

**NEW PARADIGM NARRATIVE AND CONSTRUCTION  
OF MEANINGS OF THAI TELEVISION DRAMA  
WITH CROSS-MEDIA CONTENT**



**Sirasa Chalainanont**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy (Communication Arts and Innovation)  
The Graduate School of Communication Arts and Management  
Innovation  
National Institute of Development Administration  
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## ABSTRACT

<b>Title of Dissertation</b>	NEW PARADIGM NARRATIVE AND CONSTRUCTION OF MEANINGS OF THAI TELEVISION DRAMA WITH CROSS-MEDIA CONTENT
<b>Author</b>	Sirasa Chalainanont
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This research aims (1) to study the intertextuality between a Taiwanese television drama called “The Fierce Wife” and a Thai television drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018”; (2) to study the intercultural communication, values, ideology, and construction of the meanings of the “wife” of the television drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018” through the components of the new paradigm narrative; and (3) to study the audience’s perception and interpretation of the meanings of the “wife” of “Mia (Wife) 2018”. The research is qualitative, and the main methodologies are textual analysis of the above-mentioned dramas and in-depth interviews with the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018.”

The findings are the following. One, the intertextuality between the Taiwanese television drama “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai television drama “Mia (Wife) 2018” transfers all of the components of the new paradigm narrative (plot, theme, conflicts, characters, settings, dialogues, points of view, and special symbols), including values and ideology in all forms of convention, extension, reduction, and modification. Only the themes (the main theme is love, and the sub-theme is morality), point of view (the wife’s point of view), and conflict (family conflict) are transferred via convention. Two, both dramas communicate the values and ideology related to women and the family in a pro-social manner; that is, monogamy. The intertextuality also transfers the concepts of authoritarianism and feminism. In terms of authoritarianism, the dramas present the man’s power, represented by the husband’s influence on the female characters (wife, mistress, and colleague (his ex-girlfriend)). With regard to feminism, the dramas present liberal feminism and radical feminism through the wife. In terms of the perception and interpretation by the audience, they accept that values and ideology presented in the

drama are true in Thai society but they are not passive. The audience learns from the dramas and applies that knowledge to their real life in the same way or better ways than the wife in the drama. Three, the construction of the meanings of “wife” in “Mia (Wife) 2018” represents the wife in the digital era of 2018, which is different from the past. In contrast with the traditional archetype of a wife in Thai society, which values the roles and duties of the wives in serving their family and being dependent on their husband, the wife in “Mia (Wife) 2018” represents a by-design wife who is independent and plays the roles of wife and mother perfectly while freely choosing her way of living. Audience members who are Thai wives in real life feel that wives in Thai society should be the same as the wife presented in “Mia (Wife) 2018” in terms of their roles and duties with regard to their families. However, at present, most of wives also work together with their husbands to earn a living. They also believe that husbands should help them with taking care of children and doing household chores, rather than leaving the entire burden for their wives to bear. Meanwhile, the audiences who are men (both single and married) and single women believe that a wife should not only perform her duties in the same way as the wife presented in “Mia (Wife) 2018” but also take good care of herself.

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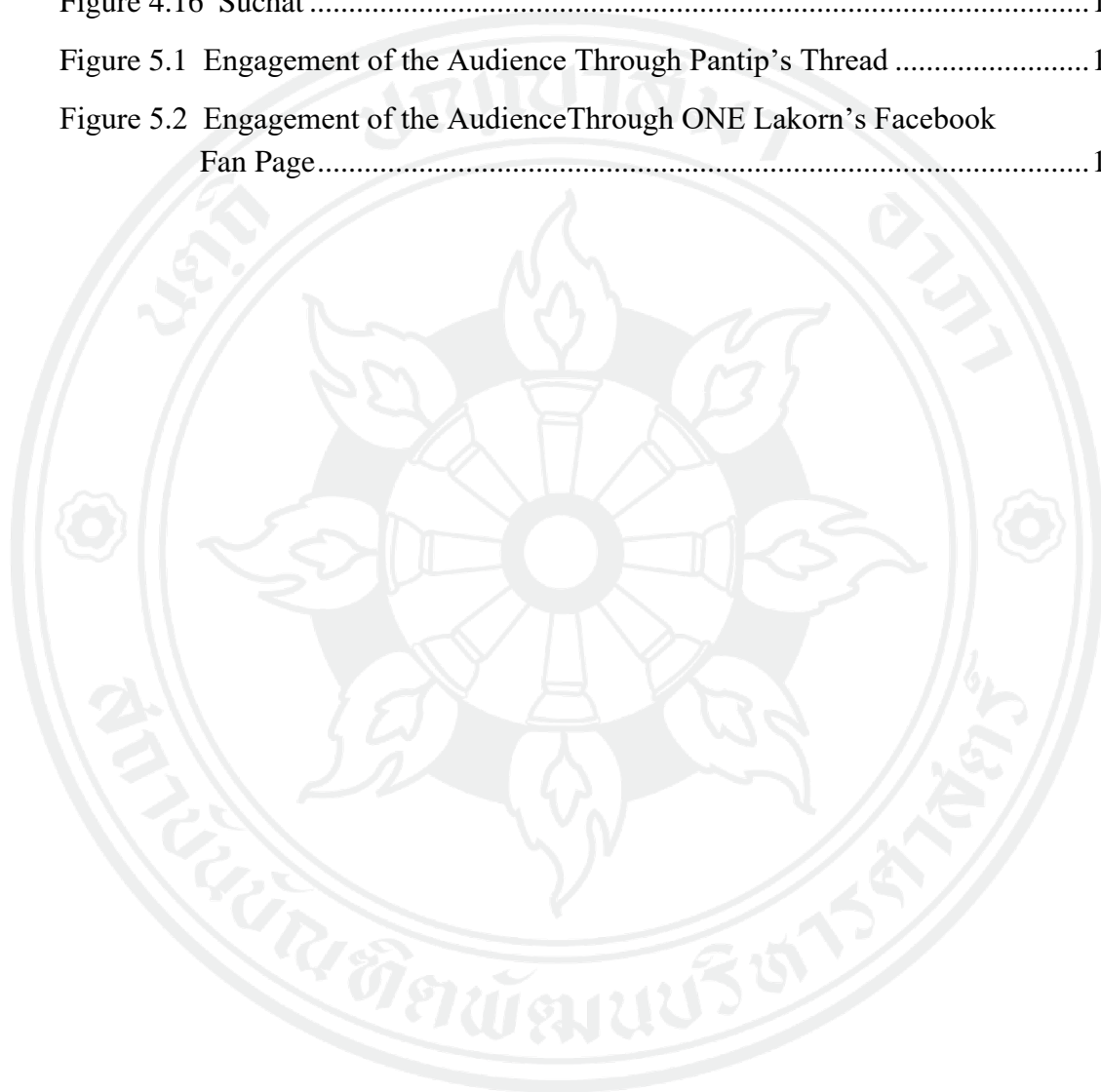
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Importance of Problems

Television dramas are popular among audience because they can entertain audiences and most of their contents are similar to the audience's real lives. However, some of them are completely different from real life, but they make the audience imagine themselves in that life and temporarily escape from their real lives while the audience watches them. Currently, the television drama industry is highly competitive and there are many platforms to present contents. Producers definitely want their dramas to be popular among audiences, so they try to update the contents of their dramas to attract an audience.

Digital TV originated and expanded in 2014 and 2015. Group M (2015) conducted a survey of the amount of time spent by Thai people watching television and using social media. It was found that both increased. Time spent watching television increased by 1-2 hours per day, on average, while use of social media increased 3-4 hours per day. The reasons were an increase in the "content" of digital TV and the audience could easily move to the new channels easily and they were more widely distributed. TV is the media which has the highest audience reach, with 100% penetration. Highlighted content, like "drama", can reach an audience of up to 5-10 million people at the same time. At present, television dramas are not only broadcast through the main free TV channels, like Channel 3 and Channel 7, but they are also broadcasted on digital TV channels, like ONE 31, GMM 25, Channel 8, and others with a variety of contents and different air times. Ratings for digital TV dramas is continually increasing because more than 50% of Thai people can access the internet. Thirty to forty million people use digital platforms and social media.

Therefore, “online platforms and social media” are additional important tools for digital TV channels to present content in order to reach teenagers and younger generations who watch television through online platforms, or audience who have multiscreen behavior. TV should present content on every “screen” because audience behaviors vary from age to age. Looking at the same content, teenagers prefer watching on online platforms, while their parents like watching on a television. Therefore, only assessing television ratings cannot accurately identify the degree of popularity of the content. Therefore, other platforms should be taken into consideration in order to fully cover penetration. Digital platforms which have many channels have an “advantage” for penetration with many audience groups. Furthermore, the online platforms are effective at creating viral marketing and predicting the popularity of TV contents.

In the age of digital convergence, many platforms are used to present content and immediately access large audiences. Two technical terms have emerged: “Crossmedia” and “Transmedia”. Filmneweurope.com (2016) defines the meanings of both terms as follows: “Crossmedia” means one episode of the content is presented through many channels simultaneously (one story, many channels), while “Transmedia” means one story is retold through multiple media avenues, where it becomes many different stories and these new stories are presented through many platforms (one story world, many stories, many forms, many channels), so the audience can freely choose what they like.

According to McLuhan (1962) “displacement hypothesis”, with the appearance of a new medium of communication which can optimally satisfy a particular social need, there may be a decline in the usage of the “old” medium, or even its complete displacement, by the “new” one. However, each medium can continue to exist separately if each one partially fulfils needs not completely fulfilled by the other media. They are interchangeable due to cross-media usage. The advantages of multi-platform presentations are beneficial for TV stations to penetrate Niche Audience, especially in terms of creating cross-media content.

However, whether TV dramas are presented through television or other platforms, the quality of the dramas cannot guarantee the popularity among audience by itself. The way the “content” is presented is the key. There are many dimensions to

present content, including the stories themselves and how the stories are told. Paradigm Narratives have complicated components in their story, which can be obviously seen in the dramas and are implied in the story and the way the story is told. The construction of the meanings is implied and must be interpreted. New Paradigm Narratives focus on the construction of meaning and how to narrate (Fisher, 1987). The process of the construction of meaning applies two rules. The first one is the Law of Selection, and the second one is the Law of Combination. (Propp, 1968)

For the above-mentioned reasons, the researcher was interested in studying the New Paradigm Narrative and construction of meanings in Thai television dramas with cross-media content. The case study for this research was the most achieved Thai television drama with the highest TV rating. It reached a 6.1 rating. This rating is higher than the ratings for Channel 7 and Channel 3, which held the first and second highest ratings for TV stations for a long time and were the most popular among audience on every platform (as of 21 August 2018) and is the highest in the history of digital TV channel ONE 31. (Diao Woratangtrakul, 2018). The mentioned drama is called “Mia (Wife) 2018”. It had 28 episodes which were broadcasted through digital TV channel ONE 31 between 28 May and 28 August 2018. The researcher studied the intertextuality between this drama and another drama called “The Fierce Wife”. “The Fierce Wife” was produced in Taiwan by Sanlih E-Television and the ONE Enterprise Co., Ltd. bought its copyright and adapted the content for broadcast in Thailand under the title of “Mia (Wife) 2018”. The researcher studied the intertextuality in terms of the new paradigm narrative, including the intercultural communication, values, and ideologies implied in the drama, then compared the construction of the meanings of “Wife” in both dramas. Finally, the researcher did a purposive sampling of the “Mia (Wife) 2018” audience by analyzing the content they engage in the drama through digital platforms, then contacted them to conduct in-depth interviews in order to understand how they perceived and interpreted the meanings of “Wife”, and then compared them with the meanings conveyed by the drama.

Moreover, the importance of this study is the continued implementation of the Women Development Plan Vol. 11 (B.E. 2555-2559). The objective of this plan is to increase the acceptance of women roles in various social contexts, equally and equitably, by supporting related agencies to produce appropriate media to



communicate the paradigm shift regarding women with people in the society (Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, 2013). In compliance with the first strategy, “Paradigm Shift Measure”, of the Women Development Strategy B.E. 2560-2564, 20-year National Strategy B.E. 2560-2579, and National Economic and Social Development Plan Vol. 11 (B.E. 2560-2564) which are focused on people-centered, all-inclusive development, participation, and access to fundamental rights, narrowing social and economic gaps (Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, 2017), the main characters of both television dramas “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” are women. Their stories are connected with the roles of women and the family, which is the fundamental institute of society.

The main characters of both dramas are women who act as good “wives” for their husbands and good “mothers” of their daughters. The dramas reflect family life and gender issues in the contexts of Thailand and Taiwan, as well as the power relations within a family, values, feminism, and power ideologies. The dramas also reflect the related economic, social, and cultural contexts in Thai and Taiwanese society, especially the husband-wife relationship, in the family.

Furthermore, textual analysis of the narrative components of the mentioned dramas, according to the new paradigm narrative, can predict the direction of women and family-related values and ideologies the media communicates to people and whether it still emphasizes the existing ideology, or opens a new space for women, and how the audience perceives and interprets the meanings as being pro-social or challenging it.

### **1.1.1 The Development of Narrative Intertextuality Studies in Television Dramas**

In the past, narrative studies began with novels and the producers used the novel's contents to produce television dramas, with some adaptations. If the dramas were popular, they would be remade by changing plots, characters, or other components according to the changing times or other factors, for example, “Ban Sai Thong”, “Cham Loey Rak”, “Khu Kam”. The studies of narrative intertextuality between novels and television dramas can be seen in prior research. For example,

Linin Sangpattana (2015) studied “Intertextuality of the main actress in Thai TV drama: Case study of Reang Ngao”. (Linin Sangpattana, 2015) The researcher employed textual analysis as a research tool to analyze the content of the TV drama according to the narrative’s conceptual factors: characters, plot, themes, setting, special symbols, and conflict, to find the main actress character’s intertextuality. In addition, the researcher used the following concepts: Intertextuality, Semiology, and Feminism to analyze it.

Later, in the new age of media, narrative did not originate from novels, the story could have previously been told by people who are not novel writers. One concrete example is the “Club Friday” Radio Program which was broadcasted on Green Wave F.M. 106.5 MHz on Fridays from 21.00 to 23.00 hrs. The audience could phone in and share their real-life love-related stories from their own experiences. The program moderators, Mrs. Saithip Montrikul na Ayudhaya (DJ Chod) and Miss Napaporn Trivitwareegune (DJ Aoy), would give advice to the audience during the program. After that, the program hosts would inform the audience of the topic for the next, so the audience could prepare in advance. For example, for the topic “True Love Loses to Intimacy”, audience members who had experiences related to the topic could share their stories on a web board. If their stories were interesting, the program staff would contact them to call in to tell their stories during the live program. During the program, the two moderators would give advice to the story teller, and other audience who were listening to the program, and they could learn how to solve problems and apply the advice to their real lives. Later, the program would open chat on the web board related to the topic and collect the theme songs for each topic. Then the program would organize a concert to present the stories told by the audience through these theme songs. For example, “Green Concert #15 Club Friday Based on True Story” was organized during 25-26 August 2012 at the Royal Paragon Hall in Siam Paragon. Then, the GMM 25 Digital TV Channel, owned by GMM Media Co., Ltd., chose the contents of the stories which were most dramatic, such as secret love, true love, getting played love, to produce a TV short series called “Club Friday, the Series” to entertain and give some advice to the audience. The first episode of the “Club Friday the Series” was broadcasted in October 2012 and the series was very popular for 4 years. Then the producer developed it to be a long series in Season 9, in



the form of “To be Continued” with each episode presenting 4 consecutive stories. They were broadcasted on Saturdays at 20:00 hrs. in 2015 and 2016. The contents of this series that was drawn from sources outside of novels and their authors included (1) a story of Love and Secrets told by Khun Miew, which was then was produced as “Club Friday the Series 5, Secret of Mint and Miew” and “Club Friday To be Continued, Mint and Miew”, (2) a story told via e-mail by Khun Chomphoo, which was then was produced as “Club Friday the Series 6, Love itself is not wrong....but best friend is wrong” and “Club Friday To be Continued, Best Friend, Bad Friend”, (3) a story told via e-mail by Khun Boss, which was then was produced as “Club Friday the Series 5, Unreal Secret of the Heart” and Love War To be continued, Unreal Secret of the Heart”, and (4) the story of 108 problems of love told by Khun Hack, which was then was produced as “Club Friday the Series 2, Cannot Love or Not Love” and “Love War To be continued, Cannot Love or Not Love” (Yutthana Suwannarat, 2015). Moreover, there was communication via Facebook where the audience could share captions in the drama and the drama contents were broadcasted on Line TV. These aspects of the series extended the experiences of the audience, who were willing to tell their stories to the public, added value to the radio program, expanded the radio audience to also be a TV audience, and created interaction with the audience through online media and activity media.

“Club Friday the Series” is one of the highest achieving TV series in terms of content. The series was awarded Nataraja Awards (Award for Radio and Television Professionals) for this type of TV series for the quality of content for 4 consecutive years. The series encouraged the audience to engage in online platforms. For example, on the series’ Facebook page, there were 1,665,935 likes and 1,886,917 followers (as of 19 September 2018). Furthermore, the popularity of the series has been reflected in a good amount of research on Club Friday storytelling, such as Prakaikavin Srijinda (2017)’s research on “Intertextuality of the Narrative Love Story in Club Friday”, to present the different perspectives and approaches in the new paradigm of linking one text to another in an interesting perspective on communication.

### **1.1.2 The Development of Audience Engagement with the Contents of Television Dramas**

In the past, when social media was not available, the engagement of the audience with the contents of television dramas was not clearly seen. Audiences could engage in the television dramas by writing comments on contents, characters, and the like on the TV station's website. Additionally, the main channel to actually watch the dramas was television. TV stations which broadcasted the dramas promoted them by launching teasers on their websites. The contents of the teasers on websites were the same as on television. Later, in the age of media convergence, TV stations began to present the drama contents through various channels in order to meet the demand of multi-screen audiences. For example, Channel 3 launched its own online platform called "Mello.me". Mello.me was created for viewing the contents of various programs produced by Channel 3. Audiences could replay the contents of TV dramas in case they missed the live program. After that, Mello.me added features and other kinds of contents, such as applications on smartphones, popular Asian Series (Korean, Chinese, Japanese and Taiwanese series) such as "I can hear you voice", "Secret garden" and "My girl". The unique feature of Mello.me was the exclusive movie contents which were produced to meet the demand of new generations, such as a series called "Notification", "Love Lie Hide Fake", and variety programs, like "Wrong Say Do" by Jennie Panhan, "Healthy Recipe" by Nokky, and others. TV stations which broadcasted dramas created audience engagement through various additional channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Line, and connected them with the activity. For example, the TV drama called "KhamSee ThanDorn", organized an activity called "#Mello Chitchat with KhamSee ThanDorn" on twitter, gave the lucky participants some gifts, and announced the names of the lucky participants on Mello.me website (Mello Thailand, 2018) to increase engagement by audience members. Another example in an activity organized by the TV drama called "Suphaphurut Juthathep", which was a "Meet & Greet". Producers allowed the lucky audience members to visit the location, "Juthathep Palace", and have lunch with the five gentlemen of Juthathep Palace who were leading actors of the drama (Thairath, 2013). Apart from organizing activity to increase audience engagement, TV stations

also cooperated with Line TV to broadcast contents for audiences who would like to watch some scenes they liked from the drama, again.

Later, when social media became more popular, audiences were no longer just passive receivers, they were able to create content themselves, which was called “User-generated content”. They could watch TV dramas through various channels, including both TV and other platforms. They could then engage in many channels and many forms voluntarily. For example, sending SMS messages; answering questions to win prizes; following, liking, and sharing on Facebook; giving comments; chatting on web boards’ capturing some scenes in the drama, and writing captions; or even writing new scripts from their imaginations in the form of online novels. The analysis of the forms and contents of audience engagement can reflect the perceptions and interpretations of the meanings which the audience decoded and to what extent they interpret them differently from the meanings constructed and encoded by the drama producers.

### 1.1.3 Background of the TV Drama Called “The Fierce Wife”



Figure 1.1 Advertisement Picture of TV Drama Called “The Fierce Wife”

Source: Flickriver and Settvw (2010)

The TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” was produced by TTV in cooperation with Sanlih E-Television (SET) TV Stations in Taiwan, and was directed by Xu Fujun. It had 23 episodes which were broadcasted on Sanlih E-Television (SET) in Taiwan during between November 2010 and 15 April 2011. It reached the highest rating in the history of Taiwanese TV programs and was described as “the most talked about TV show in Taiwan”. Its story was about the complicated love within a family. The leading character was Xie Anzhen (portrayed by Sonia Sui). She dedicated herself to love and dreamed of having a happy family life. She was married to Wen Ruifan (portrayed by Wen Shenghao). She and her husband loved and understood each other. Then, she learned that her husband had a love affair with her cousin, Li Wei-en (portrayed by Amanda Zhu). Anzhen was going through depression and finding herself learning how to live again from Lan Tianwei (portrayed by Chris Wang), who acted as a mentor giving her good advice and supporting her. However, Lan Tian Wei ended up falling in love with Anzhen. “The Fierce Wife” was very successful both in Taiwan and abroad. It was broadcasted in Japan as 34 episodes under the name “Does Marriage Guarantee Happiness?” with Japanese subtitles.

Later, the producer, Wang Peihua, decided to make it into a feature movie set four years after the main female character, Xie Anzhen, got divorced. The film was released on 17 August 2012. “The Fierce Wife” was nominated for awards in many categories, including Best Television Series, Best Leading Actor, Best Leading Actress, Best Supporting Actress, and Best Screenplay, at the 47<sup>th</sup> Golden Bell Awards.

“The Fierce Wife” was broadcasted with Thai dubbing for the first time in Thailand on True Asian Series Channel (Channel 64) on 10 May 2012. Later, The ONE Enterprise Co., Ltd. bought the copyright to produce the TV drama named “Mia (Wife) 2018”. “Mia (Wife) 2018” had 28 episodes which were broadcasted from 28 May to 28 August 2018 on the ONE 31 digital TV channel.



