepravat, K, Trans.). *Amarin Howto*. (Original work published 2022).
- Mogi, K. (2023). เลิกเป็นคนดี [Stop Being a Good Person]. (Klinakesorn, P, Trans.). *Se-Education*. (Original work published 2021).
- Nagumo, Y. (2015). แก่ช้าลงแน่แค่ปล่อยให้หิว [Age Slower Just by Letting Yourself Get Hungry]. (Yosuke, Trans.). *WeLearn Publishing*. (Original work published 2012).
- Nakano, N. (2025). วิธีใช้คำพูดเชือดนิ่มๆ สไตส์ผู้ดีเกียวโต [How to Use Gentle Sharp Words in Kyoto Elite Style]. (Warasak, C, Trans.). *WeLearn Publishing*. (Original work published 2023).
- Nishino, S. (2025). หลับดีมีคุณภาพด้วยเคล็ดลับฉบับสแตนฟอร์ด [Quality Sleep with Stanford Tips]. (Gamephaophon, A, Trans.). *Amarin Howto*. (Original work published 2017).
- Nishioka, I. (2021). อ่านแบบโทได [Reading Like a Todai Student]. (Sonpraphan, P, Trans.). *WeLearn Publishing*. (Original work published 2018).
- Nye, J. S. (1990). Soft power. *Foreign Policy*, 80, 153–171. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1148580>
- Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*. PublicAffairs.
- Otmazgin, N. K. (2007). Japanese popular culture in East and Southeast Asia: Time for a regional paradigm?. *Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia*, (8–9).
- Ozawa, T. (2023). ถ้าอีก 1 ปีฉันจะต้องตาย [If I Had One More Year to Live]. (Singkhanat, W, Trans.). *WeLearn Publishing*. (Original work published 2021).
- Riki, O. (2023). ออกแบบชีวิตด้วยเทคนิคปฏิทิน 100 ปี [Designing Life with the 100-Year Calendar Technique]. (Khieo-urai, N, Trans.). *Amarin Howto*. (Original work published 2021).
- Saladtook, S., & Banterng, T. (2023). การสื่อสารภาพลักษณ์วัฒนธรรมญี่ปุ่นด้านอาหารผ่านภาพยนตร์การ์ตูน
- Shiihara, T. (2021). ฝึกตัวเองให้เป็นคนที่ยังเป็น [Training Yourself to Be Someone Who Can Let Go]. (Sopitachasak, S, Trans.). *Biblio*. (Original work published 2018).
- Shiozawa, M. (2021). ทำแบบญี่ปุ่น สำเร็จแบบญี่ปุ่น: การดำเนินกิจการ 100 ปี ที่ยั่งยืน [Do Like the Japanese, Succeed Like the Japanese: 100-Year Sustainable Business Operations]. (Thomya, C, Trans.). *Gypsy Publishing*. (Original work published 2013).
- Straubhaar, J. D. (1991). Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 8(1), 39–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15295039109366779>
- Suzuki, N. (2022). วะบิ วะบิ ความงามในความไม่สมบูรณ์แบบ [Wabi Sabi: Beauty in Imperfection]. (Wannangkung, S, Trans.). *Nation Book*. (Original work published 2020).
- Tanaka, T. (2025). Work Priority ทำงานไหนก่อนดี เพราะตอนนี้ทุกอย่างดูด่วนไปหมด [Work Priority: What Work to Do First When Everything Seems Urgent]. (Vanichyanon, R, Trans.). *Amarin Howto*. (Original work published 2023).
- The Asahi Shimbun. (2025, April 23). 73% of Thai visitors have come to Japan more than once. *The Asahi Shimbun*. <https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/15722204>
- Tomoya, F. (2024). ช่างมันเถอะ อีกไม่กี่ปีเราก็เป็นเถ้าหลิกันหมดแล้ว [Never Mind, In a Few Years We'll All Be Dust

- Anyway]. (Phenaram, K, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2023).
- Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Newsroom. (2014, July 8). Thai AirAsia X to launch direct flights to Tokyo and Osaka from September 1. <https://www.tatnews.org/2014/07/thai-airasia-x-to-launch-direct-flights-to-tokyo-and-osaka-from-september-1/>
- Toyoshima, N. (2008). Longing for Japan: The consumption of Japanese cultural products in Thailand. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 23(2), 252–282. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41220073>
- Tsukamoto, R. (2022). สิ่งที่ต้องไม่ทำของคนที่ยิ่งมือทำ [Things That Doers Must Never Do]. (Kansomchai, P, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2020).
- Tsukamoto, R. (2023). เทคนิคเลิกคิดเยอะแล้วทำทันที [Techniques to Stop Overthinking and Act Immediately]. (Sirisathian, N, Trans.). WeLearn Publishing. (Original work published 2017).
- Yamamoto, N. (2025). เทคนิคทำงาน 1 วันให้เสร็จใน 3 ชั่วโมง [Techniques to Finish a Day's Work in 3 Hours]. (Khieourai, N, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2019).
- Yoshihiro, S. (2025). กิจวัตรสร้างความรวยที่คนรวยแล้วไม่เคยบอกคุณ [Wealth-Building Routines That Rich People Never Tell You]. (Phenaram, K, Trans.). Amarin Howto. (Original work published 2024).
- Yuichiro, N. (2019). คัมภีร์กู้วิกฤตธุรกิจปากเหวให้ฟื้นคืนชีพ [The Manual for Rescuing Businesses from the Brink]. (Somrangsang, P, Trans.). Sukkhapabjai Publishing. (Original work published 2018).
- ZIPAIR Tokyo. (2020, October 19). ZIPAIR will launch passenger service flight from Bangkok to Narita [Press release]. <https://www.zipairtokyo.com/en/press/article/2020/1019.html>