#### 1.1.4 Synopsis of “Mia (Wife) 2018”



Figure 1.2 Advertisement Picture of TV Drama Called “Mia (Wife) 2018”

Source: Dooracon (2018)

“Mia (Wife) 2018” was a melodrama directed by Sant Srikaewlaw and produced by The ONE Enterprise Co., Ltd. and Remind K Co., Ltd. The screenwriter was Wattana Weerayawattana and the drama’s air time was on Mondays and Tuesdays at 21.30 hours on ONE 31 digital TV Channel. The leading characters were Namthip Jongrachatawiboon, Nawat Kulrattanakarn, Marie Broenner, Pete

Thongchua, Thanapat Kawila, Pitchanart Sakakorn, Wattana Gamtornthip, Chanokwanun Rakcheep, Paweena Charivsakul and Rungrada Runglikitjarearn.

Synopsis: Aruna (portrayed by Namthip Jongrachatawiboon) was married to Thada (portrayed by Nawat Kulrattanarak). After her marriage, she decided to quit her job and become a housewife. She had one daughter, Nuda (portrayed by Rungrada Runglikitjarearn). Her family was very happy until her cousin, Kanya, (portrayed by Marie Broenner) returned from abroad to live with her. Her perfect life was changed and fell apart after learning that Kanya had gotten sexually involved with Thada. She was very upset and had to decide how to cope with the problem. She was reminded her mother's words what they had taught her. Her mother compared family life with a "wonton". When we make wonton, we should fold and boil it neatly. Like family life, which the husband and wife should build with care. When Aruna was in trouble, she knew Wasin (portrayed by Thanapat Kawila) could help her. Wasin was the young CEO of a super car company. He had just graduated from abroad and come back to run the business. He fell in love with Aruna and he helped Aruna by offering to let her to work for him in the company. Aruna had to decide whether to accept this offer or not.

## 1.2 Research Questions

1) To what extent are convention, extension, reduction, and modification of the contents transferred from TV drama called "The Fierce Wife" to "Mia (Wife) 2018", and what are the reasons behind the transfer?

2) How do the TV drama called "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018" communicate intercultural communication, values, ideologies, and the construction of the meaning of the word "wife" through the new paradigm narrative? What are the similarities and differences, if any, between the two TV dramas?

3) How does the audience of the TV drama called "Mia (Wife) 2018" perceive and interpret the meaning of "wife"? Are there any similarities and differences between the meaning of "wife" interpreted by the audience and the meaning constructed by producer of the drama?

### 1.3 Research Objectives

- 1) To study the intertextuality between the TV dramas called “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018”
- 2) To study the intercultural communication, values, ideologies, and the construction of the meaning of the word “wife” in the TV dramas called “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” through the new paradigm narrative.
- 3) To study the perceptions and interpretations of the meaning of “wife” among the “Mia (Wife) 2018” audience.

### 1.4 Scope of Research

Researcher chooses to study the TV dramas called “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” based on the following criteria: 1) They are husband and wife dramas that reflect the husband-wife relationship in a middle-class family, which is quite vulnerable. 2) They are digital TV dramas which present contents not only through television, but other online platforms, as well. 3) They are most successful and most popular shows among audiences who watch dramas on television and other platforms. The objectives of the study were 1) to analyze the intertextuality between both dramas in terms of convention, extension, reduction, and modification of the contents including intercultural communication, values, ideologies, and the construction of the meaning of the word “wife” through the components of the new paradigm narrative, which focuses on the construction of meaning; 2) to study how the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018” perceived and interpreted the meaning of “wife” and the similarities and differences between the meaning of “wife” as interpreted by the audience and as constructed by producer of the drama. The methodology applied textual analysis of both dramas to study the intertextuality and analyze the contents that the audience engaged with related to the drama on the online platforms in order to learn how the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018” perceived and interpreted the meaning of “wife” in general. Then, sampling and in-depth interviews of the audience were performed in order to learn in detail how they decoded the meanings and find out the



similarities and differences between the meanings of “wife” as decoded by the audience and as encoded by producer of the drama.

### **1.5 Contributions of the Research**

1) The TV dramas called “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” in this study are the most successful and the most popular shows among drama audiences in Taiwan and Thailand. They reflect the middle-class family life and gender in the Thai and Taiwanese contexts in the digital age. Studying these two dramas enabled the researcher understand the images of the main characters (husband, wife, mistress) which the producer communicated with the audience and learn about the intertextuality between Taiwanese dramas and Thai dramas.

2) Drama producers can adjust the way they present images, roles, and sexual values through media to be more suitable for a changing society.

3) The results of this study are not only beneficial for mass communication, media, and the audience, but also extend the study of mass communication related to social issue communications; especially family and gender issues, in order to shift the paradigms related to women, especially women who are wives and family members in the society.

### **1.6 Operational Definitions**

Television Drama means an entertainment program produced for broadcast on television. They are presented in many forms, but have the same characters. Their air times are on weekly basis on a fixed day and time. They can be broadcasted through free TV or digital TV channels according to the program schedule and may also presented on online platforms. The television dramas in this study are “The Fierce Wife”, broadcasted on Sanlih E-Television (SET) in Taiwan, and “Mia (Wife) 2018”, broadcasted on ONE 31 digital TV Channel in Thailand.

Intertextuality means the textual references between the original, or source, drama (“The Fierce Wife”) to the new, or remade, drama (“Mia (Wife) 2018”). The

new text retains some parts of the original drama and the process of new text creation can adjust the original drama as follows:

1) Extension means the remade drama adds some content or other components which do not exist in the original drama and how the extensions affect the overall meanings of the content.

2) Reduction means the remade drama cuts some content or other components that exist in the original drama and how the reductions affect the overall meanings of the content.

3) Modification means the remade drama modifies some contents or other components which do not exist in the original drama to update it with regard to the changing contexts of age, society, culture, and so on.

4) Convention means the remade drama retains content or other components exist in the original drama and what the retained content represents.

New Paradigm Narrative means the form of presenting or telling a story through narrative components: plot, theme, conflict, character, setting, dialogue, point of view, and special symbols. The New Paradigm Narrative emphasizes how to narrate and construct meanings in order to understand the story and meaning in “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018”

Wife means the role of a woman who lives together with a man and they have a husband-wife relationship. Performance of that role is constructed under different contexts related to the economy, society, culture, values, beliefs, and traditions.

Social Construction of Reality means the process of constructing “world of meanings” which is how people in the real world explain, define, and systemize things in order to explain their “world of reality”, although we cannot explain everything accurately.

Decoding means the process of reading text, which is in the arena of coding. Decoding does not exist in the text itself, but comes from the interaction between the encoders and the decoders who have created a shared meaning. In the communication process, is not necessary for something to have only one meaning. It is not necessary for the coding systems of the encoders and the decoders to be the same. Decoding can be a preferred reading, a negotiated reading, or an oppositional reading.

Representation means the image which defines/constructs a meaning in a system of language, which then becomes the representation of that phenomenon based on the belief that reality does not merely exist, but that it is constructed by people and society.

### 1.7 Conceptual Framework

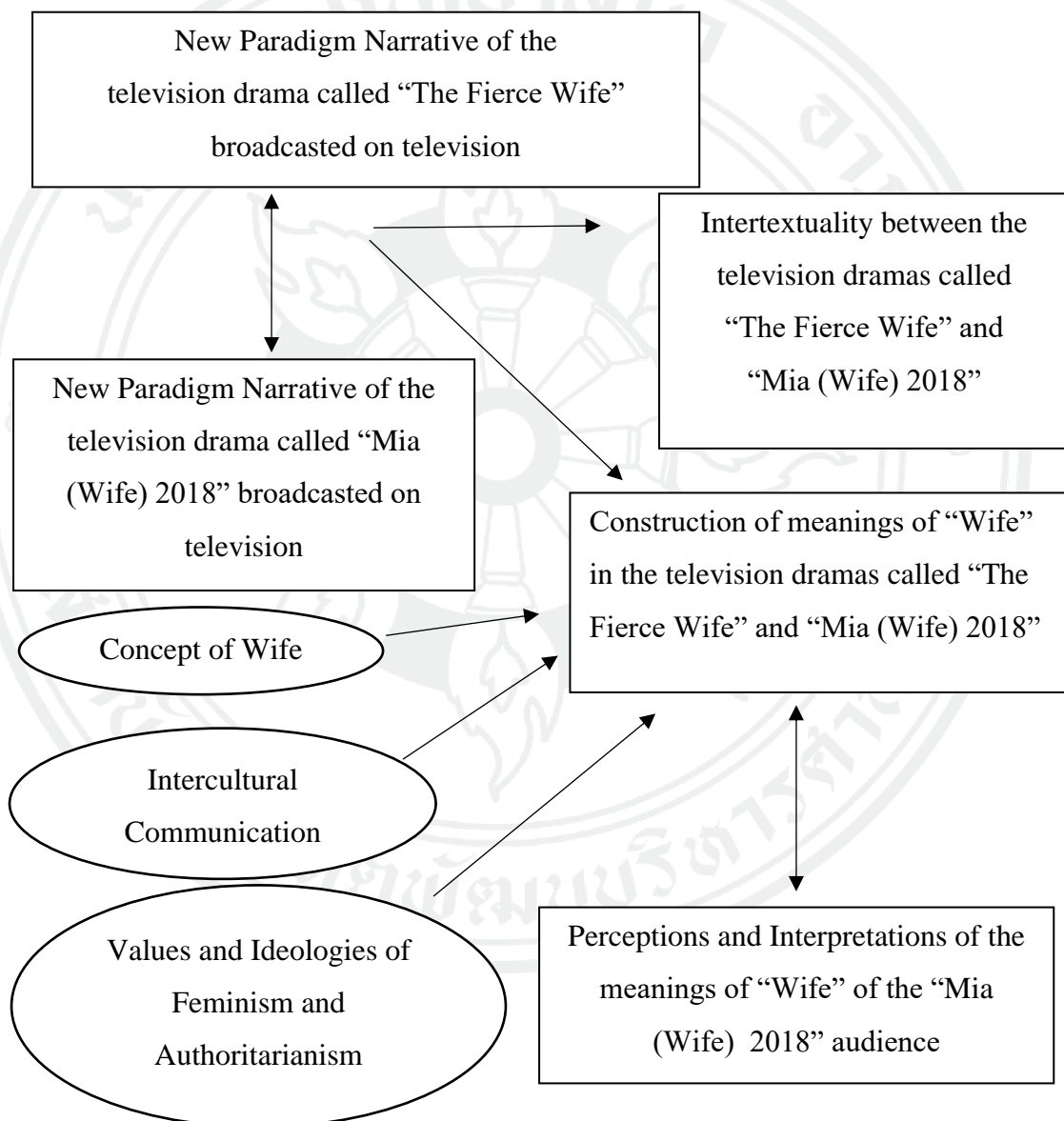


Figure 1.3 Conceptual Framework

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **CONCEPTS, THEORIES, AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

The study of the New Paradigm Narratives and Construction of Meanings of Thai Television Drama with Cross-media Content, researcher applies the conceptual framework, theories, and literature review of related research as follows:

- 1) Concept of Television Drama
- 2) Concept of Intertextuality
- 3) Concept of New Paradigm Narrative
- 4) Theory of Social Construction of Reality
- 5) Semiology
- 6) Intercultural Communication
- 7) Concept of Social Media Engagement and Decoding of the TV Drama Audience
- 8) Concept of the Wife
- 9) Feminism
- 10) Related Research

#### **2.1 Concept of Television Drama**

In general, television dramas are defined as an entertainment genre that presents various contents. Television drama content may be written by the novel writer or screenwriter and can be imaginary or based on a true story; e.g. a historical period drama. The key factor of television drama production is the same as other TV programs; that is, the producers hope that their dramas will get a high rating and be popular among the audience, which will lead to advertising sponsors. From the communication perspective, the contents of TV dramas are messages. They are the

molds of many ideologies, such as feudalism, capitalism, gender, patriotism, violence, etc. which send global cultural messages in the globalization era, blended with local culture (Kanjana Kaewthep, 1996). Television dramas convey the thoughts, emotions, and feelings of the senders (screenwriters, directors, producers) to the audience and expect them to perceive and interpret the meanings of the contents in the way required by the senders (Kasidet Suwanmalee, 2017). In practice, the interpretation of the contents by the audience is complicated, depending on various factors. For the audience to perceive and interpret in the way required by the senders, the senders must analyze the audience in order to make the audience engaged. At present, audiences' behaviors are more complicated, and this is increased by new advanced media technology. Further, the audience can watch dramas through various channels besides the televisions in their homes.

### **2.1.1 Historical Background of TV Dramas in Thailand**

Kritsada Rattanasangsri (1992) has discussed the historical background of TV dramas in Thailand. The age of stage drama was very popular among Thai people in 1953, and after that the entertainment of Thai people shifted from going out to see a stage drama to listening to radio dramas at home. However, radio has only sound, and the audience must imagine the characters, the scenes, and other components while listening; their imagination will vary depending on their personal experience.

The first TV station in Thailand was Channel 4, Bang Khunphrom, run by Thai Television Co., Ltd. It was a state-owned TV station under the policy of the Government Public Relations Department. Radio broadcasting began 1 year before television broadcasting. The first Thai television drama was called “Suriyanee Mai Yom Taeng Ngan (Suriyanee would not be married)” and was produced from the novel of Mr. Ramkhan (Prayat So. Nakhanat) with Pojanee Prongmanee as a producer. There were two leading actors—Thanatsri Sawatdiwat and Chotirot Samosorn—and one leading actress, Nuanla-or Thongnueadee. It was first broadcasted on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, 1956. During that period, dramas were live programs and short stories that ended in one episode because of the limited space of the studio and the number of screens. Furthermore, the actors and actresses could not remember the script, so there was a person voicing the scripts while they were acting.



Figure 2.1 The First TV Station in Thailand (Channel 4, Bang Khunphrom)

Source: UndubZapp (2018)

During the first few years, there were only 6 television dramas. The other five were the following: “Krasun Akhat” (broadcasted on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1956), “Duek Sialao” (broadcasted on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1956), “Nam Saban” (broadcasted on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1956), Sattrulap Khong Salaya” (broadcasted on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1956), and “Ngai Niddiao” (broadcasted on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1956).





Figure 2.2 Sample of TV Drama Broadcasted on Channel 4, Bang Khunphrom

Source: UndubZapp (2018)

TV dramas were very prosperous around 1958, and the actors and actresses of stage dramas turned to TV dramas. The TV dramas of Channel 4 were very popular, while Channel 7 began to produce TV dramas by remaking stage dramas, but some of them were new productions. During 1962-1967, both TV stations were competitors



for the production of many good TV dramas. However, the TV drama business was on a downturn during some periods because film serials had become popular again. Later, TV dramas became popular again because of video recording. Channel 4 was changed to Channel 9, which had more TV dramas than other channels. These dramas were broadcasted on Mondays to Fridays; for example, a TV drama called “Thatdao Bussaya,” broadcasted in 1976, was very popular. After that, more dramas in this genre were produced. Next, during 1979, Channel 5 produced a TV drama called “38 Soi 2,” which was the first situation comedy with family life content.

In 1980 the National Radio and Television Broadcasting Commission ordered all TV stations to stop broadcasting from 18.30 to 20.00 hrs. in order to save electrical energy. As a result, TV dramas were in a downturn while Chinese series became more popular. Since 1981, the National Radio and Television Broadcasting Commission has asked all TV stations for cooperation to broadcast Thai programs instead of international programs after news programs at 20.00 hrs. For this reason, Thai TV dramas became popular again and all TV stations broadcasted TV drama programs after news programs.

Then in 1970, Channel 3 began broadcasting. Its first TV dramas were “Khemmarin-Inthira,” “Mae Ying,” and “Saphai Jao,” but they were not very successful. After that, Pattarawadee Meechuthon (Teacher Lek) changed the form of TV dramas to be like foreign dramas; that is, there was not anyone voicing the scripts to the characters—they had to remember the scripts themselves. The dramas that made Channel 3 outstanding were called “Khabuankankhonchai,” “Tukkata Siakaban,” “Songkhrampasart,” “Nanajittang,” “Prachachonchaoflat,” “Srithanonchai,” and two TV series called “Khwamrak” and Pakarangsidadam.”



Figure 2.3 Advertisement of “Prachachonchaoflat” Broadcasted on Channel 3  
Source: UndubZapp (2018)

Then in 1981, Surang Prempreet became an executive of Channel 7 and supervised the marketing, programming, and personnel. She invited Mom Chao Chatrichalerm Yukol to be a partner, establishing a company called “Prommit Film,” running the business on TV dramas and film production. The TV dramas produced during that period were “Yingkormehujai,” “Hong Sichomphu,” “Ngueaknoi,” “Jotmaijakmueangthai,” “Huangrakhewluek,” and “Khao Nokna.” The most popular series was called “Mophi.” Then, Channel 7 invited Wanit Jarungkit-anan to be a screenwriter.

Since 1987, the TV drama business has been fully prosperous. The success of the dramas was rated by ratings. Channel 3 and Channel 7 were very competitive.

There was high demand for screenwriters, directors, actors, and actresses. In 2014, digital TV in Thailand began and TV dramas were produced and broadcasted at different times, not only during prime time but reruns were broadcasted as well at different times. Different channels focused on different audiences. For example, Channel 8 focused on grassroots people, Channel ONE focused on the general public audience while the GMM channel focused on teenagers. The main players of TV dramas were no longer Channel 3 and Channel 7.

### **2.1.2 Types of TV Dramas**

Thiranan Anawatsiriwong (2012) stated that TV dramas can be divided according to format and genre as follows:

1) Format means the number of episodes and continuity of air time.

(1) a TV serial has 12-20 episodes, with 2-3 days weekly air time. The contents are continued and the characters are the same from beginning to end.

(2) TV series are aired on a weekly basis. The themes and main characters are the same but sometimes there are guest stars.

(3) Miniseries have 2-8 episodes and are aired once a week or with everyday air time. The stories are run very fast, so if the audience misses some episodes, it cannot understand the whole story.

(4) In terms of anthology series, their contents have similar themes but the stories or episodes are not connected. The characters can be the same or not.

2) TV dramas can be divided according to their genre as follows (Ath Kupongsak, 2010):

(1) A tragedy presents the torture of humans which ends with catastrophe or loss of the leading characters, as in “Khukham” (2013, Channel 5), “Thong Nueakhao (2013, Channel 3), “Waen Thongluang” (2015, Channel 8), etc.

(2) Romantic dramas present happiness and the value of love. Audience are really into the roles of the characters and feel that they can escape from the unhappiness in their real lives, as for example in “Chocolate Heart” (2005, Channel 5), “Suphapburut Juthathep” (2013, Channel 3), etc.

(3) A melodrama is an emotional drama. The themes of melodramas are love, conflict, and jealousy. Characters are typed, and the villains are completely

bad throughout the whole story or the hero-heroine are in trouble because of the villains, as can be seen for example in “Phrungnikorakther” (2009, Channel 5), “Raeng Ngao” (2012, Channel 3), “Dok Sok” (2012, Channel 5), “Dok Sonchu” (2015, Channel 8), “Nam Sosai” (2017, Channel 7), etc.

(4) A sentimental comedy focuses on entertainment with lovely and sulky leading characters. The story is based on teasing and making fun of each other. The comedy is made by friends or relatives of the leading characters, for example in dramas such as Panyachonkhonkrua (2012, Channel 3), Lunrakkhamrua (2015, Channel 8), etc.

(5) In a situation comedy or sitcom, the story is made specifically for characters in each episode that are not the same. The story is based on comedy and ends within one episode. The main characters are the same in each week, for example in “Pen Tor” (2015, Channel ONE), “Ama Apartment” (2016, Channel 7), “Bangrak Soi 9/1” (2016, Channel ONE), “Rakthae Maemaipuem (2016, Channel ONE), “Sutrak Chunlamun” (2016, Channel ONE), etc.

(6) In an action comedy, the story is based on action, but the stories are not so serious and do not include killing, as seen in “Li-ke Matsang” (2015, Channel 8), etc.

(7) For a family comedy, the story is based on real life, the family, father, mother, children, relatives, all presented in comedy style, as can be seen in “Heng Heng Heng” (2002-2016, Channel 3 and Channel ONE), “Banni Mirak” (2006-2016, Channel 3 and Channel ONE) etc.

(8) A horror comedy is a story based on superstition, spirits, and mystery but it is presented in a comedy style, as can be seen for example in “Banni Phimaipop (2015, Channel 3), “Mueprab Kukukku” (2015-2016, Channel ONE), etc.

(9) In an action drama, most of the leading characters are males. They fight to protect society or their lovers from the villains. Most of the settings are fighting scenes between the heroes and villains and demonstrate how to solve problems or beat the villains, as can be witnessed in such dramas as “Chat Chaophraya” (2013, Channel 3), “Khamakhondiao” (2016, Channel 7), “Hak Linchang” (2017, Channel 7), “Ma Nueamek” (2017, Channel 7), etc.



(10) Adventures stories are about travelling to many mysterious and amazing places. The stories are exciting, new, and exotic, challenging, make the audience curious, and are related to human ability, as can be seen for example in “Thepphabutsutveha” (2015, Channel 3), “Ankor” (2017, Channel 3), etc.

(11) A horror story is puzzling, exciting, and is related to devils, ghosts, spirits, something scary, and revenge between spirits and humans, as in “Phleng Phibok” (2000, Channel 5), “Buang” (2012, Channel 3), “Pitsawat” (2016, Channel ONE), etc.

(12) A folktale, fairy tales, and legends, as in “Kaeo Nama” (2015, Channel 7), “Si Yotkuman” (2016, Channel 7), “Uthaithevi” (2017, Channel 7), “Thep Samruedu” (2017, Channel 7), etc.

### **2.1.3 The Transition from Analog to Digital TV Dramas**

Tipphasiri Kaewthet, Nattawat Suttiyotin, and Paiboon Kachentaraphan (2018) studied on the transition from analog to digital Thai TV dramas compares the content and storytelling of TV dramas between analog and digital ones. The results are as follows concerning analog TV dramas (1987-1997). 1) The story comes from original writings. 2) It is presented in serial form at around 30 episodes and in anthologies. 3) The themes of most of the analog TV dramas are love, morality, idealism, power, and career. 4) The points of view are those of the writers and screenwriters. 5) The screenplays are adapted from novels. 6) The traditional storytelling begins with exposition, rising action, crisis, and falling action to the ending. 6) The genre types are melodrama, antinovel, comedy, action, horror, period, historical period, folktale, and music. 7) The contents are the love of men and women, the love of men and women who come from different classes, love in the family, jealousy, and patriotism. 8) This contains flat characters. 9) This contains a happy ending. 10) And this contains one screenwriter.

On the other hand, digital TV dramas (1998-present) create different formats and contents. There are 2 new formats, which are series and miniseries, and 6 new formats, which are adventure, mystery and horror, crime series, detective series, fancy, and imaginary stories and miracles. The writings are newly composed, so the plots and screenplays are also new. The plots are newly created with outcast themes, such

as homosexual love and love of disabilities. The characters are rounded and real and reflect the life of some specific groups in the Thai society. The points of view are original writings and the screenwriters' points of view. Another change is with storytelling. The crisis is moved to the beginning and is followed by exposition, rising action, falling action, and the ending. The narrative in each episode remains the same, but continues more quickly from exposition to crisis. The endings of the dramas are not only happy but can also be tragic and more close to real life.

Moreover, an increase in the channels for watching dramas on the new media has led to "every time and everywhere watching." The audience can watch the rerun dramas on the new media instead of the live ones broadcast on television. This has led to "likely to change" behavior. When the audience does not like the contents of the dramas, they can easily watch new ones on other channels. Thus, producers try to "attract" them with quick storytelling by switching the crisis to the beginning and then speeding up the storytelling in rising action in order to make the audience interpret the meanings and understand the contents immediately without too many dialogues. This method of narration is in accordance with so-called technological determinism, where Toffler (1980), for example, explains that the media are the main mechanism in determining the communication and guidance in the social system to shape changing human behavior, especially the mental system related to thoughts, emotions, and expressions inside. This rapid change is motivated by passion. Furthermore, these ideas are in accordance with the study results of Sorarat Jirabovornwisut (2011), which found that the creation of television scripts in the period of globalization (1997 to the present) has attracted audiences by speeding up the rhythm of storytelling. It has been brought about by advanced technology which competing with speed. The scenes should be easily understood, and many details in the dialogues are not provided.

To be competitive in the digital age, drama producers attempt to create formats and contents that are newly created by presenting outcast themes, such as that of homosexuality, lesbianism, persons with mental disabilities, persons with hyperactivity disorder, persons with major depressive disorder—all of whom can be leading characters.

The creation of outcast themes leads the characters to be representatives of specific groups in the society. The characters are real in terms of the current social context. This is in accordance with the representation theory of Michel Foucault, which explains that reality is the works of social institutes and the mass media by creating representation and identity for communication through the social construction of reality by the mass media (Kanjana Kaewthep & Nikhom Chaikhunpol, 2012). In the digital age, the public can have media power and disclose themselves easily by presenting their stories through the new media, such as presenting homosexual love to be seen and accepted by the society. When the “outcasts” are accepted by the society, the producers can create characters that represent those persons or situations. Cultural studies theory (Thitinan Boonpap Common, 2013) explains that self and identity can be created depending on social context. Humans must choose the “materials” available in the social context to create and shape their identity and “self.” The social media are areas that are full of pictures, motion pictures, messages, and contents. They are important materials for shaping identity and self in the post-modern period. This is in accordance with the research results of Thitinan Boonpap Common (2017), which found that the social media are the main areas for presenting self and identity in many aspects; and it is in accordance with the research results of Sukollawat Kanarot (2015), which found that for digital TV drama management, producers should create contents that are novel and up-to-date, should control the quality of the contents, and have strategic plans for production in response to audiences’ demands in the digital age.

The present researcher will apply the concept of television dramas, the formats of television dramas, and concept of the transition from analog to digital TV dramas to analyze the formats and narratives of digital TV dramas using cross-media content called “Mia (Wife) 2018” in order to see the characteristics of the drama (analog, digital, or mixed) and how the theme, narrative, and storytelling have changed from traditional TV dramas in order to present the content in the new media in response to changing audience behaviors in the digital age.



## 2.2 Concept of Intertextuality

The term “intertextuality” was defined in 1960 by Julia Kristeva, a Bulgarian scholar who lived in France. Kristeva linked the concepts of F. de Saussure and M. Bakhtin. Saussure and Bakhtin analyzed the intertextuality in linguistics and literature. In these areas, the Law of Selection and the Law of Combination still mostly focused on words. Due to the fact that words are fundamental signs of linguistics and literature, Kristeva extended the scope of intertextuality to the mass communication area. The fundamental signs in that area cover a wider area, such as characters, ways of storytelling, pictures, sounds, etc.

Actually, the concept of intertextuality originated during the pre-historical period. During the classical period, which is the age of the arts and literature production, the communication was not complicated. The concept of “intertextuality” is a mutual support between the arts and literature. For example, the writers were inspired by drawings to write poems, the musician was inspired by poems to write songs. This is a positive viewpoint on “intertextuality.” Later, during the middle ages, there was the term “quotation,” such as the quotation of God’s speech, religious scriptures, etc.

Later, during the modern period, the scientific revolution led to a revolution in economic structure (industry/capitalism), political structure (democratic regimes), and socio-cultural structure (urbanization-mass media). During this age, new mass media emerged, such as newspapers, magazines, movies, the radio, and television. Concerning intertextuality, movie producers produced movies based on novel contents while the novelists wrote novels based on the true stories that happened and appeared in the newspapers. Television was invented after movies. Like movie producers, TV drama producers produced dramas based on novel contents. Thus, the viewpoints of “mutual support” of intertextuality still existed, but the viewpoint of intertextuality changed in a negative way. The questions of loyalty and value, especially, aesthetic value or communication value, were raised. TV dramas produced based on novel contents may be adapted too much and misinterpret the intention of the novelists, or the original texts may be devalued during the reproduction process.

Later, during the post-modern period, intertextuality was the mainstream of cultural production in the society. This might have resulted from the advanced communication technology, which made reproduction more convenient. In the view of the inventors during the post-modern period, compositions remained the same, and the novelty should be hybridization, organization, and relations. The importance of producers was reduced because they were not necessary to produce the new contents, but were to focus on creating quantitative and qualitative novelty in intertextuality. In terms of quantitative novelty, it can be measured according to the extent of the addition, reduction, or modification between the original text and the new one. In terms of qualitative novelty, it can be measured according to the forms of intertextuality line, which can be partially hidden, or completely hidden. Producers completely, partially, or unintentionally to do reproduction. In some cases they intend to hide, modify or reinterpret the texts (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2010).

To summarize, intertextuality means the relations between texts or the gap between texts during the process of meaning construction in new texts by quotation or borrowing “meaning” from the existing original text to use as material for a new textual construction. Therefore, intertextuality should have more than one storytelling and comparative study between the compositions of the original story and the new story on how the reduction, addition, or modification take place. For example, a comparison of the storytelling between “Khu Kam” in novel form and movie form or a comparison of the storytelling between “Khu Kam” in TV drama form produced in different time. The composition would change, as the characters or the characteristics of the leading characters changed, and other characters were added or reduced, etc. The intertextuality concept proposes that the storytelling in each version might change because of various factors, such as audience taste, social values, etc.

The researcher will apply the concept of intertextuality to analyze the composition of the new paradigm narrative, which will be discussed below. A comparison will be made between the Taiwanese TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” (original text), broadcasted on Sanlih E-Television (SET) in Taiwan, and the Thai TV drama called “Wife (Mia) 2018,” broadcasted on Channel ONE in Thailand, in order to analyze how the contents and storytelling composition changed.

## 2.3 Concept of New Paradigm Narrative

Raksarn Wiwatsinudom (2015) discussed the idea that a narrative is an ancient art form of humans for the creation of an imaginary world. A narrative means a storytelling of events that are linked like a chain, and actions are linked with each other with many characters in the story. A narrative is a consequence with time and place continuity and a logic of causes and effects (Pramaggiore & Wallis, 2008) or an explanation of consequence throughout the whole story. Moreover, a narrative must contain a theme, which is the important event in each setting (Pearson & Simpson, 2001). A narrative is the creation of a story and reflects on media such as novels, drawings, music, photos, movies with the theme under the plot, the logic of causes and effects, characters, consequences linked with each other in a specific time, and media suitable for the story in the form of dialogue, messages, pictures sent to the receivers, who are readers, listeners, or viewers.

Going back to the ancient period, Aristotle explained narrative by dividing a story into two parts. The first part is diegetic theory. This refers to a narrative that represents meaning in speech and written forms. Stories may be told by storytellers themselves or by other persons but remain the original dialogue and message. The second part is mimic theory, which means a narrative delivered through actors/actresses or characters. Therefore, according to Aristotle's concept, the narrative in novels conforms to diegetic theory, while the narrative in TV dramas or movies conforms to mimic theory.

Nopporn Prachakun (2000) stated that narrative can be divided into two levels as follows:

- 1) The content or textual level, which refers to contents that are concrete, such as novel content
- 2) The story level, which means the structure of the concept relation in the story. The study of narrative at this level will focus on narrative components.

### 2.3.1 New Paradigm Narrative

As mentioned earlier, the study of narrative has been carried out for a long time. Kanjana Kaewthep (2010) compared the old and new paradigm narratives and

discussed the principle concept of the old paradigm narrative according to Aristotle's view, that a narrative is like a "picture reflected in a mirror," which implies that there must be "objects/real objects/reality" so that they can be reflected in the story. On the other hand, in the new paradigm narrative, "narratology" applies "constructionism," which states that although objects/real objects/reality" or "objective reality" exist, humans in different ages and societies "interpret the meanings" of "objective reality" differently depending on "the construction of meanings" for a particular thing and then it becomes subjective reality. Subjective reality makes sense for humans and narratives are an important tool for the construction of meaning, where in some cases "objective reality" does not exist.

Therefore, it does not matter whether the original reality exists or not; a narrative can "construct" it. The results of construction can be "constructed reality" whether the objective reality exists or not. A narrative can construct the meanings. The details will be discussed later in section 2.4 on the theory of the social construction of reality.

Due to the fact that new paradigm narrative is related to the construction of meaning for things, it has been questioned why meanings are constructed as they are. Therefore, narratology is related to semiology, which will be discussed later in 2.5 on semiology. Semiology is a science of signs, which are constructed meanings. When semiology is combined with the concept of "power" according to the new paradigm of Michel Foucault. The study area of new paradigm narrative usually ask question "Who has the power to construct reality or the meanings of that reality?" including analyzing the "power of the story and narrative." The power of a story can "construct," "deconstruct," or "reconstruct" the meanings of many signs.

This research focuses on the "content" of TV drama, which is presented by narratives both in the dimension of the story and in the manner of the narrative. The narrative paradigm consists of complicated components. The components of a story can be analyzed from its content, which can be seen and implied in the story and the type of the narrative can be analyzed by analyzing the construction of meanings and interpretation, which focus on, especially, the new paradigm narrative. During the process of the meaning construction analysis, it focuses on "how to narrate" (Fisher,

1987) and there are two rules controlling the construction of meaning: the law of selection and the law of combination (Propp, 1968).

### 2.3.2 Elements of Storytelling in TV Dramas

Ubonwan Premsrirat (2015) discussed the elements of storytelling in TV dramas as follows.

1) Plot means a sequence of events that has logic and destination; that is, the beginning, the middle, and the end. Plot likes planning or defining the lines of characters which have problems, obstacles, actions, alternatives, and the end of each character.

Oranuch Lerdchanyarak (2015) mentioned that the structure of TV dramas includes the following: Premise or Theme, Introduction, Conflict, Rising Action, Crisis, Climax, Falling Action, Solution and Resolution, at the end.

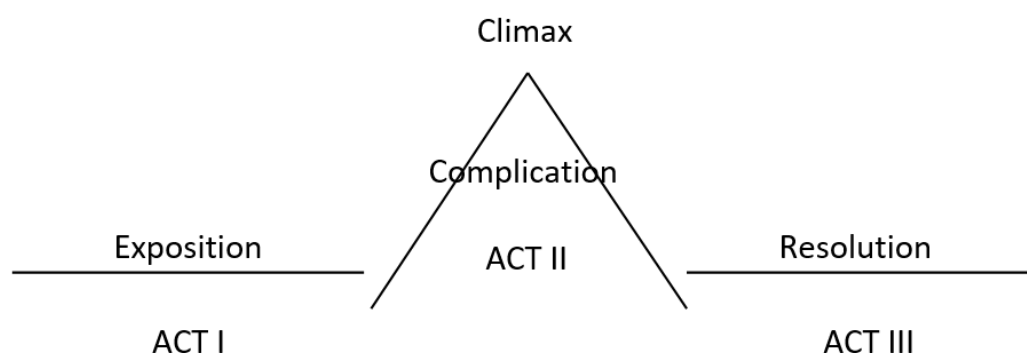


Figure 2.4 The Structure of TV Dramas

Source: Oranuch Lerdchanyarak (2015)

2) The theme is the main element containing the main idea of the story which the sender would like to tell the receivers. A theme can be divided into 6 types: love, morality, idealism, power, career, and outcast theme.

3) Conflict is the main element that creates problems and the characters have to find solutions to the problems. The conflict among characters is hostility or



discrepancy in their behaviors, actions, thoughts, wishes, or the intention of the characters. Conflicts can be divided into 3 types: 1) conflicts between one character and other characters, 2) conflicts within one character's mind, and 3) conflicts between characters and their surroundings, such as conflicts with an unpleasant environment or nature.

4) A character means the actors and receivers of actions. Good characters should be developed by having positive changes in their thoughts, habits, as well as attitudes and actions, and these changes must not be in conflict with the rationale and reality. Characters can be divided into two types: one characteristic character or flat character and many characteristics character or a round character.

5) Setting is one of the elements of nearly every kind of storytelling. The setting is the location of the event that occurs in the story. A setting can represent some meanings in the story and affect the thoughts and actions of the characters. The setting in storytelling can be divided into two parts as follows: 1) time means the time that the event happened; 2) location means the place where the event happened continuing from time.

6) Dialogue continues the events in the story as required. Apart from this, dialogue reflects the thoughts, emotions, feelings, habits, and characteristics of the characters.

7) Point of view is the tactics of the storyteller. It means that the story is told from a certain point of view or from the point of view of the characters. The tactics of storytelling can be divided into many ways as follows: 1) the first person, who is the main character, is the storyteller; 2) the first person, who is the supporting character, is the storyteller; 3) the omniscient author is the storyteller; and 4) the author as an observer is the storyteller (in this kind of storytelling the author does not focus on the character's thoughts and feelings, but he/she only focuses on what he/she has seen or heard); 5) the first person tells the story using stream of consciousness—that is, the main character tells his/her story by himself/herself through his/her thoughts or memory.

8) A special symbol is a symbol for conveying meanings in the form of speech and pictures. The special symbols found in movies and dramas can be divided into two types. First, a picture symbol is the elements that are repeatedly presented. A

picture symbol can be a single picture or edited groups of pictures. Second, a sound symbol is the sound used to convey meanings to emphasize pictures or to compare pictures that may convey different meanings.

Apart from the elements of storytelling, this research focuses on TV drama narrative. The concept of the “content” analysis of TV drama in the new paradigm narrative focuses on *how* to narrate rather than *what* to narrate. There are many scholars that have clarified the focus on how to narrate in the new paradigm narrative—that each story must contain “internal elements” and “internal logic.” For example, storytelling must consist of characters and conflicts, as mentioned earlier. These elements must have sequential relations that represent the different ways of storytelling and that construct different meanings for the characters and other elements. According to the paradigmatic structure of narrative of Propp (1968), there are sets of characters and courses of action structure and logic for construct narrative. The logic is the rules to control these two structures; that is, the Law of Selection and the Law of Combination. To clarify these laws, how to select the characteristics of the characters and the functions of the course of actions is referred to as the Law of Selection, while how to construct the sequence of the story and order functions is referred to as the Law of Combination. This can be done in many ways. On the other hand, according to the structure of narrative of Todorov (1977), there is a difference between the story and the plot where the story is the raw materials of the story. It can be of various dimensions and distributed. On the other hand, a plot is a way to present the story in a linear and sequential relation. The relation can be cause-reason or any other forms that are not required to be in chronological order. Moreover, Burton (1997) explained the narrative mode, indicating that it defines the plot of the story. Different kinds of storytelling have different narrative modes.

Furthermore, the new paradigm narrative also focuses on “narrative time,” which is the concept of Chatman (1980). He proposed that “story time” is the actual time of the events in reality but “narrative time” is not necessarily the same as the story time. The storyteller can apply the Law of Selection to select many kinds of time structure to tell the story as follows: 1) Scene means that the story time is equal to narrative time; 2) Pause means that the story time is zero because there is a pause for explanation; 3) Ellipsis means the story time is zero because the event is cut or

skipped; 4) Stretch means that the story time is longer than narrative time by using slow-motion pictures; 5) Summary means that the story time is shorter than narrative time by using many scenes to represent the time passing for many days for example within only a few scenes.

### **2.3.3 Construction of Meaning through Narrative Elements**

Fisher (1987) has a view in common with constructionists in general. They believe that meanings do not attach to objects but they are attached to thoughts and the understanding of the receivers depending on the cultural codes of a particular society. This conceptual framework will explain the construction of meanings, adaptation, and presentation, including symbolic news individuals/groups of receivers.

Character is a sub-element that can lead to various constructions of meanings. For example, the concept of the paradigmatic structure of Propp (1968) indicated what kind of sex, nationality, class, age, and so on can be what character (hero, heroine, villain, and so on), concept of dividing characters into one-dimension or multi-dimension of characters of Forster (2005) and concept of characterization for required meanings of Boggs and Petrie (2003). The concept of characterization means to characterize through the outside figures of the characters such as body, face, dressing, personality, and so on, through what he/she says in the dialogues to disclose him/herself, through the storyteller, through external and internal actions, through the actions of other characters, through binary opposition according to semiology, through repeated actions, and through the characters' names.

According to semiology, a story is the focal point of many signs but the plot is a set of signs linking each other with logical relations and then a "new meaning" is constructed. Thus, the construction of different meanings mainly depends on the plot.

Theme means the core of the meaning related to ideology, values, and the beliefs of a particular society. To construct meanings through the theme, if the goal of the theme is consistent with the ideology, values, and beliefs of the society, the construction of meaning may not be difficult. On the other hand, if the construction of

meaning changes the traditional meanings or presents “alternative meanings,” the construction of meanings through the theme might be more difficult.

In terms of the construction of meanings through setting, Boggs and Petrie (2003) proposed that each event must consist of “time” and “location.” The time and location dimensions (including decoration) in the narrative are called the “setting.” The setting can be divided into two dimensions: the physical dimension and the socio-cultural aspect. They can be divided into four types as follows: 1) temporal factors mean the period of time in which the story happened; 2) geographical factors mean the physical location, which can be a natural setting, a climate setting, or a decorated setting; 3) prevailing social structure and economic factors; 4) moral attitude, customs, and codes of behaviors in the society in which the story took place. The prevailing social structure and economic factors and moral attitude, customs, and codes of behaviors are the factors related to the socio-cultural aspect. The analysis of setting related to the construction of meanings still refers to the internal logic of the narrative, as mentioned earlier, which are the Law of Selection and Law of Combination. Although there are many settings in a story, the storyteller can select and focus on different settings to serve different purposes. The goal of a narrative is one exact meaning construction, and all of the elements, including the setting that appear in the story, are not “coincidences or accidents.”

Moreover, costumes, locomotion, and weaponry are also supporting elements. Costumes are a “sign” to define the meaning of characters. The locomotion and weaponry used by the characters must be in accordance with the genre and the profession, status, and so on of the characters. These three supporting elements will function as a “set of signs” to direct the meaning to be in accordance with the genre.

In terms of the construction of meanings through conflicts, Gripsrud (2002) stated that conflict is a characteristic of a “story” that can differentiate a “story” from other kinds of verbal texts. Muller and Williams (1985) defined “story” as the connection of events based on conflicts. A plot is a sequence of phenomena or behaviors/characters’ courses of action/logical relations. Those events or behaviors are developed in conflicts. Conflicts can be divided into four types. First, internal conflicts mean conflicts in the minds of the characters which make them confused or feel uncomfortable in making decisions in continuing to live. Second, there are

conflicts between two persons or groups. These conflicts may originate from benefits, different opinions, and so on. Third are conflicts between people and society. This refers to the conflicts between people and rules, order, or the structure of the society, for example, to challenge traditions and the beliefs of the society, or the economic/political structures or religious beliefs. The binary opposition of these people might have stronger power than the conflict counterparts in number two. Fourth are the conflicts between humans and outside power, which may be natural or supernatural powers. An analysis of conflict for meaning construction can begin with analyzing which type of conflicts the story mostly focuses on, such as conflicts within family. Then, the types of conflict issues such as struggling for money or property are considered, and finally, analyzing the methods of dealing with conflicts and resolutions at the end.

In terms of the construction of meanings through internal logic, which consists of developing the story and the storyteller's position, according to semiology, a short/long period of time continuing the story can construct "some meanings." For example, if the period of time from climax to resolution is short, it means that the conflict is not so complicated and not so difficult to be solved or the characters that deal with the conflict have high competency. The storyteller's position is a "first gate" open to meaning construction for everything in the story. The different points of view of the storytellers lead to different constructions of meanings for the story. The new paradigm narrative not only focuses on the techniques of using signs through narrative elements to construct meanings, but also focuses on the "power" related to the story in terms of who has the power to construct meaning. The powers of the storyteller are related to the power structure in society (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2010).

#### **2.3.4 Husband-wife Relationship Genre Storytelling**

Somsuk Hinviman (2015) summarized three patterns of husband-wife relationship genre storytelling as follows.

- 1) The "before being husband-wife" genre always begins with misunderstandings between the main characters, and then some events lead to the resolution of conflicts. For example, the heroine is raped and then the hero comes to save her, or the hero and heroine have sexual relations and then the heroine become



pregnant. The villain is punished or repents his/her wrong doing. The hero and heroine get married and finally have a happy ending. The reproduction of the meanings of this genre type usually confirms heterosexualism. In the meantime, it represents the feelings of middle-class people in a capitalist society, suggesting that although the real world is full of conflicts, conflicts in the imaginary world can be solved in any way. For example, the power of love between the hero and heroine can solve the problems, social rules punish the villains, or problems can be solved by themselves without any reason. Further, some female villains repent their wrong doing by themselves without any reason.

2) The “after being husband-wife” genre always begins with a happy family, and then conflicts are developed and bring problems to the family, such as the intervenor coming to mess around then leading to a tragic ending such as divorce, separation, or death. In contrast, some have a happy ending, with the husband and wife returning to have a happy family again. The reproduction of the meanings of this genre type usually confirms monogamy and emphasizes the importance of the family. The family scene presented in the drama may not be an ideal happy family but it presents the middle-class, vulnerable family in the real world. This genre type may be a trial and error space in the imaginary world for the middle-class audience to think about and choose their way of life if they have to face unexpected family problems. The solutions may be divorce, forgiveness, or leaving and beginning a new family with other persons.

3) Regarding the “not being husband-wife” genre, there are fewer types of this genre than the first two types. It always begins with obstacles and conflicts between the hero and heroine. Then there are many conflicts that emerge, such as internal conflicts in the minds of the characters, conflicts between the characters that compete in terms of love, dignity, reputation, and so on, and conflicts between characters and social values. These conflicts are not resolved and end with tragedy. Each character gets what he/she deserves. The reproduction of the meanings of this genre type also confirms the idea of monogamy. In the meantime, the drama shapes the audience to adhere to moral and social regulations. The scenes in the drama reflect the notion that if the characters do not comply with moral and social regulations, they will receive negative effects in the end. According to the above-

mentioned husband-wife relationship genre of storytelling, the forms of relationships between the man and woman who are the leading characters can be divided into three types as follows.

(1) Monogamous relations appear in the “before being husband-wife” genre and have a happy ending scene. The drama confirms the value of monogamy, which is in accordance with present Thai social values.

(2) Polygamous relations, although they are not in accordance with present Thai social values, appear in many dramas that reflects that this type of family relations exists in the real world. Most of them have a tragic ending scene. On the other side points of view, dramas present these types of relations in order to reduce conflicts between the husband and wife in real life because it explains to the audience that the fate of other couples can be the same as the fate of the couples in the audience in real life, or even worse.

(3) Polyandrous relations usually end with separation and tragedy. The female character is condemned for her challenging the social taboo of monogamy. The wife must be honest with her husband. On the other hand, when the husband has polygamous relations, he is not condemned or punished by society like the wife.

TV dramas present various relations because they reflect various and complicated relations in the real world. These relations may be the same as those of the audience. When the audience watches the drama and sees the same experience or feelings, they will really understand the drama. Drama contents can give explanations and find social outlets for the audience. Therefore, the audience can use the drama as a trial and error space and apply the explanations and social outlets derived from the drama content to the problems they are facing in their real life.

Researcher will apply the concept of narrative, especially husband-wife relationship genre storytelling, to analyze the narrative of the original Taiwanese TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018,” which will be presented in Chapter 4 because both of them belong to the “after being husband-wife” genre. They begin with a happy family, then conflicts are developed and bring problems to the family because the intervenor comes to mess around. The researcher will analyze the elements of storytelling as mentioned earlier.

## 2.4 Theory of Social Construction of Reality

The common concept of cultural studies theory is that “reality” is not given or “out there” and waits for scholars to find it, as empirical studies believe. On the other hand, cultural studies scholars believe that reality is constructed and the receivers are not passive and let the mass media construct the contents surrounding them only. They are active and use the media content to surround themselves.

Initially, this concept explained that humans have two levels of the world surrounding them. The first one is the physical world. This means nature such as land, sky, river, trees, etc. The second level is the social world, which is constructed by the society. The social world has different meanings in different locals and at different periods of time. Therefore, the physical world for individuals might be the same but their social worlds might be different. The construction of reality for individuals is different. Giving definitions and interpretations of meanings is different in each area and age. Persons can have a social world through the construction of reality by the mass media even they never touch the real “physical world.”

It was believed that the mass media are the main institutes to structure the social reality surrounding us. Following this belief, there have been studies on what kind of reality framework the mass media use to frame people. For example, if we use the criteria of the pro-social or anti-social contents of mass media, the results always show that the mass media mostly present pro-social contents to construct the reality; that “although there are disadvantages or problems, they are acceptable by our society.” This is why our society can exist further. However, theorists of phenomenology have provided some space for the argument that although the mass media present pro-social contents, receivers can choose to interpret the meanings or select only anti-social contents to frame themselves (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2013).

Berger and Luckmann (1966) (cited in Kwanfa Sripraphan, 2008) stated that everyone constructs meanings for the world from the everyday life interaction between humans and social institutions. The world is divided into 2 parts. The first one is the world of reality. This means the world we can touch with our senses, eyes, ears, tongue, body, and mind. The second one is the world of meanings, which means knowledge. We receive the world of meanings in some parts from the world of reality.

Due to the fact that many realities exist, humans cannot find an exact reality from them, which can be called “the part of the world which we can explain, define, and draw a pattern.” Although we cannot explain the world of reality exactly, we can get answers to our questions. The world of meanings is necessary because it secures people’s feelings and people can adhere to it. Data gradually change, not abruptly contrast to things we know. The world of meanings is the knowledge partially derived from world of reality and then it is constructed and becomes a “stock of knowledge,” which means that the reality constructed by humans is social reality. However, humans in different societies perceive reality in different ways because they have different worldviews. The experiences in the social process accumulate to be “stock of knowledge” specific for an individual or society. In this regard, the social construction of reality is defined by the social interaction between people or institutions through their daily lives. Then, they pass it on to other people in the form of rules or methods to deal with things. These rules can define the behaviors or actions of people in that society or institution. Finally, people in society or in an institution accept and learn “the way to do thing” through the experiences of people in older generations. Furthermore, Berger and Luckmann (1966) also stated that social reality may change from the original context depending on how the meanings of phenomena are passed on and how rule-governed codes are accepted by particular social change. According to the assumptions of semiology, senders and receivers are never necessary to share the common codes during the encoding and decoding process, but communication succeeds because they share similar codes, but not the same ones. Eco (1979) stated that the misinterpreted decoding is the rule and not the exception of communication. Due to the fact that the different references between senders and receivers, there is not error decoding but different one. Codes can be divided into 1) product codes, which means the codes related to objects, which can cover different meanings; 2) social codes, which means the codes related to relationships between persons; 3) cultural codes, which means the codes related to cultures and traditions; and 4) personal codes, which means the codes related to persons.

The above-mentioned categories of codes can be connected with the television codes of Fiske (2011). Fiske (2011) originally categorized television codes into three levels (cited in Jithiwadee Wilailoy & Asawin Nedpogaeo, 2016) (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Encoding Levels in TV Dramas (Fiske, 2011)

Level	Encoding Process	Example
First Level “Reality”	Encoded by social codes	Appearance, behavior, speech, sound, and setting
Second Level “Representation”	Encoded by technical codes presented on television Transmit conventional representation codes	Camera, lighting, sound, music, and editing Narrative, conflict, character, action, dialogue, setting, casting, and so forth
Third Level “Ideology”	Ideology code acceptable by a certain society	Values, believes, materialism, and capitalism

The theory of the social construction of reality can be applied to the construction of the meanings of “wife” in this research. It might be stated that “Wife” did not originate naturally when a man and a woman are married. On the other hand, the meanings of “Wife” are constructed in an economical context; for example, earning for a family living, social context, values, beliefs, and traditions. Importantly, how “Wife” will be depends on the social speech acts during a certain period. Therefore, the meanings of “Wife” is not definite, but changes according to social contexts. This research focuses on the construction of the meaning of “Wife” through the new paradigm narrative of digital TV drama with cross-media contents called “Mia (Wife) 2018.” The research aims to study how the drama uses different contexts



to construct the meanings of “Wife” and how the drama encodes the meaning at each level.

## 2.5 Semiology

Semiology focuses on the construction and adaptation of meanings embedded in signs. Everything surrounding us which can be constructed meanings can be a sign. In the case of the mass media, the mass media applies semiology concepts to raise research questions as follows: are there any signs in radio/television (e.g. scene, sound, camera, etc.) and how do these signs work to convey meanings? In terms of the sign creators, questions can be raised concerning how the meanings embedded in signs are generated and how the sign creators convey meanings to the receivers. In terms of the receivers, questions can be raised concerning the process of receiving the sign; that is, how the receivers encode the meanings. Therefore, understanding the nature of signs helps to choose signs to convey meanings efficiently.

What the semiology concept mostly focuses on is “relations,” Relations can explain “meanings” due to the fact that nothing embeds meanings in itself and content cannot define meanings. Things have meanings in themselves when they are related with others, for example, binary opposition and text-context relations. What a certain text means depends on its contexts, and a certain text may convey different meanings if its context changes. In the mass communication field, content can be compared with text and form/format can be compared with context. Settings, costumes, dialogues, actions, etc. also convey meanings (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2009). This concept is in accordance with that of Eco (1976) who stated that context is important for defining meanings and the socio-cultural context is the most important. Further, Culler (1976) stated that the objects themselves do not convey meaning until the cultural context encodes the meanings in them.

There are four scholars of semiology: F. de Saussure (1857-1913), a Swiss linguist; Peirce (1839-1914), an American linguistic philosopher; Roland Barthes (1915-1980), a French semiologist; and Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009), a French anthropologist.

Ferdinand de Saussure defined “semiology” as the study of “the life of signs within society where the signs are originated.” To clarify the phrase “the life of signs,” it means the study of the origin, growth, change, and disruption of a particular sign, including the analysis of the rules behind its life. Semiology makes us understand how signs are constructed and under what rules and how they change in conveying meanings (one meaning ends and then varies to another meaning) (Saussure, 1974).

According to Saussure (1974), a sign is constructed to contain meaning and represents a real object. In a certain text and context, a sign is composed of a signifier, a sound-image, or its graphical equivalent, and its signified, the concept, or the meaning. The combination of signifier and its signified is a cultural convention. Its relation is not natural, arbitrary, or illogical. The construction and conveying of meanings according to Saussure are to use or choose codes and to combine signifiers systematically and traditionally in accordance with social rules. The chosen signifier conveys meanings because of other unchosen signifiers. The meanings of signifiers derive from the relations between one signifier and other signifiers in the same structure. Choosing something or not and the combination of things can construct meanings.

According to Peirce (1935)’s concept, signification is a combination of experiences in the real world and mind. They interact to construct meanings and the meanings can change depending on circumstances. Peirce also demonstrated that a sign can never have a definite meaning, for the meaning must be continuously qualified. He categorized signs into three main types: 1) an icon, which resembles its referent (such as photos, maps, road signs resembling cars or motorcycles, or even onomatopoeic words); 2) an index, which is associated with its referent in causal connection (for example smoke is a sign of fire); and 3) a symbol, which is related to its referent without resemblance but only by social convention (such as language and mathematic symbols).

Roland Barthes, a French semiologist as indicated above, was the first to apply semiotic analysis to cultural studies. His main concept is that there are two levels of a signifier’s meanings. First is denotation, which is the direct meaning (literal meaning) with objective construction. It is accepted by social convention and is classified as the

descriptive level. Second is connotation, which implies that meaning derives from subjective construction. It depends on individuals' experiences and social and cultural contexts. Semiologists focus on implied meaning because it is important for individuals in terms of their perception, decoding, and interpretation, and the implied meaning can vary broadly.

Barthes (1967) viewed that the things surrounding us in society are signifiers and they are encoded by culture or rules of meaning construction. Due to familiarity or cultural intimacy, we overlook or cannot see the meanings in things which are signifiers or are signified and their sign-function. We see them as natural and as things for use only. Barthes called the process of change, reduction, disclosure, distortion the signifier status of things in the society to be natural or normal or only to serve for use as "myth construction process" and the outcome of this process is called "myth/alibi/doxa" or thoughts/beliefs which are undoubtful acceptable by most of the people in the society. They convey meanings with cultural beliefs that are distorted to be perceived as natural and these thoughts and beliefs are in accordance with the power existing in a certain period of the society (Chairat Charoensinolarn, 2002). The meanings in language are constructed from the elements: 1) signifier 2) signified and 3) sign. In our daily life experiences, we can see only the signifier and signified but cannot see the sign, which is a combination of signifier and signified. As well as in the myth, they interact in 3 dimensions, signs in language becomes signifiers in the myth; that is, they can convey meanings independently from the combination of signifier and signified as in language.

However, rules exist but the meanings are dynamic depending on their contexts. A sign can convey meanings at multi-levels and in several dimensions. It has been found in an analysis of deep structure that "myth" is constructed to convey meanings or to cultivate some ideologies naturally. People in a certain society are familiar with them, so they do not think that they are constructed by culture and do not question their background. The concept of semiology leads to signification or representation of the world of reality, which are one of the focal points of study in the post-modern period.

Lévi-Strauss (1963), another scholar that is interested in the study of the deep structure of texts, indicated that textual analysis should be classified between manifest

meaning and latent meaning. Manifest meaning means that the storyteller tells what the characters did and what happened, while the latent meaning tells what the texts are related to and what meaning they convey. Lévi-Strauss's areas of interests are: 1) the system of narrative, such as the reasons behind the change of female leading characters from the beginning till the end; 2) the meanings implied in the types of storytelling or character construction; and 3) how implied meanings reflect the thought structures of people in different kinds of groups. The unit of analysis in his interests is the relations among characters.

According to the above concept of semiology, the meanings of signs are dynamic depending on their contexts. One sign can have more than one meaning. The concept of semiology leads to signification or representation of the world of reality, which is related to the theory of the social construction of reality discussed in 2.4.

For the reasons discussed above, the researcher applies semiology as a framework for the analysis of the representation of the leading characters (husband, wife, mistress) and their relations, together with other elements that appeared in the TV dramas called "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018," in order to ascertain how they convey meanings, to understand the roles of the signs in the construction of character, as well as the construction of meanings of "wife" in the dramas.

## **2.6 Concept of Intercultural Communication**

Lustig and Koester (1996) (cited in Metta Wiwattananukul, 2016) defined "intercultural communication" as the process of exchanging, transmitting, perceiving, and interpreting the meanings of the interactions and symbols in a particular communication context. The persons in the communication process are from cultures that are so much different to cause different interpretation and expected behaviour and then lead to different perception of meanings.

In the past, the meaning of intercultural communication only focused on interpersonal communication or face-to-face and interactive communication. The persons in the communication process are from different non-mediated cultures. For example, Thai people greet other with a "wai" but Americans greet with hand-shaking, so how people with different communication behaviors can get along.

However, with advanced technology and communication devices, the definition of intercultural communication also covers mediated communication such as e-mail, Facebook, Line, etc.

Apart from the above mentioned, there are some terms where the definitions are closely related to intercultural communication: cross-cultural communication, international communication,” and “comparative mass communication.

Cross-cultural communication focuses on the comparison between the communication of people in one culture and another. The communication partners are not necessary to be in different cultures, but the study focuses on the perceptions and behaviors of people in the same culture, similar to cultural studies, and then compares both cultures (cross-cultural studies). On the other hand, Wonghatai Tunshevavong (2011) explained cross-cultural communication as the comparative study between two cultures or more. This definition covers more areas than the above mentioned.

In the meantime, international communication focuses on mediated communication between people that live in different countries. For example, Thai people contact American clients by telephone or e-mail. The communication partners may be in the same or different cultures, for example, when a mother and her child make a long-distance call across countries. However, the academic area focuses on the international communication among people in different cultures. On the other hand, comparative mass communication” is similar to cross-cultural communication but focuses on the mass media in different cultures, for example, the differences in news programs between the NHK (Japan) and BBC (England).

Culture and communication are closely related. The way to define communication, and why and how to communicate, are parts of culture. Opportunities for misunderstanding between people that are from different cultures is high (Jandt, 1998). The obstacles to communication can be: 1) anxiety, 2) assuming similarity instead of difference, 3) stereotypes, 4) ethnocentrism, 5) prejudice, 6) language, 7) racism, and 8) non-verbal language misinterpretation. Therefore, the main problem of intercultural communication concerns the differences in definitions and communication behaviors because senders and receivers are from different cultures. In order to build common understandings between senders and receivers, they should have positive attitudes and not feel that they are superior or inferior to the



communication partners during an interaction, especially among ethnic groups (Samovar, Porter, R.McDaniel, & Roy, 2012). The main reason for different host conformity in communication is because communication is a channel for strangers to learn about the host's society. Communication can be divided into two aspects. First is personal communication. In personal communication, the factors that should be taken into consideration are cognitive structure, knowledge, self-image, acculturation motivation, and host communication competence. Second is social communication, which can be divided into two directions: mass communication and interpersonal communication.

Intercultural adaptation theory means the personal adaptation process caused by the interaction between the person and his/her environment. There are two stages in this process: 1) persons make judgments about the news and information they newly receive via the existing news and information they have learned before; and 2) adaptive personality is the outcome after the judgment (Chen & Starosta, 2008). There are three components of adaptation as follows. First is the cognitive component, which refers to the knowledge of persons toward stimulants, which are individuals or groups or any conditions shaping the nature and directions of the persons' views. Second is the affective component, which refers to the positive or negative views toward the stimulants. These positive views are satisfied with and interested in the stimulants. Third is the behavioral component, which means the individual's response to a particular thing. This behavior reflects the nature and directions of adaptation. Positive behavior is satisfied with, interested in, and ready to take action explicitly. On the other hand, negative behavior is unsatisfied with, not interested in, and avoids taking action (Triandis, 1971).

### **2.6.1 Cultural Perception**

Jandt (1998) stated that communication comes from selective perception, which is a part of culture besides the five senses and the individual's background. In general, there are different stages that people go through within the cultural perception process: selection, organization, and interpretation. 1) Selection comes with the limitation of a person's senses, so persons select only the stimulants that they are interested in. 2) Organization comes after persons select stimulants that meet their

interests. They organize stimulants in a form with which they can construct meanings. Language can define understanding which affects the nature of sending and receiving messages. Language defines symbols to organize understanding and culture defines the understanding of people in each group. 3) Interpretation means the combination of the meanings and feelings of people toward stimulants and situations. People that are exposed to different cultures may interpret meanings differently.

### **2.6.2 Studies on Cultural Influence and Elements**

Metta Wiwattananukul (2016) discussed the impact or elements of culture that are widely studied as follows.

1) Worldview means how we perceive our surroundings and our world. In general, the difference in worldviews results in intercultural communication in at least two dimensions. First, a holistic worldview perceives that nothing in the world can be separated. It relates to each other such as the concept of Yin-Yang and high-context culture, while a segmented worldview believes that in order to understand things accurately for analysis and communication, they should be segmented, for example, a low-context culture which mainly focuses on a “message” and direct communication. Second, a scientific worldview focuses on empirical proof or visible/tangible evidence while a spiritual/non-scientific worldview believes in superstition, sin, and karma.

2) Value defines how persons decide to choose. The values of each group and society vary depending on the cultural cultivation of a particular group. For example, Thai people prefer postponement and easy-going values, while strong relations in Thai society teach them to be generous. In the western cultures, people prefer punctuality and competition. Values define what is right and what is wrong in a particular society. Some values do not create a peaceful society and are not always right, but whoever does not adhere to them is perceived as doing wrong. Values and beliefs closely relate to each other. Values are based on groups of beliefs. For example there is the belief that elder persons have more experiences than younger ones, so what they say is credible. They have gratitude and are respected. These beliefs become “the value of paying respect to the elder persons.” Religious belief also creates many values such as sacrifice and forgiveness. There are many levels of

values, from “predominant/great tradition values” such as the value of paying respect to elder persons in Thai society, to “variant values” such as fashion and materialism.

3) Regarding cultural norms and rules, norms are a main element derived from culture. Cultural norms are the expected standard behaviors in a particular situation. For example, in Thailand, a man and woman must be married before being husband and wife. Cultural norms also include “rules of communication.” Norms are different from rules in terms of morality or ethics. Norms are the standard of acceptable behavior related to morality or ethics but rules are not (Olsen, 1978).

Hofstede (1980) divided culture into four dimensions. First, individualism mainly focuses on self and family, while collectivism focuses on the social group we are in. Second, high power distance means separate power in accordance with the individual’s roles and positions. For example, a child must obey his/her parents, and subordinates must follow their boss’s order, while low power distance believes that power should be exercised appropriately. Personal rights should be respected with equality and freedom in our society. Third, masculinity focuses on competition, leadership, and challenge. Life is work-oriented and success is measured by materialism. Men’s and women’s roles are clearly separated while femininity is more harmonized. It focuses more on quality of life and relationships than materialism. Men’s and women’s roles are not clearly separated but are flexible. It is believed that men and women have equal power. Moreover, Hofstede also classified high masculinity or low femininity and low masculinity or high femininity. Fourth, high-uncertainty avoidance means thoughts based on uncertainty about future change. It is not assured that change will bring a better life. As a result, society has strict rules, trust in high-qualified persons and seniority or experts, but does not accept the new generation’s opinions because they have less experience. Information and planning are required for work. Low-uncertainty avoidance means that the person loves challenges and does not strictly adhere to rules. Life is flexible and open to the new generation. It focuses on liberalism. People tend to accept opinions that are different from theirs.

Bond (1992) had work experience in the Chinese culture and developed the Chinese Values Survey (CVS) to discover additional dimensions from Hofstede’s concepts. Some of these dimensions concern Confucian dynamics. He conducted a

survey in Chinese culture countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, as well as students that studied overseas in 23 countries. There were 40 values in the Chinese Values Survey, which can be divided into four main types. First, CVS-I concerns self-development, such as honesty and tolerance. Second, CVS-II concerns relations with others, which is related to Confucian's teachings, for example parents and children relations value love, ruler and subordinate relations value justice, husband and wife relations value harmony, siblings and relatives relations value seniority. Third, CVS-III concerns social responsibility and humanity. Fourth, CVS-IV concerns sufficiency and morality (Matthews, 2000).

Then, Minkov (2010) applied World Values Survey Data to conduct a study in more than 93 countries. This study showed the differences between eastern and western cultures. The additional fifth dimension was called "long-term or short-term orientation," and the sixth one was called "indulgence or restraint."

Long-term orientation can be applied to a society that focuses on virtues that make the expected future come true, such as money saving, diligence, and tolerance, including flexibility. Finally, these can bring about success or economic progress or expected goals, while "short-term orientation" exists in a society that values tradition and modernity, pride in the nation and lineage, and face-saving and dignity. It focuses on beliefs, values, and following social rules.

Indulgence means freedom in doing anything to fulfill one's needs and to have a happy life while restraint means to control and tolerate in order to fulfill one's personal needs but to consider social norms beyond personal needs.

These three elements are connected with each other and give an overall picture of a culture. Each society has different norms, rules, and values. It tends to lead to misunderstandings in communication easily because the scope and attitude toward one form of behavior of people vary from area to area. Understanding these three elements are required when communicating with people from different cultures in order to choose the right way and to increase efficiency in communication. Moreover, in a changing society, it is necessary to understand the power of cross-cultural media more than in the past. In the meantime, it is necessary to understand the movement of people from one place to another in each society, which leads to selection/new

meaning construction for “messages” in the media differently (Porntip Yenjabok, 2016).

This study applies the concept of intercultural communication and the cultural elements mentioned above—worldview, values, and cultural norms and rules—to analyze the new paradigm narrative elements of the Taiwanese TV drama called “The Fierce Wife,” especially the values in Chinese culture, and the Thai TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018,” as well as the intertextuality from “The Fierce Wife” to “Mia (Wife) 2018.” In this study, drama is the medium for the communication of culture. According to the concept of cultural studies, modern mass media have changed the values and ideologies of capitalism to cultural products by changing politically dominant mechanisms to economic and culturally dominant mechanisms, which can be termed “cultural imperialism” (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2001). In this study, TV drama is one of the media transmitting values and ideologies, which are economic and culturally dominant mechanisms.

## **2.7 Social Network Interactivity and Decoding of the TV Audience**

Tipphasiri Kaewthet et al. (2018) explained the concept of Thai TV drama transmission from the analog to the digital era—that the interaction between producers and the audience has change the characteristics of Thai TV drama production from mass entertainment to “mass engagement.” The producers and the audience can chat on live Facebook, LINE TV, YouTube, and websites, which is two-way communication. The new media create “two-way mass communication” between the audience and the digital Thai TV drama producers, which is in accordance with the technology determinism theory of Everett Rogers and the study of Sirinat Sodprasert (2015), where it was found that watching dramas on Facebook can change the audience from being passive to active because Facebook is a social space for expressing feelings freely.

This study focuses on the construction of the meanings of TV drama, which presents its contents on television and other platforms. It aims to study the encoding of the senders reflected through the narrative of the drama and the decoding of the receivers reflected the audience interactivity on social network.



Kwanfa Sripraphan (2008) noted the encoding of senders and the decoding of receivers according to the ideas of Stuart Hall—that senders do not act as transmitters but as encoders of the message. When they “send a message,” they send both the “message itself” and the “encoded message” together. The encoded message includes language, pictures, sound, or other kinds of media. Hall explained that when the audience watches television, it not only interprets what it sees on television, but also learns or are encoded. Apart from this, some codes are presented in a naturalized form, where the meaning can be interpreted easily without learning. Therefore, Hall observed that the receivers can direct the decoding through the TV production process.

In terms of “mass media messages,” Hall viewed that a “message” is a constructed reality. Therefore, a mass media message is not originated naturally, but is constructed both through the sender’s production process and the receiver’s interpretation. (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2001)

Furthermore, Hall indicated that the broadcasting code means the codes shared by the mass receivers. The group of receivers covers many kinds of people. The characteristics of messages or radio and television broadcasting codes are shared among them and they are connected with their societies. Receivers can share broadcasting codes as the origin of messages in three ways. (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2013)

- 1) Sharing content: one of the ways senders send message to mass receivers is to create content that is popular and adapt it to be in accordance with emotions and feelings, attitudes, and social values.

- 2) Sharing forms of messages, or what is called “production formula”: this is due to the fact that receivers expect to see a particular form of message varying from one kind of program to another. The senders must encode the message to be in accordance with their expectations.

- 3) Receivers share content through structural explanations. Due to the fact that the mass media are one of the institutions in our society, the mass media codes should be similar to the social ones. The similarities continue because mass media institutions recruit employees that have the same ideas as the institutions to work for them.

Apart from Hall’s explanations in terms of the relations among social structure, mass media institutions, and the senders that work for mass media organizations,

Kanjana Kaewthep (2013) also explained the idea of “social structure,” that it may mean the structure of the thoughts, emotions, and feelings of the receivers. There might be some vague relations between the structure of thoughts, emotions, and feelings of the audience, the structure of the message encoding, and the structure of the mass media organizations (senders). That is, the media personnel that work for mass media organizations tend to create contents in accordance with the structure of the thoughts of the receivers, and do not go far beyond or remain behind the receivers’ thoughts.

According to the new concept of receivers of Stuart Hall, the code systems of senders and receivers are not necessarily the same. In this regard, there are many reasons for inconsistent code systems of senders and receivers or even contradictions, depending on background, experience, education, profession, economic interests, political position, gender, ideology, and so on. He focused on the subjective interpretation or decoding of the receivers and divided the decoding position into the following three types.

- 1) Preferred reading means the meaning codes dominate thoughts of people in a certain society and are connected with elite views.
- 2) Negotiated reading means that the receivers interpret meanings by relating them to their experiences or interpreting the meanings according to some conditions.
- 3) Oppositional reading means that the receivers respond to messages by providing alternative meanings that are different from the encoded ones by the senders.

Apart from the subjective interpretation of the receivers according to Hall’s concept, the receivers in digital age are more unique and can be user-generated content. As a result, the decoding of the receivers can be affected by various factors, which are different from the past and are unpredictable. Hence, the senders in this study are, who the TV drama producers, should adjust the content creation or encoding method in response to the changing characteristics of the receivers. (Kanjana Kaewthep, 2001)

This research applies the concept of social network interactivity and the decoding of the TV audience which reflect on social media to support the data

collecting from the in-depth interview of the receivers who interact with the drama content on social media. It aims to analyze how the audience decodes the meaning of “wife” in the TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018.” (preferred reading, negotiated reading, or oppositional reading or these three forms in combination) because the diversity of the audience and their behaviors are unpredictable.

## 2.8 Concept of the Wife

According to the “Concept of Mia in Thai Society” of Irapatra Suriyapan (2009), the given status of “Mia” or “wife” in detail is much different from daughter and mother. The status of “Mia” is constructed after a woman marries a man outside her family or relatives while daughter or mother status is derived from family descendant. Hence, the status of “Mia” is really constructed by the society and has a complicated meaning. The husband-wife relationship can change, while mother or daughter status is fixed and undeniable.

At present, when we mention “Mia” or “wife” (“Phanraya” or “Phariya”), in general, it means the woman’s status, which indicates that she has her own family or husband. Actually, the dimension of “Mia” or “Wife” (“Phanraya” or “Phariya”) can be viewed in many ways and has different implied meanings. “Phariya” is a legal term that indicates that the mentioned woman has a legal marriage accepted by the state. “Phanraya” formally and generally is a polite way of referring to a woman that has a husband. “Mia” is more informal and has various meanings, such as “Mia Luang” (the first wife), “Mia Noi” (mistress), “Mia Khonchai” (servant wife), “Mia Kao” (ex-wife), and so on. These represent the explanations of the meaning of “Mia” in more complicated ways in Thai society.

The Thai Dictionary of the Royal Institute Edition, B. E. 2542 (1999) defines “Phanraya” as wife, a woman who is a spouse of a man who is her husband. The difference between “Phanraya” and “Phariya” is that “Phanraya” is a Sanskrit word for “Pharaya” but “Phariya” is a Palit word for “Phariya.” Thus, most people misunderstand that “Phanraya” means a woman who is a spouse of a man who is a commoner, while “Phariya” means a woman who is a spouse of a man who is an elite. Actually, whether “Phanraya” or “Phariya”, means wife, a woman who is a spouse of

a man who is her husband (Pornthip Dejtipprapab, n.d.n.d.). “Mia” also means wife, a woman who is a spouse of a man who is her “Phua” (husband). On the other hand, “Mia Noi” means a woman whom a man takes care of and supports like his wife but is of lower status than “Mia Luang.” She does not have a registered marriage with a man. “Mia Luang” is a wife who is honored by her husband to be the highest status of wife.

Studying the meaning of “Mia” began after the administrative regime change to democracy in Thailand, according to the Civil and Criminal Code (Volume 5), B. E. 2478 (1935), which is the first modern state Family Law in Thailand. Chapter 3 on the husband and wife relationship, prescribes that a husband and wife must live together and take care of each other. A husband is a “Leader of a Spouse” who helps and takes care of his wife. In the past the traditional “Mia” or “Phanraya” must depend on her husband, who is the caretaker. However, in the modern democratic state, “Mia” or “Phanraya” remains the same—she must be taken care of by her husband according to Family Law.

According to the meaning of “Mia” in Thai dictionaries and the laws mentioned above, it has been found that the common characteristic of “Mia” is that she is a woman and must be taken care of by a man who is her “Phua” (husband). Being a “Mia” can be in many forms, whether in marriage, royal grant, or through caretaking, but there is not any dictionary or law that defines the roles or the importance of “Mia” for the family or society.

Parsons (1951) (cited in Chindarat Phonok, 2009) stated that any social systems must face two main problems: external problems related to production and rare resource allocation and internal problems related to social order and solidarity. Parsons developed the AGIL Model, which indicates four basic functions that all social systems must perform: (1) Adaptation–A, (2) Goal–attainment–G, (3) Integration–I, and (4) Latency or pattern–maintenance–L. These four basic functions connect the flows of “inputs” and “outputs,” which Parsons calls “media of exchange.” The balance of social system depends on the complicated exchange among these four basic functions. This concept can be applied to the analysis of the traditional roles of husband and wife in the family, which is one of the social systems. The husband’s roles are related to external functions while the wife’s roles are related

to internal functions. Their roles are separated by inside and outside the family and exchange benefits between each other. The husband's role is to earn the family's living while the wife's roles are giving love, being a married couple in adversity, and taking care of household chores. They exchange responsibilities.

Duanghathai Buranajaroenkij (2017) states that during the reigns of King Rama IV through King Rama VI (around the 1860's), the impact of "modernity" from western countries during the colonial period changed gender practice; that is, the behavior patterns varied from men to women. Although it is not a fixed social rule, it is a norm acceptable by people in the society. It challenges patriarchy and the traditional family. For example, the ideology of monogamy was initially accepted among the courtiers and unavoidably caused controversial issues of gender equity. The traditional value of polygamy stated that having many wives represents wealth and power among the elites. The daughters of the aristocrats usually were taught with literature related to women's image, such as "Kritsana Sorn Nong," "Sawatdiraksa," as well as "Proverbs for Women" by Sunthorn Phu. The main teaching in this literature was that the wife should try to please the husband. Aristocrats usually offer their daughters to be a concubine of the King because they hope to get promoted. The controversial issue of woman is not a belonging of man but both are humans originated in the Thai society during the reign of King Rama IV. Amdaeng (the title of "Miss" in ancient Thai society) Muean, a commoner, submitted a petition to King Rama IV. She thought that it was not fair that her father forced her to marry a man whom she did not love. After that, there was an announcement that buying and selling daughters and wives is prohibited. The law was revised allowing a woman that attains her majority has rights regarding her body and can choose her own mate in the future. Later, during the reign of King Rama V, there were national reforms in many areas. In response to this, human resources development was required and it was the first time that educational opportunity extended to women in other classes apart from the high society class. Initially, most of the courses focused on the preparation for being a good mother and wife. The first stage of the educational reform did not focus on developing women's potential to be ready for work, like men. In addition, the traditional education system was organized in the temples because the traditions prohibited women from being close to monks. Then, organizing education outside the



temples provided more opportunity for women. Later, “common girls” were educated and transmitted the image of women in the aristocratic society through literature and fables, which then were produced in drama forms such as “Chaiyachet,” “Kraithong,” “Sangthong,” “Khawee,” “Maneepichai,” and so on. The content of these works valued the roles and duties of the wife in terms of staying at home and serving her family (though the common women had to help her husband in the field, but the aristocratic women did not have to) (Pranee Wongthet, 2016).

In the social context, “the representation of the modern woman” was emphasized during the reign of King Rama VI. Women in his point of view had to have the perfect qualifications of traditional Thai women. Women should have good manners, maintain a good reputation and dignity, be responsible for household chores, be good at cooking, and dress properly. In the meantime, women should have a good education, self-development, and be up-to-date. However, from Akhin Rapeepat and Nithi Iaosriwong (2015)’s point of view, although the husband’s status is as a family leader, the wife’s status does not depend on the husband; they earn a living together.

Although the principle of monogamy is combined in one part of the Modern Family Law, “polygamy” was not completely be rejected. (Surachet Suklarpkit, 2018). Currently, the situation of husbands having mistresses is commonly found in Thai society, represented both in the media and in the real world.

In comparison with the wife’s roles in Taiwanese and Thai societies, like the wives in the Thai society, the wives in Taiwanese society are expected to serve their family. Jackson, Jieyu, and Juhyun (2013) discussed the roles of Taiwanese wives, stating that when husbands must travel on business to other places, the wives have to work alone both at home and at the workplace. The husbands do not bear these burdens and go back home once a week, once a month, or 2-3 times a month. The wife acts like a “single mom” while her husband is away from home and she begins worrying about the unfaithful behavior of her husband. She has to decide whether she should stay with her husband and leave her children and parents in Taiwan. She cannot make a decision about which should be her priority, her children or her husband, so she must travel between her home and other cities. Mostly, when her husband is away, there are some affairs involved. Although her husband still works in

Taiwan, he always finds some excuses to travel on business to see his mistress in other places. It is the right decision if the wife relocates to stay with her husband because the wife can then exercise her power to dominate him and protect her marriage life.

As mentioned above are concepts of wife from the past to present and comparison between Thai and Taiwanese societies because Taiwan is the country where the original TV drama of “Mia (Wife) 2018” was produced. The researcher focuses on how the meaning of “Mia” is constructed in the context of Thai society at present. How do the media construct the meaning of “Mia” from reality, beliefs, values, and so on? The researcher analyzes this through the new paradigm narrative elements presented in the Thai TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018.” Furthermore, the researcher applied the concept of wife to design the interview questions. The researcher asked the interviewees, who are Thai people, what they think about “Mia” in general and what the roles of “Mia” are and how they are important for the family. The interviewees replied concerning what they perceived both from the media’s construction of meanings and their first-hand experiences.

## **2.9 Concept of Feminism**

Feminism focuses on gender studies. Gender can be divided into two types: 1) sex, refers to the biological aspects of an individual as determined by his/her anatomy at birth; 2) gender is socially constructed and relates to behaviors and attributes based on the labels of masculinity and femininity. Gender identity is a personal, internal perception of oneself and so the gender category that someone identifies with may not match the sex they had at birth. This concept corresponds with Beauvoir (2009)’s views. Beauvoir is a French feminist that believes that a “woman is not a woman at birth, but is constructed to be a woman later by social circumstances, culture, and various institutions in the social context of patriarchy.” The feminism concept studies the subordinated status of women. It asserts that women are inferior and badly treated by an unfair society. The feminism concept aims to change, modify, improve, and fight against the mentioned situation. Feminism can be classified according to four

groups. Each group explains gender inequality and the inferiority of women similarly, but proposes different solutions.

1) Liberal feminism studies the representation of women and men in the mass media and explains the consequences of inequality. Liberal feminism believes that although our society is more advanced and free, women's roles are still inferior compared with men's. The representation of women in the media also confirms this belief. For example, Jarin Lertjeraprasert (1992) did a study entitled "Occupational Roles of Women in Television Drama." The findings revealed that the occupations of women in television dramas are mostly service jobs, such as housewife, maid, secretary, hotel receptionist, etc. Though there are female characters occupying the positions of executives, managing directors, and managers, they are only supporting roles with no importance to the plot. The marital status of female characters is far more important than their occupations. Most of the settings portray love and marriage. The female characters getting married is their goal in life. Therefore, feminists request a change in the roles and rights of women and want them to have more opportunities so that they are equal to men. It is believed that a good society must have equality, liberty, and fraternity. The reality of the consequences of inequality can be explained in two ways. The first is social learning based on modeling. This theory states that individuals can learn from observing the social role models presented in television programs. Girls can perceive that women have limitations and are unequal to men through the female characters presented in the TV dramas, so they learn that the roles of females are limited. Second is social learning by reinforcement. This theory states that individuals can learn appropriate behaviors from the rewards and punishment given by the society as presented in TV dramas. For example, the heroine must be a good woman and behave following social norms. Although she has to deal with the problems and obstacles caused by the villain or by her own destiny, performing good deeds leads her to meet the hero, who always helps her. Finally, they find love with a happy ending and she is rewarded for her good deeds. On the other hand, the villain gets punished from his or her bad deeds.

2) Concerning Marxist-socialist feminism, this group of feminists believes that the problems of women come from patriarchy and capitalism. The economic structure promotes men's advantages. If capitalism were overthrown, the

problems of women would be resolved. This group focuses on ideological problems rather than economic structure. The research question is how gender ideology is constructed through language and media. They study and analyze the representation of women on TV, including the analysis of why the mass media portray women in a certain way and compare this with women in the real world.

3) Radical feminists are a group that accepts the concept of cultural feminism, which proposes that female is a desirable behaviour and that women are not only different from men but are also better than them in all aspects, whether concerning wisdom or morality. This group focuses on analyzing the relationship between male and female characters. They believe that the media usually portray male characters as smarter than females, and that the supposed inferiority of females is because of patriarchy. If patriarchy were overthrown, females would have more freedom and be happier. In the real world, most of our societies still support patriarchy, and people still believe that males are superior to females.

4) Post-modern Feminism and the Authoritarianism Concept of Michel Foucault. Feminism during this period believed that the freedom of woman was limited. The woman should experience her sexual identity as it should be. Therefore, the woman tries to find some ideologies with which she can present her sexual identity. Post-modern feminism emerged to fulfill this requirement. This group sought to increase the power of women but did not identify how women should experience their own sexuality. This concept evolved from complicated discourses which tried to return power to women (Phoca & Wright, 1999).

The concept of post-modern feminism was influenced by post-modern theory, which believes that discourses have the power to create sexuality in the society. Understanding social sexual identity requires not only understanding nature or psychological conditions but also understanding the social processes during a particular historical period. Social identity is very complicated because it is constructed through various social operations. It is not static, but is dynamic, depending on time, relations, and the actions of the actors. Post-modern feminism refuses the notion that women are universal but are unique. Moreover, it also refuses binary oppositions, such as female-male, reason-emotion, etc. Regarding males and

females, sex and gender are not opposites but are combined as individuals (Chongchit Soponkanaporn, 2011).

Regarding the relationship between females and males, the concept of post-modern feminism can be related to the authoritarianism concept of Michel Foucault (Theerayut Boonmee, 2014). Foucault explained that power is dynamic, not static. Power is not tangible, an object, or to be in the possession of anyone, but power is a technique and strategy applied for the construction of social relations. Foucault did not focus on whose power it is, where it is, or where it comes from, but he questioned “how the power is used,” in what ways, and what the consequences are of using power. For example, the study of the complicated identity of a person. Power is not a static object, but flows in the social body in the form of a chain or network. A person is not an agent of power but is constructed by power. The ultimate outcomes of power are body, action, discourse, and passion, which are constructed to be a person. Power does not adhere to anything or anywhere but is always dynamic. Everyone is close to power. We are constantly subjected to it and are objects of it interchangeably. Power exists in every relationship in our society. (Kanjana Kaewthep & Somsuk Hinviman, 2010)

Wasinee Sutiwipakorn (2009) analyzed Thai women’s status and roles as represented in 16 novels written during 1967-2006 by Khunying Wimol Siripaiboon (“Thommayantee”). Khunying Wimol’s feminism discourse is under the space usurpation between patriarchal and feminism discourses. The novels’ texts largely contain the representation of sexual inequality, the reflection of binary opposite sex, the reproduction of females’ stereotypes and women’s identity distortion, following the feminist concept until it has been realized as mainstream discourse and integrated into the social fabric. However, the author reflected female restrictions and repeatedly reproduced women’s ideology in the patriarchal context.

### **2.9.1 Feminism in Taiwan**

Kuo (2014) discussed feminism in Taiwan, stating that 2000 marked a significant turning point in Taiwanese history. In the presidential election that year, Mr. Chen Shui-bian won the election to be the president and Annette Lu was the vice-president. It was not the first time that a woman had a leading position in politics, but



it was the first time that a woman served as Taiwan's vice-president. Vice-president Lu was also one of the first advocates of the feminist movements in Taiwanese history. During the early 1970s, Vice-president Lu proposed the idea of "new feminism" and founded a publishing house exclusively for feminist purposes. This drew the public's attention to issues regarding the promotion of women's rights, including domestic violence, equal employment, and even the abortion, which is a taboo topic in that period. Even though her publishing house no longer exists, Ms. Lu's legacy in feminism still exists in Taiwan.

Ms. Lu's life and career can be seen as the rise of women as independent social agents in modern Taiwanese history. Since the mid-twentieth century, Taiwanese women have begun to work outside as domestic helpers for wealthy families or as waitresses, but mostly have worked as laborers in industrial factories. By that time, to work outside the household for wages was not something that a Taiwanese woman would be proud of, since it meant that she had to share the burden of earning the income for the family. The typical and ideal path of a woman's life in Taiwan at that time was to get married and to be a housewife.

Soon, however, such a life pattern became less and less favorable among Taiwanese women. Even though they had to work hard to support themselves as well as their families, more Taiwanese women began to find values in their jobs; the wages they earned gave them economic independence, a sense of accomplishment and empowerment. Inspired by the feminist discourses from the West, and more opportunity for women in politics, Taiwanese women began to discuss issues related to the promotion of their social and political rights, including education and employment, equal payment, and domestic abuse. Further, Ms. Lu was among the very first few women that were brave enough to address those issues in the public. As a result, the life pattern of women in Taiwan became more diverse and liberal. Taiwanese women had higher education, and the multiple forms of social oppressions against women came to be critical issues of public attention and discussion in Taiwanese society.

The researcher applies here the concept of post-modern feminism and the authoritarianism of Michel Foucault to analyze character relations in order to find the hidden concepts or sexual ideology of characters as one of the narrative elements. The

analysis focuses on exercising power between the leading characters, who are the husband, wife, and mistress, and the relations between the leading characters and other characters in the TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018.” The perspective of analysis is that drama is a space in which to communicate authoritarianism to the audience. The characteristic of exercising power by the characters can be done through verbal language and non-verbal language (such as facial expression, eye contact, body language, areas of positions and levels, distances, voices, etc.). Apart from language, power can be expressed through the relationships of the characters and consists of two attributes. First is the vertical power expressed through the relationships between father and son, husband and wife, boss and subordinates, and so on. Second is the horizontal power expressed through the relationships between colleagues (Kusuma Teppharak, 2017). In addition, the researcher applies the concept of feminism in Taiwan to be a framework for analyzing the extent to which the Taiwanese drama called “The Fierce Wife,” which was the original version of the Thai TV drama “Mia (Wife) 2018,” reflects the concept. The results of the analysis of the values of feminism and authoritarianism embodied in the dramas can lead the actors and actresses as well as other involved persons in the drama production reflect these values to shape the audience in the ways preferred by society or make them recognize social problems at present. Since the characteristics of the dramas in the digital age encourage audience engagement, the audience can also participate in the dramas in order to propose proper solutions to social problems.

## **2.10 Related Literature**

In the study of the New Paradigm Narratives and the Construction of Meanings of Thai Television Drama with Cross-media Content, the researcher reviews the following related research and finds some knowledge gaps as a guide for this research.

### **2.10.1 Research Related to Intertextuality**

Umaporn Maronee (2008) studied and analyzed the intertextuality of the narrative in comics, television dramas, and novels broadcasted and published in

Thailand under the title "Dung-Duang-Ha-Ru-Thai or You are Like My Sweetheart" and "Full House" in order to analyze the factors influencing the intertextuality among them. The results revealed that the intertextuality—from comics to television dramas and novels—was maintained, extended, deducted, and modified plot, theme, conflicts, the outstanding characteristics of the characters, and most of the settings because most of the TV dramas' contents were created from novels.

Nisara Boonpotikaew (2008) analyzed the intertextuality of four animated Angies from TV talk show hosts. The research indicated that the producer paid more attention to the intertextualization of the TV news talk show hosts' personality than their image. The producer intertextualized outstanding personalities and the talent of the TV hosts through convention, reduction, and modification in order to serve the cartoon text (secondary text). In addition, it was found that the producer extended the logic of narration, which did not exist in the primary text, to the secondary text.

Nich-navin Chullabrahm (2011) studied the intertextual narrative in American contemporary vampire films and TV series. The research showed that the intertextuality from traditional vampires to contemporary vampries included the following elements: convention, extension, reduction, and adaptation in narrative components, especially, plot, characters, and setting.

Wichayut Puchitakorn (2013) conducted a study entitled "Crossmedia and Transcultural Intertextuality of 'Ring' in Novel, Film, Television Drama and Manga." The research demonstrated that the Intertextuality of the "Ring" in novels, films, television dramas, and Manga was maintained, extended, reduced, and modified. From book to film, plot and genre are modified. Then the television drama was adapted from two books of novels. Furthermore, from book to manga and film to manga were maintained like the original text. On the other hand, the transcultural intertextuality of "Ring" in Japanese film, Korean film, and Hollywood film was maintained, extended, reduced, and modified, including adapted social and cultural contexts.

Linin Sangpattana (2015) did a study entitled "The Intertextuality of the Main Actress in Thai TV Drama: a Case Study of Reang Ngao" by analyzing the content of TV drama according to the narrative conceptual factors of character, plot, themes, setting, special symbols, and conflict in order to find the intersexuality of the main

actress's character. The result of the research showed that the intertextuality of the main actress was conventional, new, extended, and modified. The factors influencing the intertextuality were business and marketing, the actress, and social and value factors.

### **2.10.2 Research Related to Narratives in Television Dramas**

Tinna Simapaisal (2010) did a comparative study of Korean and Thai popular television serials focusing on the structure and characteristics of the narrative. The study found that the two dramas had different narrative characteristics due to different bases and purposes of creation. The Korean series “Dae Jang-geum” (Jewel in the Palace) was created in order to promote Korean culture while “Four Reigns” was created from the literary form for the purpose of recalling history. “Four Reigns” had scenes of an adapted script, innovation, and different scripts. The distinctive characteristics of Jewel in the Palace were the creation of the story and the formation of its components. The characteristics of the narrative all tied up perfectly. The overall plot and its narrative were told in accordance with a theory that added a universal quality to it. The scenes were elaborate and beautiful—it is quite important to have interesting details in scenes.

Nuttaporn Limprasitwong (2011) studied narrative and character-building in film and television with female protagonists from Greek mythology. The results indicated that the narrative strategy in films and television dramas from Greek mythology can be divided into three groups. First, Greek mythology films are based on Greek mythology drama and maintain narrative elements. Second, Greek mythology films and television dramas are based on different versions of Greek mythology with new interpretation. Third, Greek mythology films and television dramas, which are influenced by Greek mythology plots, are reinterpreted. Few narrative elements of the mythology are retained. Such films and television dramas are *Plerng-Pid-Sa-Was* (M.L. Pundhevanop Dhewakul, 1984 Thailand) *Eternity* (M.L. Pundhevanop Dhewakul, 2010 Thailand) *Medea* (Theo Van Gogh, 2005 Netherland), and *Mourning Becomes Electra* (Nick Havinga, 1978 USA) Second, the characteristic of the female protagonists in films and television dramas from Greek mythology can be categorized into four groups. The first group is heroine protagonists. The second

group is victimized female protagonists, which can be divided as follows: 1) war victims, Hecuba Andromache and Cassandra; 2) the victim of family problems, Electra and Lavinia; 3) the victim of gender orientation; Medea (1988) and Helen (2003); and 4) the victim of men's deception, Medea(1969) and Medea (2005). The third group is comprised of superior female protagonists, Helen (1971), and Pradthana and Yoopadee. The last group is ideal female protagonists, for example Helen (1956).

Siwinee Chaiyapong (2011) studied the narratives in Korean romantic drama TV series. The outcome revealed that the elements of the narrative combined morality themes, career themes, and love themes; at exposition, the main characters are introduced and integrated into the plot. The obstacles to love continually appear until the climax, and problems are resolved during the falling action, which leads to happy, tragic, or surprising endings. The narrative techniques used are narrative sequence, frequency, conflict, soliloquy, and suspense.

Ong-art Singlumphong (2018) did a study entitled "Cultural Transmission through the Narration of Indian Drama Series: Siya Ke Ram." The results of the research were as follows: there were 7 elements of Siya Ke Ram's plot, which in order from exposition, rising action, climax, resolution and closure completely follow through. The storyline was mixed with love and the theme of verbal truth which basically the most important aspect of being human underneath personal conflicts, internal conflicts, social conflicts and environmental conflicts within the time factors, geographic factors, social structure, economic factors, custom, morality, attitude and code of behaviors which used the symbolic interpretation. In addition, the researcher also found the inclusion of cultural beliefs, such as faith in God, the cycle of birth and death, and the practical method of "as you sow, so you reap."

Narisorn Termchaithanachot (2018) did a study entitled "Reflection on Thai Society Presented in Contemporary Thai Films of Suphannahong National Film Awards of the Year 2007-2016." The study results revealed that nine contemporary Thai films reflected Thai society in terms of three main issues as follows: (1) social issues, such as family, morality, the values of the rural people, sexual deviance, social stratification, Thai labor and competition in the work of Thai people, health, sanitation and disease, as well as the influence of Buddhism on Thai society; (2) economic issues, such as the reflection of the lives of Thai people affected by a



capitalist economy and consumerism; and (3) political issues, such as the reflection of Thai political history in terms of political change in the past and the movement of change in Thai politics in the contemporary era. Regarding the study of the narrative strategies of films, for most of the endings, the characters often suffered sadness and the story usually ended without a clear resolution. In addition, the themes that the films aimed to communicate to the audience mostly concerned the dimensions of love and human relationships regarding social, economic, and political aspects. Moreover, in terms of character traits, the studied films presented characters according to two types, typed characters and well-rounded characters. Furthermore, most of the scenes in the films were in natural environments and scenes in artificial settings were designed according to the period of the story in the film. Regarding the point of view in the storytelling, the films usually had an omniscient point of view and mostly told the story from the first person point of view.

### **2.10.3 Research Related to Media that Reflect Thai Society, Especially the Family and Women**

Pornchok Pechaya Usomboon (2015) studied women's power in a novel called "The woman named Bunrood." The researcher applied narrative theory and focused on event functions to analyze the relationship between events and the female leading character, who reflects women's power. Then to find out how the power is constructed. The researcher studied the narrative components of location, time, characters, the sequences of events, point of view, and types of narrative, and applied feminist theory to study woman's behavior through text and context. The results revealed that "Bunrood" communicated self-reliance and perseverance. She was constructed from poverty and underprivileged. Among the 67 main events "Fight Life" was the most unique incident. The role of the protagonist, a woman by the events in the life, was divided into 2 periods: the power of women and the power of the wife.

Rodsarin Dittabanjong, Siriwan Nantachantoon, and Pratuang Dinnaratna (2016) studied the language and representation of violence against women in Thai family novels. The researcher studied semantic strategies in order to explore the language strategies employed in the representation of violence against women in 37

Thai family novels written by five popular novelists that had received the National Artist Award and that had been awarded by the National Book Development Committee: Krisana Asoksin, Srifa Ladawan, V. Vinichaikul, Tamayanti, and Piyaporn Sakkasem. The findings revealed that the semantic strategies adopted were, first, harsh expressions used to address women and second, expressions manifesting violence against women. The harsh expressions included modifying units to address the elderly, adult women, and girls. The modifying units that appeared most frequently in the Thai family novels were “Ee,” “Nung,” “Yai,” and “Ai” respectively. These expressions manifest criticism or insults to women. Moreover, the harsh expressions used to address women in the Thai family novels can be divided into two categories: (1) expressions manifesting physical violence and (2) expressions manifesting psychological violence. The expressions manifesting psychological violence have been found more than those that manifest physical ones. They are used to address all age groups of women. Psychological violence has been demonstrated through both verbal and nonverbal strategies. The verbal strategies refer to verbal abuse, insults, disrespect, and denigrating the status of women, while the nonverbal strategies include eye expression, a hateful tone of voice, and gestures. In addition, the expressions that manifest physical violence refer to physical assaults, the threat of physical assaults, and sexual assault in the form of rape.

Saowakon Wongsupachainimit (2016) studied the status and roles of female characters in Nara’s novels. The researcher analyzed the female characters’ status and role in 10 of Nara’s novels. In terms of the legal or *de facto* wives’ role, they showed respect and looked after their husband, managed home expenses, did family planning, and worked outside the home while raising their children. Regarding the daughters’ role, they were modern and decisive girls. They acted as the family’s head and were expected to be the family business successor and were grateful to their parents. In terms of the mothers’ role, they were modern mothers who raised and supported their children in a Western style. The findings revealed that the number of single mothers was increasing. In terms of status and role in the society, most of the female characters had a university degree and “noble professions” requiring high skills and ability. All showed that women had more important roles. Regarding the strategies for creating characters, it was found that the female characters in Nara’s novels portrayed

themselves as modern women with self-confidence shown from both their inner self and in their physical appearance. They led their lives in urban consumerism with western eating and drinking styles. Additionally, these female characters were more likely to present themselves comfortably in public. Considering sexuality, it was presented through the characters in three aspects. These included the physical presentations of men and women and the relationship between men and women. The second aspect was the relationship between lovers, which were chosen based on social appropriateness and personal preference, showing the relationship of monogamous spouses. The final aspect was the presentation of sexual relationships that demonstrated sexual desire and pleasure, and sexual behavior with the prevention of pregnancy. The male and female characters exhibited pregnancy precautions when having sexual relationships.

Lingfen Mo (2017) did a study entitled “Family Problems in Thai Society: Reflection from Thai Novels during 1965-2014.” The results revealed that four Thai family novels, called “Mia Luang” (composed by Krissana Asokesin), “Sin Sawat” (composed by Roselaren), “Preng Karma” (composed by Botan), and “Tam Lompliew” (composed by W. Winitchaikul), reflected four main family problems. First is the improper behavior of family members, for example an unfaithful husband having an intimate relationship with another woman, family members not having conversations over the problem in order to create a clear understanding, and senseless behavior caused by alcohol drinking. Second are the influences of western values where divorce is common, the remarriage of a women is not shameful, and having sex with people other than your spouse is common in today's society. The third is an insufficient income, causing a family problem, since and insufficient income leads to stress, requires additional time to work, and leaves no time for the family. These marriage and financial problems would end with selfishness, and 4) differences of family background caused problems for adjusting to married life.

Pornsawan Chalermyanont and Jomkwan Sudhinont (2018) analyzed femininity in the novel “Naree Nakhara” (她的城), a Chinese work authored by Chi Li (池莉) and translated by Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn according to the concept of women’s roles based on cultural feminism. The researcher analyzed the narratives and conversations of the main female characters and presented the results using

descriptive analysis. It was found that the author used the characteristics of the main characters to construct different roles of their femininity: the roles of a mother giving birth and bringing up her children, and the roles of the wife. In addition, the characteristics demonstrated women's development in changing their status to be equal to that of men, and praising women for their companionship with their husbands. Equality was reflected from the occupations of the main characters, who also earned an income for their families. Femininity seen in occupations is a result of good education that enables women to be self-dependent and to have freedom in living their lives. The femininity in the novel was found to link traditional values and traditions with modern ones that make women gentle but mentally strong.

#### **2.10.4 Research Related to the Construction of Reality in TV Dramas**

Pornpitcha Boonbunjong (2011) conducted a study entitled "Mae Nak: Myth of 'wifedom' constructed in television series, film and theatre." This myth frames Thai women norms to be passive under the authority of the husband. The objective of this research was to study the process of the disseminated norms of Thai women under Thai patriarchal society through the plot of "Mae Nak." Through the plot analysis, the researcher focused on the protagonist's dramatic action, and the point of attack and climax, in order to find out the actions of the protagonist that identified "wifedom." Then the researcher used Roland Barthes's concept of myth to critically analyze the "frame of meaning" that was embedded in the protagonist's dramatic actions and the structures of the plots of Mae Nak. The researcher found that the myth of "wifedom" revealed the propagation of ideology and prejudice concerning the roles and practices of women and men in Thai society. The plots and dramatic actions of "Mae Nak" demonstrate the standards of what a good Thai woman should be. In fact, it is only an "illusion" that society has attempted to set as a "reality" that it is the belief system of Thai society structure.

Nattaporn Artharn (2012) did a study called "The Social Construction of Reality of Second Wife in Soap Operas." The research findings indicate that TV soap operas portray the lives of some second wives in order to construct the stereotype of second wives in a negative way because stereotypical second wives have characteristics and natures that contradict social norms, which are reflected through



their dressing styles and violent behaviors. While the second wives that follow social norms and rules by allowing themselves to be abused and exploited are portrayed with empathy, the second wives that fight for their rights are portrayed as villains and must be eliminated. This reflects social control in the paternal context. However, in reality, second wives decode the stereotype that is portrayed by TV soap operas in order to differentiate their images from those portrayed by TV soap operas. However, they do not directly oppose the stereotypical images that TV soap operas construct but create images that are different from those shown on TV. For example, second wives on TV do not work or rely only on their husbands' money, whilst the negotiated role is of the second wives that work and earn their living. Another example is the image of violent second wives that annoy the first wives which, in reality, is changed to the image of the second wives that respect the first wives. These are called the tactics for survival that the subordinate in the society uses in order to negotiate for acceptance from society.

#### **2.10.5 Research Related to the Analysis of the TV Drama Audience's Decoding**

Ployphun Makaphol (2015) studied the intertextuality between the remakes and the earlier versions of Thai TV dramas. The findings revealed that there were four types of intertextual relations between the remake and the earlier versions—maintain, extension, reduction and modification—in order to modernize the remade ones and to make them correspond with current social context. Both groups of audiences decoded the meaning in a “negotiated reading” way but based on different aspects. The audience that watched both the remake and the earlier versions of the dramas compared the remake versions to the earlier ones, whereas those that watched only the remake versions made a comparison based on their mediated experience of other dramas and personal experiences.

According to the above related literature, most of the studies focus on the intertextuality of the same media reproduction but in different times and contexts. For example, the remake TV dramas are produced in different times from their earlier versions, the comparative study between two TV dramas produced in different countries and find out the reasons of difference in their narrative components. On the



other hand, there is little research on the intertextuality between the original text produced in foreign countries and remakes in Thailand. Thai producers buy the texts' copyrights from foreign producers, where the texts represent different languages and cultures. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV drama called "The Fierce Wife" (original text) and the Thai TV drama called "Mia (Wife) 2018" (secondary text). Both of them are the most popular TV dramas in Taiwan and Thailand. The objectives of the study are to find out the reduction, addition, or modification that occur in the intertextuality by analyzing the new paradigm narrative components, which focus on the construction of the meaning, values, and ideology, and the cultural elements embedded in the drama contents as well. In this regard, the intercultural communication is applied because the original text was produced in the Chinese culture but the secondary text was remade in the Thai culture. Furthermore, this research also focuses on the construction of the meaning of "wife" in "Mia (Wife) 2018" encoded by the producer. Due to the fact that "Mia (Wife) 2018" is a digital TV drama that is broadcasted through different platforms. It can encourage the audience to engage in many ways, such as giving comments, chatting with other viewers, inserting pictures, quoting characters' dialogues, writing new dialogues using their imagination, and so on, through digital media such as LINE TV, YouTube, Facebook, websites, and platforms of TV channels. Hence, the researcher also compares the encoded meanings of "wife" with the decoded meanings perceived by the audience by conducting in-depth interviews with the engaged audience in order to see the similarities and differences. The sampled audience was divided into two groups. The first group is the audience that had direct experience (wives, both *de facto* and *de jure*), and the second is the audience that had indirect experience but experience through the media (husbands, single men, and single women that had never had a husband-wife relationship with any man).

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study of “the New Paradigm Narratives and Construction of Meanings of Thai Television Drama with Cross-media Content” is qualitative research and the main methodologies were textual analysis and in-depth interviews based on the following details about sampling and data collection.

#### **3.1 Sampling of the TV Dramas**

In this study, the researcher chose the TV dramas “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” for comparison based on purposive sampling. “The Fierce Wife” has 23 episodes. It was broadcasted on Sanlih E-Television (SET) in Taiwan in August 2001 and a Thai dubbed version was rebroadcasted on True Asian Series Channel (Channel 64) in Thailand starting 10 May 2012. Later, the One Enterprise bought the copyrights from Sanlih E-Television (SET) to produce “Mia (Wife) 2018”. “Mia (Wife) 2018” has 28 episodes, which were broadcasted between 28 May – 28 August 2018 on the ONE 31 Channel, Thailand.

The researcher chose these two dramas because both of them are very successful dramas. “The Fierce Wife” broke the record for the highest rating in the history of Taiwanese TV dramas. Experts on family affairs declared that it was a good drama which female and male viewers must not miss if they wished to have a love that was real and beautiful like the characters in the drama. However, experts also warned the female viewers that they should not be enchanted by their husbands and love husbands so much that they forget to love themselves.

“The Fierce Wife” is a melodrama with a love theme which represents the complicated love of a couple. “Mia (Wife) 2018” was also popular in Thailand and had rating 6.1 nationwide. During the same air time, its rating was higher than the ratings for the TV 7 and TV 3 channels, which had held the first and second rankings for a long time. It was also the most popular drama on every platform over which it was broadcasted and had the highest rating in the history of ONE Channel’s dramas. (Diao Woratangtrakul, 2018). It is a digital TV drama which was broadcasted across multiple platforms, such as LINE TV, YouTube, Facebook, and the channel’s own online media. It also encouraged high audience engagement through many channels, such as creating hash tags and sharing drama, or related, contents over online media.



Figure 3.1 Viewership and Ratings of “Mia (Wife) 2018” During 28 Episodes of Broadcasting Period

Source: Diao Woratangtrakul (2018)

### 3.2 Textual Analysis

The researcher applied textual analysis in the two ways.

#### 3.2.1 Study of the Intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV Drama Called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV Drama Called “Mia (Wife) 2018”

The objective of doing textual analysis in this part was to study intertextuality in terms of the new paradigm narrative components in “The Fierce Wife” (the original text), which was broadcasted on Sanlih E-Television (SET) in Taiwan, and “Mia (Wife) 2018” (the secondary text), which was broadcasted on ONE 31 Channel, Thailand, to explore how the new paradigm narrative components changed. The researcher watched both dramas from the beginning to the end and recorded the results of the analysis in the coding sheets. The coding sheets were designed according to the concept of intertextuality and concept of new paradigm narrative described in sections 2.2 and 2.3 in Chapter 2.

The researcher applied textual analysis to “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” by using the concept of new paradigm narrative as the framework to analyze the 8 narrative components as follows:

- 1) Plot, analyzing the event sequences and how they conveyed meanings.
- 2) Theme, analyzing the main ideas of the story which reflect the theme using concepts of feminism and authoritarianism as a framework.
- 3) Conflict, analyzing 3 kinds of conflicts: conflicts between a specific character and other characters: conflicts within a character’s mind: and conflicts between characters and their surroundings, such as conflicts with an unpleasant environment or nature.
- 4) Character, analyzing the habits and attitudes of characters by interpreting their speech, dialogues, expressions, personalities, dress, and the type of character (flat character or round character).
- 5) Setting, analyzing the different types of settings and how they conveyed meanings or affected the thoughts and actions of the characters.

6) Dialogue, analyzing the dialogues to support character analysis because dialogues can reflect the thoughts, emotions and feelings, habits, and personalities of the characters.

7) Point of view, analyzing how the drama's contents are told, from whose points of view, and in what form of narrative. In a first person point of view, the storyteller tells the story from their point of view in a stream of consciousness style narrative. The storyteller may be either the main character or a supporting character. In a story told from a third person point of view, the storyteller is an omniscient author or an observer who shares the narrative.

8) Special symbols, analyzing how special symbols (both pictures and sounds) presented in the dramas convey meanings.

In addition to the analysis of the above mentioned narrative components, the researcher also analyzed the intertextuality of the values and ideologies of both dramas because the new paradigm narrative concept focuses on the construction of meanings, and values and ideology are important elements in the construction of meanings.

After analyzing the narrative components, including the values and ideology embedded in both dramas, the researcher analyzed the intertextuality between the two dramas and recorded the findings in the table below.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of Intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV Drama “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV Drama “Mia (Wife) 2018”

No.	Narrative Components	Characteristics of Intertextuality			
		Convention	Extension	Reduction	Modification
1	Plot				
2	Theme				
3	Conflict				
4	Character				
5	Setting				
6	Dialogue				
7	Point of View				



No.	Narrative Components	Characteristics of Intertextuality			
		Convention	Extension	Reduction	Modification
8	Special Symbols				
9	Values				
10	Ideology				

Source: Table of Characteristics of Intertextuality between the Thai TV Drama called “Reang Ngao” broadcasted in 2001 and 2012 (Linin Sangpattana, 2015)

Next, the researcher recorded the characteristics of intertextuality of the narrative components (convention, extension, reduction, and modification) and reported the descriptive results for the intertextuality of each component.

### **3.2.2 Study of the Construction of the Meanings of “Wife” Conveyed in the Thai TV Drama Called “Mia (Wife) 2018”**

The objective of this phase of the textual analysis was to analyze the content of “Mia (Wife) 2018” related to the eight narrative components mentioned in Part 1. The researcher applied the theory of social construction of reality, concept of wife, feminism, and encoding levels in the TV drama of Fiske (2011) to analyze “meanings and social reality” constructed by “Mia (Wife) 2018” and reported the descriptive results in relation to the following aspects of the relevant constructs.

- 1) The social construction of reality of the “wife” in terms of demographics (e.g. age, occupation, education, and economic and social status).
- 2) The social construction of reality of the “wife” in terms of physical appearance (e.g. personality and style of dress).
- 3) The social construction of reality of the “wife” in terms of habits and emotional maturity.

Aspects 1-3 are comparable with the first level (reality) of the encoding levels in the TV drama of Fiske (2011).

- 4) The social construction of reality in terms of the wife’s roles in her family.

5) The social construction of reality in terms of the relationships between the “wife” and the other characters.

6) The social construction of reality regarding other dimensions of the “wife” character (e.g. positioning of the “wife” character (good, bad, or a combination of both), the final decisions of the wife when her family life is not as smooth as expected and the outcomes of the decisions).

Aspects 4-6 are comparable with the second level (representation) of the encoding levels in the TV drama of Fiske (2011).

7) The social construction of reality to communicate the values of “wife”.

The 7<sup>th</sup> aspect is comparable with the third level (ideology) of the encoding levels in the TV drama of Fiske (2011).

### **3.2.3 Study of the Perceptions and Interpretations of “Wife” of the Audiences of “Mia (Wife) 2018”**

In this part, the researcher applied the concept of decoding of TV dramas by the audience of Stuart Hall, which divides the decoding positions of an audience into three categories, as follows:

- 1) Preferred reading
- 2) Negotiated reading
- 3) Oppositional reading

As mentioned above, according to Stuart Hall, apart from the subjective factors of the audience in interpreting or decoding, the receivers in the digital age are not homogenous mass, but unique individuals and there can be user-generated content. The decoding of modern day receivers can be affected by various other factors which are different from those seen in the past which cannot be explained by the above mentioned concepts and are unpredictable.

### 3.3 Audience Sampling

The researcher performed audience sampling using purposive sampling. The researcher surveyed a number of audience members who engaged with “Mia (Wife) 2018” through online media (ONE LAKORN Facebook and Pantip Webboard).

Then, the researcher analyzed the characteristics of these audience members in general (e.g. male, female, single, married) by interpreting the engagement contents of the audience members. This analysis allowed the researcher to get an overall idea of the audience’s perceptions and points of view toward “Mia (Wife) 2018”. Next, the researcher contacted the audience members through online media. The researcher classified the audience into 2 groups: The first group included audience members who had direct experience (wives both De facto and De jure) and the second group were those who had indirect experience or experience through media (husbands, single men, single women). The researcher interviewed 15 viewers from the first group and 5 viewers from the second group, 20 viewers in total, to explore how the audience decoded and interpreted the meanings of “wife”. The researcher analyzed data based on the following points.

- 1) Demographic data of the first audience group (wives, both De facto and De jure)
- 2) Demographic data of the second audience group (husbands, single men, and single women)
- 3) The decoded meaning of “Wife” in “Mia (Wife) 2018” of the two audience groups based on the following points mentioned in Part 2.
  - (1) The decoding of meanings of “wife” in terms of demographics (e.g. age, occupation, education, economic and social status).
  - (2) The decoding of meanings of “wife” in terms of physical appearance (e.g. personality, dressing style).
  - (3) The decoding of meanings of “wife” in terms of habits and emotional maturity.
  - (4) The decoding of meanings in terms of the wife’s roles in her family.

(5) The decoding of meanings in terms of the relationships between the “wife” and other characters.

(6) The decoding of meanings of “wife” in other dimensions (e.g. positioning of the “wife” character (good, bad, or combination of both), final decisions of the wife when her family life was not as smooth as expected and the outcomes of the decisions).

(7) The decoding of the communication of the values of “wife” in the drama.

### **3.4 In-depth Interviews**

The researcher interviewed two groups of the viewers that were engaged with on the online media. The researcher classified the audience into 2 groups: The first group was audience members who had direct experience (wives both De facto and De jure) and the second group was audience members who had indirect experience or experience through media (husbands, single men, single women). The researcher interviewed 15 viewers from the first group and 5 viewers from the second group, 20 viewers in total, to explore how the audiences decoded and interpreted the meanings of “wife” in the drama and the similarities, or differences, from the meanings of “wife” constructed by the drama producer, as well as the reasons for any differences. The researcher designed interview questions to elicit this information in accordance with the seven points related to encoding and decoding mentioned above.

### **3.5 Presentation of the Research Results**

The researcher presents the findings of the research on “the New Paradigm Narratives and Construction of Meanings of Thai Television Dramas with Cross-media Content in the following 3 chapters as follows:

Chapter 4 presents the research results related to intertextuality and the construction of meanings in two parts. Part 1 addresses the intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV drama called “Mia

(Wife) 2018” and Part 2 looks at the constructed meanings of “wife” through the lens of the narrative components in “Mia (Wife) 2018”.

Chapter 5 presents the research results related to the perceptions and interpretations of “wife” of the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018”.

Chapter 6 presents discussions on the research results and recommendations for future inquiries.





## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FINDINGS ON DRAMA**

In the research entitled “the New Paradigm Narratives and Construction of Meanings of Thai Television Drama with Cross-media Content,” the researcher presents the findings of Part 1: the intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018,” and Part 2: the construction of the meanings of “wife” through the narrative components in “Mia (Wife) 2018.”

#### **4.1 Analysis of the Narrative Components of the Taiwanese TV Drama Called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV Drama Called “Mia (Wife) 2018”**

The findings of this part is in response to research question no. 1.2.1, which asks “To what extent are the convention, extension, reduction, and modification of the contents transferred from the TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” to “Mia (Wife) 2018,” and What are the reasons behind the transfer?”; and no. 1.2.2, “How do the TV dramas called “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” communicate intercultural communication, values, ideologies, and the construction of the meaning of the word “wife” through the new paradigm narrative? What are the similarities and differences, if any, between the two TV dramas?



Figure 4.1 Advertisement Pictures of the Taiwanese TV drama Called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV Drama Called “Mia (Wife) 2018”

Source: Campus-Star (2018)

#### Original Text

Drama name: The Fierce Wife (English name) / 犀利人妻 (Xi Li Ren Qi) (Chinese name)

Genre: family, drama

Duration: 23 episodes

Director: Qi Fujun

Screenwriter: Yang Haiwei

Producer: Sanlih E-Television (SET), Taiwan

Air time: Mondays - Fridays between 19.00 - 20.00 hrs., the first episode was broadcasted on Thursday 10 May 2012 on TRUE Asian Series (Channel 64), Thailand

Leading characters: Sonia Sui, Wen Shenghao, Amanda Zhu, Chris Wang

### Synopsis:

The plot of “The Fierce Wife” is about the complicated love within the family. The leading character is Xie Anzhen (portrayed by Sonia Sui). She dedicates herself to love and dreamed to have a happy family life. She is married to Wen Ruifan (portrayed by Wen Shenghao). She and her husband love and understand each other. Once she learned that her husband had a love affair with her cousin, named Li Wei-en (portrayed by Amanda Chu), Anzhen became depressed. She learned how to live independently from Lan Tianwei (portrayed by Chris Wang), who acts as her mentor giving her good advice and support to her, and then Lan Tian Wei ends up falling in love with Anzhen.

### Secondary text

Drama name : Mia (Wife) 2018

Genre: melodrama

Duration: 28 episodes

Director: Sant Srikaewlaw

Screenwriter : Wattana Weerayawattana

Producer: The ONE Enterprise Co., Ltd. and Remind K Co., Ltd.

Air time: Mondays and Tuesdays at 21.30 hrs. ONE 31 Channel,  
Thailand

Leading characters: Namthip Jongrachatawiboon, Nawat Kulrattanak, Marie Broenner, Thanapat Kawila

### Synopsis:

Aruna (portrayed by Namthip Jongrachatawiboon) was married to Thada (portrayed by Nawat Kulrattanak). After her marriage, she decided to quit her job and become a housewife. She had one daughter, Nuda (portrayed by Rungrada Runglikitjarearn). Her family was very happy until her cousin, Kanya (portrayed by Marie Broenner), returned from abroad to live with her. Her perfect life was changed and fell apart after learning that Kanya had gotten sexually involved with Thada. She was very upset and had to decide how to cope with the problem. She was reminded of her mother’s words that had been taught to her. Her mother compared family life with a “wonton.” When we make wontons, we have to fold and boil them neatly. This is like family life, which the husband and wife should build with care. When Aruna was

in trouble, she knew that Wasin (portrayed by Thanapat Kawila) could help her. Wasin was the young CEO of a super car company. He had just graduated from abroad and had come back to run the business. He fell in love with Aruna and he helped her by offering to let her to work for him in the company. Aruna had to decide whether to accept this offer or not.

#### **4.1.1 Analysis of the Narrative Components of “The Fierce Wife”**

The researcher applied the concept of new paradigm narrative to be the framework for analyzing the 8 narrative components: plot, theme, conflict, characters, settings, dialogues, points of view, and special symbols. In addition to these components, the researcher also analyzed the values and ideology embedded in the drama.

##### **1) Plot**

The events in the story of the “The Fierce Wife” took place mainly in chronological sequence from the beginning to the end. There are some flashbacks when the characters think about the things that happened in the past. The narrative plot of the drama is as follows.

##### **Exposition**

(1) The first scene is a temple, where Xie Anzhen introduces herself to the viewers. She runs into the temple to be the first person that can light an incense stick and put it in the incense burner. She believes that if she is the first person that can put light the incense stick, the wish that she made will come true. The viewers can see the appearance and personality of Anzhen—that she simply dresses and looks clumsy. She is patient, determined, and cares for her husband more than herself.

(2) Anzhen has a perfect family life. Her family members are her husband, daughter, and parents. She is a perfect wife, and does her best to serve her family, especially her husband. Her husband, Wen Ruifan, is also a perfect man with a good image. He loves his family and is honest to his wife. He is successful in his work and is in the position of sales manager of a cosmetics company. He is a candidate for general manager. He and Anzhen have one daughter named Mengmeng.

(3) Another couple is Wen Ruixian and Hao Kangde. Wen Ruixian is a close friend of Anzhen, and she is Ruifan’s sister. Hao Kangde is her husband and



always behaves like a playboy, so Ruixian does not trust him. They always have a quarrel about Kangde's dishonesty.

(4) Li Wei-en is a younger cousin of Anzhen. Her parents are divorced. She has just come back from America and is living with Anzhen temporarily until she can find a job. Ruifan tells her to apply for a job at his company. She gets a job and works with He Ailin. He Ailin is the business development manager. She is also a candidate for general manager and always competes with Ruifan at work. She is Ruifan's ex-girlfriend.

(5) Lan Tianwei meets Anzhen for the first time in an antique shop. Anzhen wanted to buy the vase he had already bought. She asks him to sell it to her and finally he sells it because he is annoyed with her. Unfortunately, Anzhen is so clumsy that she breaks the vase in front of the shop. After that, she meets Tianwei again at a condominium. She thinks that Tianwei is a sales representative for an insurance company. Tianwei offers her to borrow his vase, so they know each other, but Tianwei does not tell her his real status.

#### Rising action

(1) Wei-en begins working at the same company as Ruifan's, so they are getting closer. Ruifan starts falling in love with her and always feels annoyed and angry with Anzhen.

(2) Wei-en feels good when she stays close to Ruifan. She loves him while feeling guilty about her sister. Finally, she confesses to Ruifan that she loves him and so does Ruifan.

(3) Ruifan always tells a lie to Anzhen in order to hide the relationship between Wei-en and him. Kangde accidentally learned about their relationship but he does not tell anyone. He warns Ruifan and Ruifan is confused about what to do. He feels guilty about both Anzhen and Wei-en.

(4) Kangde sees that Ruifan and Wei-en are together in the workplace at night. He does not tell Anzhen. Tianwei also sees Ruifan and Wei-en are dating. He is confused about whether he should tell Anzhen or not.

(5) Anzhen begins to get wind of her husband's dishonesty. She doubts Ailin because Ruixian tells her that Ailin is Ruifan's ex-girlfriend. Kangde also suggests to her to bring lunch to her husband at the office to show that she is Ruifan's



wife. Moreover, Tianwei calls Anzhen to invite her to have lunch together because he would like to tell her that he sees that Ruifan is dating a woman by chance, but he cannot see clearly who the woman is.

(6) Wei-en changes Ruifan's looks. She suggests him to change his hairstyle and to wear more colorful neckties. Ruifan changes his looks as Wei-en suggests. Ruixian suggests that Anzhen observe the changed behaviour of Ruifan, which indicates that he has a new lover. Anzhen is reminded of her mother's words: "Life is sweet and our future is also sweet," so she believes that Ruifan might have a new lover but she still trusts him. She asks Kangde who the new lover of Ruifan is because she still thinks that his new lover might be Ailin, but Kangde tells her that it is not Ailin but he does not tell her who the person really is.

(7) Ruifan is always crabby, and quarrels with Anzhen. The atmosphere in the family is changed; Ruifan and Anzhen talk to each other less. Ruifan reminds Anzhen that since they have been married, Anzhen likes to fix everything in his life. For example, she always tells Ruifan what to eat, and what he should not because it is harmful to his health, but he does not like what Anzhen does. He loves to do what he wants without concern too much. Anzhen does not understand his feelings. Anzhen tells him why he has never told her that he does not like what she does. If she knew that, she would not do what she does.

(8) Anzhen decides to find some jobs in order to forget about thinking of Ruifan. She works as a sales representative at the company where Ruixian works and the CEO of the company is Tianwei.

#### Climax

(1) When Anzhen picks up Ruifan's shirt to wash, she sees a letter written by Wei-en in the pocket. After finishing reading the letter, she cries and is reminded of what Tianwei warned her about—Ruifan dating other woman. At that time, she does not believe what Tianwei said. Now she is very sad and tries to console herself and forget all of this for her daughter and for her family. Anzhen reviews the past events when Ruifan and Wei-en deceived her. Then, she goes to Ruifan's office and slaps Wei-en face in the lobby in public and Wei-en falls down.

(2) Ruifan decides to be separated from Anzhen for a while. Anzhen thinks that if Ruifan comes back and does not go to see Wei-en again, she will forget what happened, for her daughter.

(3) Ruifan apologizes to Anzhen again and again. Anzhen is reminded of her mother's words: "Everybody makes mistakes," so she is ready to forgive Ruifan. However, Ruifan asks her for a divorce instead of returning to her.

(4) Anzhen has an accident during a test drive. When she is in the hospital, she misses Ruifan but Tianwei takes care of her. Ruifan comes to see her and brings the divorce certificate for her to sign. Anzhen is not willing to sign it but Ruifan forces her. Finally, she signs the divorce certificate with tears.

(5) Ruifan lives with Wei-en but his life is in a downturn. His subordinates do not have faith in him anymore because he betrayed his wife. Finally, he resigns and it is not easy to find a new job because his relationship with Wei-en violates social norms. As he is unemployed, he must sell his car and house to earn a living. Even his parents do not allow him to live with them if he brings Wei-en to their house. Finally, Anzhen allows Ruifan and Wei-en to live with her because she needs someone to take care of her daughter while she goes out to work.

#### Resolution

(1) Anzhen decides to get Ruifan back by following Tianwei's advice. Tianwei advises her to change her looks, to learn more, change her taste in dressing and her belongings, build her confidence, and learn to socialize to become a good-looking, modern woman. Her new looks make Ruifan regrets that he left her.

(2) Anzhen is invited to be a TV program moderator. Her program is a cooking demonstration program, at which she is an expert. Her program gets a very high rating, so she becomes popular. Her fans encourage her to fight for her life. He Ailin is her personal manager. Wei-en is jealous of her, so she releases fake news that ruins her reputation. However, the truth is disclosed. Wei-en is condemned by the public but Anzhen gets more sympathy.

#### Ending

(1) Ruifan and Wei-en break up. Wei-en goes back to America. Before she leaves, she comes to see Anzhen to say goodbye and to apologize, but Anzhen does not forgive her. However, Anzhen wishes her a bright future.

(2) Tianwei and Anzhen are close friends. Tianwei confesses love to Anzhen, but Anzhen refuses. She would like to be just a friend of Tianwei.

(3) Ruifan can find a job in Kaosong District, which is in the south of Taiwan. His position is lower and he has to work harder than in the past, but he has no choice because he cannot find a job. He says goodbye to Anzhen, his daughter, and everyone.

(4) Ruixian gets promoted to be a supervisor while Anzhen gets promoted to be the manager of a car showroom.

(5) Ruifan repents but does not ask Anzhen to forgive him. He offers to compensate Anzhen with love and by taking care of her and her daughter. Anzhen refuses his offer and tells him that she cannot go back to have the same life as in the past.

(6) Tianwei travels around China for one year. He writes articles in the newspapers about what he saw during his backpack trip. In his article, he uses the name “Minus 1” when he mentions Anzhen. The reason behind the name “Minus 1” is that when Anzhen was a new sales representative, she could not meet the sales target, so she got a “minus” instead of a “plus.” Anzhen keeps all of his articles. After his trip, he returns to Taipei and writes a book. He organizes events in the bookstore to promote his book and signs his name in the book for his fans. Anzhen comes to greet and congratulate him. However, Anzhen is not ready to start a new love with anyone, so she retains her relation with Tianwei as a friendship.

## 2) Theme

The main theme of the drama is love. The love presented in the drama is so complicated. The feelings of the characters are implicit and present love in many forms. The love of the husband and wife is explicit while the love of husband and the new lover is secret. The husband himself has conflicts in his mind about what kind of love he should choose, what kind of love makes him really happy. Furthermore, there is the love of the other couples that are supporting characters. The couple of Ruixian and Kangde always have quarrels because Ruixian never trusts Kangde, but they do not hate each other. Actually, Kangde is not dishonest but just enchanted by other women; he does not love anyone except Ruixian. The couple of Ruifan’s parents always have quarrels because of disagreements about something but they are not

seriously angry with each other. Wei-en's parents do not appear in the drama scene, but the viewers can perceive their existence through Wei-en's story. She says that her parents are divorced and left her. The love of this couple represents a disappointed life. The main theme which the producer would like to emphasize is the definition of love and real love seeking of each character.

The sub-theme of the drama is morality. The drama script represents immoral actions that will bring suffering. For example, Ruifan and Wei-en are dishonest with Anzhen. Finally, their lives are not happy. The drama script presents the worth of doing good deeds, like those of Anzhen. She is a good wife and mother, although in the end she does not have a perfect family as at the beginning, but her life is better than in the past. She has good friends who always support her; even Ailin, the ex-girlfriend of Ruifan, also supports her. Tianwei helps her to change her looks and teaches her many things to improve herself to be "the new Anzhen." While coaching her, Tianwei is upset and blames her because she is so clumsy, tasteless, and cannot do what he teaches, but Anzhen is never angry with him. In contrast, she thanks him for coaching and giving her advice to deal with her family problems. Tianwei falls in love with her because of her goodness.

### 3) Conflicts

#### Conflict between husband and wife

(1) Ruifan and Anzhen have serious conflicts because of Wei-en, so they became divorced.

(2) Kangde and Ruixian always have quarrels because Ruixian is angry with him. Kangde tends to cheat on her. The situation gets worse when Ruixian threatens him with a divorce and Kangde challenges her to do that, but finally they are not divorced because they love each other.

#### Conflicts within the character's mind

(1) Ruifan is confused about his feelings; he does not know why he cares so much about Wei-en. He feels guilty about both Anzhen and Wei-en. He does not know why he left Anzhen to love Wei-en.

(2) Many things happened to make Ruifan confused. He cannot leave Wei-en but still cares about Anzhen. He must be a good father while keeping a good image at work to compete with Ailin.

(3) Wei-en tries to tell herself that Ruifan is her brother-in-law. She should not love him, but she cannot.

(4) Anzhen's confidence in the fidelity of her husband is insecure. She is confused about believing what others tell her about being careful that her husband has a new lover or that she should believe in her husband's goodness as she used to believe.

(5) Ailin tells Anzhen to find a job. Anzhen is confused about whether she will stay at home as a housewife or go to work.

(6) Wei-en is confused. She is reminded about what Kangde warned her—that she should not have an affair with another person's husband because the love she gets is not true love. She also remembers what Tianwei told her, that love is not a possession. You should leave a gap between you and your lover; otherwise, it can be compared to having a pet, not a lover.

(7) Anzhen is confused about whether she really would like Ruifan to return or just feels sympathy for him.

#### Conflicts between characters and surroundings

(1) In everyone's points of view, Ruifan is a perfect guy. It is impossible for him to do bad things, but he has conflicts with this. He has the burden to disguise as everyone's expectation. He needs freedom to do anything he wants.

(2) According to social norms, people perceive that the second wife or mistress is a bad woman who destroys other's family and devalues herself. Wei-en knows that she intervenes in her sister's family and makes her sad, but she cannot deter herself. She loves her brother-in-law and would like to own him. She needs his lover because she needs love from her parents but never receives it. Wei-en is patient when insulted by the people surrounding her.

In summary, "The Fierce Wife" constructs meanings mostly through the conflict between husband and wife and through some conflicts within the individual character's mind. The solution to the conflict between the husband (Ruifan) and wife (Anzhen) is divorce. In terms of conflicts within the characters' minds, each character has conflicts within his/her own mind. Ruifan is confused about whether he still loves Anzhen or loves Wei-en, and Anzhen is confused about whether she still loves Ruifan or not. Should she forgive him or not? Further, Wei-en is confused about whether she



loves Ruifan or just wants him because she is not as happy as she expected while living with him. Tianwei is also confused about why he cares so much about Anzhen. Then he can find the reason why he loves Anzhen but does not know it when this feeling occurs.

#### 4) Characters

The main characters in “The Fierce Wife” that affect the narrative are:

Xie Anzhen



Figure 4.2 Xie Anzhen

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

Xie Anzhen is a beautiful and gentle woman, who has a simple life. She is a good wife and mother. Her father passed away when she was young, so she lives with her mother. She has been married with Wen Ruifan for more than 10 years. They have one daughter named Mengmeng. Anzhen is a housewife, and simply dresses in clothes with colors of soft tones. She wears her hair in a bun and does not put on makeup. She goes to the market holding a tote bag, and does not use a handbag. Every day she drives her husband to the workplace and encourages him to work. Her catch phrase is “fighting.” She is optimistic and has a simple life. She spends money

sparingly, when she buys things, she will bargain as much as possible, she serves her family perfectly and is loved by her husband's parents, she always does her best for her husband, and she believes that if she is a good wife, her husband will not find a new lover. She also believes that her husband is good and has never been dishonest. She is good at cooking and always brings lunch to her husband and his colleagues, and she supports her husband in his work. She believes that a husband and wife sometimes can have a quarrel. She likes whistling while washing dishes, and she loves watching dramas and adapts what she sees in the dramas to her real life. She looks like a grouch but she is well-intentioned. She believes that marriage life should be based on trust. She is a “flat” character, which means that she has only a good side.

Wen Ruifan

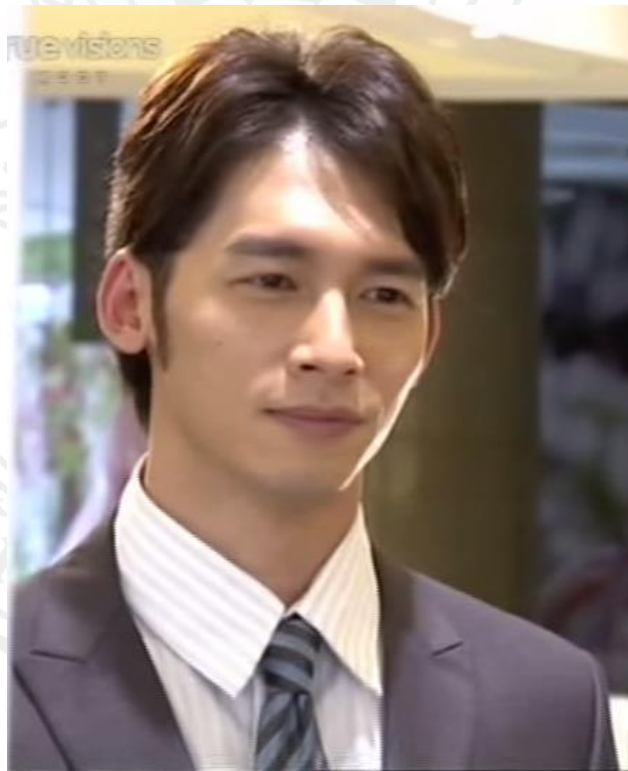


Figure 4.3 Wen Ruifan

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

Wen Ruifan is Anzhen's husband. He is a handsome and hard-working man. He works as a sales manager of a cosmetics company and is successful in his work. He

fell in love with Anzhen when he was a university student. After graduation, they married and have had husband-wife relationship for more than 10 years. He is attractive to women. He is like a perfect advertising model of the company. For this reason, many women approach him but no one can be enchanted by him. Ruifan dresses neatly, wears a working suit and necktie. He is a role model of a good husband who has never been unfaithful. He always warns Kangde to adhere to morality. He believes that he gets promoted because of his competence, not because of his connections. He is a “round” character, which means that he has both good and bad sides. He is good at the beginning of the story but gradually changes to have negative behavior. He is finally unfaithful to his wife. He has an influence on all of the female characters’ (Xie Anzhen, He Ailin, Li Wei-en) behaviors.

Li Wei-en



Figure 4.4 Li Wei-en

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

Li Wei-en is a beautiful and lovely woman. She has bright eyes like a child. She is Anzhen’s cousin. In physical appearance, she looks innocent but deep down

she is not. Since she was in childhood, she has hoped to have a happy family. But in her real life, her parents were divorced and left her, so she always needs love. Then, she leaves America for Thailand and lives with Anzhen, who introduces her to Ruifan, who is her brother-in-law. She lives with Anzhen temporarily until she gets a job. Then she gets a job in the company where Ruifan works. She has a short hair bob, and dresses in a modern style. She loves to wear red high-heeled shoes and looks sexy. She is jealous of Anzhen's happy family. She dreams to have a family like Anzhen's. She has a cat and always talks with her cat to express her feelings. She is disappointed with her destiny because her parents are divorced and left her. She lived in America before coming to Taiwan, so her mindset is different from the Taiwanese. She is independent but wants other people to care for her. She does not want to get married because she has seen the bad example of her parents, but she changes her mind when she sees Anzhen's family. She believes that men always have more than one lover. She is vindictive. She has a lot of pressures in her life, so she has psychological problems. Everyone calls her "devil" because she makes all kinds of trouble. At the end of the story, she feels guilty about what she has done with Anzhen. She is a round character, which turns from a bad to a good character.

Wen Ruixian



Figure 4.5 Wen Ruixian

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

Wen Ruixian is Ruifan's sister. She has been a close friend of Anzhen since she was a student. She has long hair and dresses in a modern working woman's style. She works as a car sales representative. She does not like Wei-en flirting with Ruifan. She gets jealous easily because her husband (Hao Kangde) is very flirtatious. She is a good consultant for Anzhen, especially regarding husband-related matters. She always warns Anzhen to beware of husbands' infidelity. Anzhen follows her advice. She is a friend who shares is a friend who cares of Anzhen. She is very frank, loves shouting, and is easily angry but she is kind. She is a flat character, which means that she has only a good side.

Hao Kangde



Figure 4.6 Hao Kangde

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

He is Ruixian's husband, so he is Ruifan's brother-in-law. His roles are the friend and brother of Ruifan, so he can be a good consultant for Ruifan. He works at the same company as Ruifan but his position is lower than Ruifan's. His position is division head. He is so playful and flirtatious. He always makes Ruixian get jealous easily, but he is never dishonest. He loves his wife very much. He grew up in America, so he usually uses some English words in his speech. He is a flat character, which means that he only has a good side.



He Ailin



Figure 4.7 He Ailin

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

She is an ex-girlfriend of Ruifan and loves him until now. She works at the same company as Ruifan in the position of business development manager. She is a beautiful modern working woman. She is also a presenter of the cosmetics manufactured by the company. She is Ruifan's candidate for deputy general manager. If Ruifan returns to love her, she will give up and allow Ruifan to get promoted to be the deputy general manager. Normally, she never gives up, especially in work. She is a "velvet glove." She has a secret affair with Mr. Zhuang, the general manager, so Mr. Zhuang always supports her in her work. She believes that she cannot count on anyone, and she must be self-dependent. She is a perfectionist, and looks cold and heartless. Her assistant calls her "Shark" but Kangde calls her "Witch." At the beginning of the story, she looks like a bad character but turns out to be good in the end. She is a round character, which means that she has both good and bad sides.

Lan Tianwei



Figure 4.8 Lan Tianwei

Source: True Asian Series Channel (2012)

He is Wei-en's ex-boyfriend. He looks cold and quiet. He loves to be alone rather than socialize. He is smart and handsome. He is in a rich family and is the CEO of a business selling luxury cars. He is well-educated and usually insults others. Although he is attractive, no one can attract him. He lives with his mother in a new house because his father and mother are divorced. He loves and adores his mother; for him she is a perfect woman. He always talks to his mother and consults her. He is never interested in any women because he thinks that women are unreasonable. However, his mother argues that there are a number of women who dedicate themselves for love. He changes his mind when he meets Anzhen, who changes his habit from a cold, strict, and unsympathetic man to be more flexible and to sympathize with others. He believes that everything, even the spaghetti sauce he has made, must be perfect; otherwise, he will not do it. His nickname is "Wonderful guy in the car business." His "bark is worse than his bite." He is a round character, which means that he has both good and bad sides.

### 5) Setting

Almost all of the events in the drama happened in Taipei, the capital city of Taiwan. There are a few settings in the rural area where Anzhen's mother lives. The main setting is Anzhen's and Ruifan's house, and the minor setting is the company where Ruifan works. When Ruifan quits his job and Anzhen begins her new job, the minor setting is the car showroom where Anzhen works as a sales representative. These settings convey the meaning of family and the importance of work. After work, the characters go back home to see their family members, which consist of three generations, from the grandfather and grandmother, father and mother, to the grandchildren. The family is a warm and happy place. All of the family members talk while having dinner together. The relationship among the family members is strong. They have activities together such as celebrating birthdays, playing games, and singing.

Work is also important, especially for Ruifan, who is a leader of the family, and Ailin, who is single and is dedicated to work. Ruifan plays the roles of father and the head supervising his subordinates. Before Anzhen gets divorced, she plays the roles of mother and wife, serving her family within the house such as cooking and doing household chores and extends her roles to outside, such as driving for her husband and daughter and bringing lunch to her husband and also his colleagues at the workplace. Everyone loves Anzhen. Going to Ruifan's office shows that Ruifan is married and Anzhen is his wife. It can prevent other women from getting close to Ruifan.

Apart from the above settings, there are many settings in the drama, for example, the temple where Anzhen always goes to pray for her wishes, the night club where Ruifan entertains his customers, the department store where Ruifan's company organizes cosmetic sales promotions, and the antique shop where Anzhen and Tianwei met for the first time. Mengmeng's school, the playground near Anzhen's house where Ruifan and Wei-en always have a secret date before going back home to see Anzhen, the hospital where Anzhen was admitted after the car accident, her mother had an operation, and Wei-en had an accident falling down the stairs, on the riverside where the characters want to escape from others to stay alone or talk with

someone. Ruifan and Kangde usually go to the riverside to talk and discuss secret issues of the relationship between Wei-en and him. Ruifan and Wei-en also usually talk to each other there because they do not want Anzhen to know. Wei-en and Ruifan also breaks up with Wei-en there.

Apart from the location, the communication devices that appeared in the scene also convey meanings. The communication devices show the period of time in the drama, which is not in the digital age. For example, the mobile phone that the characters use is not a smartphone. The main communication channel of the characters is a mobile phone and sending SMS. Social media are not widely used. People mainly watch the news on television, in the newspapers, and magazines instead of from smartphones and tablets. The popularity of the TV program is measured by ratings, not viewers or likes on social media. In the story, when Anzhen has her own TV program and becomes more popular. Someone is jealous of her and releases fake news to discredit her. After that, the news appears in a gossip magazine and the news is not spread as quickly as on social media. Tianwei never reads gossip magazines, so he does not know the news until his subordinate brings the magazine to him to read.

#### Songs

Songs are one of the setting components. “The Fierce Wife” uses the theme song in the setting depending on the appropriate events in the story.

#### 6) Dialogues

Anzhen and Ruifan talk politely to each other. Both of them always call each other “Darling.” It means that they love each other very much. On the other hand, Ruixian always shouts at Kangde to show that she does not like the flirtatious behaviour of Kangde. She usually complains about Kangde to Anzhen. She mentions Wei-en with sarcastic words because she does not trust her. Ruixian thinks that Wei-en stays too close to Ruifan and tells Anzhen to beware of her.

The unique aspect of the dialogues, whether they are spoken by the good or bad characters in this drama, is that they are full of similes and metaphors that can teach the audience. The following are some examples of these dialogues.

(1) Anzhen teaches her daughter that when you like or dislike something, it should be based on reasons rather than feelings because everything has its own advantages.

(2) Kangde knows the relationship between Ruifan and Wei-en, so he warns Ruifan “If you play with fire, you will get burned.”

(3) Anzhen’s mother is optimistic. She taught Anzhen since she was young that “Life is sweet, and so is our future.”

(4) Wei-en compares love with infected disease. One does not know he or she falls in love until he or she has a symptom. Although love makes us suffer like catching a cold, Wei-en is not afraid of love. She thinks that our love (Wei-en and Ruifan) is not harmful to others.

(5) Normally, Anzhen drives for Ruifan but during the second honeymoon, Ruifan drives for Anzhen. Anzhen tells him that she is not used to this, but Ruifan tells her that he does not want Anzhen to be so tired. Anzhen tells him that she is not tired. When she drives, she feels that the car is like a home, but it is smaller. The car is a small house with only Ruifan and Anzhen inside.

(6) During the second honeymoon of Ruifan and Anzhen, Wei-en has a chance to talk with Kangde. Kangde warns her that Wei-en should not have an affair with a man that is married; she will not get real love. Wei-en argues that sometimes she does not want a husband and wife get divorced. She just wants love.

(7) Ruifan tells Wei-en that he cannot return to Wei-en as in the past. He had a wife and daughter. He cannot “delete” them completely as delete the board. Ruifan compares himself with a jigsaw puzzle played by Wei-en. The finished picture of the jigsaw is fixed in advance by Wei-en. Wei-en argues that Ruifan does not know the finished picture, and that it might be the picture of Ruifan and Wei-en. Ruifan argues that it is impossible. He has lived with Anzhen for more than 10 years, and each day is like a piece of a jigsaw puzzle; a thousand pieces have accumulated for 10 years. The finished picture must be Ruifan and Anzhen—it is impossible to be another picture.

(8) Wei-en tells Ruifan that a candle burns as fast as a few days pass when she lives with Ruifan. Ruifan tells Wei-en that we forget the time when we are in love. Wei-en asks Ruifan whether we will forget love when the time passes or not.



(9) Wei-en tells Ruifan that when she lives with Ruifan, it is like she is on a swing, going up and down, because Ruifan is so hesitating. He should be decisive about what he wants, living with Anzhen or her.

(10) Kangde warns Wei-en that Wei-en should not choose to love her brother-in-law. Wei-en is lovely and has a good profile, so it is not difficult for her to find someone who loves her. Wei-en argues that love chooses her, she does not choose love.

(11) Anzhen's mother tells her that too perfect is not good. Like a couple of Ruifan and Anzhen's life, Anzhen should thank Ruifan for making our life not perfect.

(12) Anzhen tells Ruifan that telling a lie is worse than having a second wife. Ruifan tells her that if something between them is only a burden and a duty, it might not be love anymore.

(13) Anzhen's mother tells her that if she loves Ruifan, she should forgive him. As in the proverb "to err is human," if she forgives him, he will appreciate it and treat her well. This is like the Buddhist teaching, which states that "to get rid of suffering, humans should be generous and forgive others."

(14) Ruifan tells Kangde that when he stays with Wei-en, he can be himself. He can do anything he wants. It seems that he has a new life of living tree, not a machine living for the family. On the other hand, when she lives with Anzhen, he feels like he and Anzhen are machines. They have duties but do not have freedom. Kangde argues that when Ruifan and Wei-en begin to love each other, life is lively like eating spicy sukiyaki. But we cannot eat chili every day; when we have diarrhea, we will think about rice, which is not tasty but is necessary for our life. Ruifan argues that everyone loves to eat different dishes; it is a person's right to choose what to eat.

(15) Ruifan tells Anzhen that when he lives with her, he feels like he is just a part of the family, and is not himself. Anzhen asks him whether family is the most important part of life or not.

(16) Anzhen does not give up on her daughter. She has made progress in work, and she can sell the most expensive car in the company. Sometimes a bitter life has some sweet taste. We do not have to wait for someone to give you sweet taste; we

can create it by ourselves. Nothing is impossible; there is nothing we cannot overcome.

(17) Anzhen feels hopeless. Tianwei comforts her by telling her that divorce is common for women, and acting like this does not help. The best way to get revenge is to make yourself successful. Anzhen tells him that the word “success” is too far away from her. Tianwei argues that Anzhen thinks that success is far away because she does not want to go out to find it.

(18) Anzhen’s mother tells her that sometimes there are unexpected events that happen in our life. It is normal because we cannot control everything in our life. Whatever happens, we must not fear.

(19) Tianwei teaches Anzhen that she must change her mindset and should see the good points in herself. Women in the modern age must have vision and knowledge but Anzhen looks only at her family. Whenever someone is not interested in the world, others also are not interested in him/her.

(20) Anzhen tells Ruifan that while reading, she finds a quote, “If you cry because you miss the sun, you will also miss the stars.”

(21) Anzhen tries to find the answers to these questions, why Ruifan does not love her, why Ruifan wants to get divorced, why and why...., but Anzhen never asks herself whether she still loves Ruifan or not.

(22) Ruifan compares himself to a lonely dog whose owner dies. No one welcomes him. Kangde tells him that in the past Ruifan had a peaceful and simple life. He got anything he wanted easily. Now, god teaches him a lesson.

(23) Anzhen tells Tianwei that she has given up the plan to get Ruifan back because Mengmeng tells her that she hates her father. The word “hate” is too strong for a little girl. Anzhen feels guilty, so she does not want her daughter to hate her father too much to become like Wei-en. Actually, getting Ruifan back is Anzhen’s target, but while Anzhen stares at the target, she ignores the important thing on the way, which is her daughter.

(24) As the idiom says, "You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs," others always take advantage of Anzhen because she is quite stupid. Ailin is smarter than Anzhen but she does not have any friends.

(25) Anzhen feels that there is a thin line called the “Anger Line.” She is stepping over it. Now she chooses not to step over it. Tianwei tells that if Anzhen steps over it, Anzhen will overcome others, but if Anzhen does not step over it, Anzhen will overcome herself. Anzhen says that the way to overcome suffering is to forgive the one who hurts us. Tianwei says that thinking about revenge, one must be brave, but not thinking about revenge, one must be braver (suppressing anger and learning to forgive).

(26) Anzhen apologizes to Wei-en for slapping her. Anzhen loves Ruifan so much that she overlooks his fault. She is so sorry that she did not slap Ruifan. It is not a battle between Anzhen and Ruifan but it is a battle between Ruifan in the past and Ruifan at present.

(27) Ailin compares Ruifan’s life with playing cards. He has always held the good card but it changes to be a bad one, which makes him lose.

(28) Tianwei buys Mibao, the car of Anzhen’s and Ruifan’s family, named by Anzhen. Tianwei asks Anzhen that now she has 2 cars. The old one is nice and full of memories. The new one is nicer and comfortable. Which one do you choose? (He compares Ruifan with the old car and himself with the new car).

(29) Tianwei’s mother tells him that very smart people are usually unhappy. Happiness is hidden in sincerity. Love has no reason but feelings from your heart.

(30) Kangde compares love with clay molding. The clay must be heated for a long time until it becomes porcelain. Ruifan and Wei-en cannot be molded into porcelain because Wei-en is bad clay.

(31) Wei-en tells Tianwei that everyone has different requirements. The relation between Ruifan and Wei-en in the past may be a bad dream but for Anzhen, it might be a good one.

(32) Anzhen tells Wei-en that she usually thinks that others treat her badly but never thinks that she herself also treats others badly.

(33) Ruifan’s father tells him that if he turns over a new leaf, he actually has a chance. He should not be afraid of a new start; just walk carefully and he can see beautiful scenery. Ruifan tells his father that he does not need to worry, that Ruifan just fell down and hurt himself. The more he is hurt, the more he is careful.

(34) Anzhen gives an interview to the reporter about the suicide of a woman. Anzhen tells the reporter that she understands her feelings very well. She herself has been like that. She cannot find the answers to her questions. Actually, it is not important who is right or wrong. It is not necessary to find the answers. We do not need to adhere to a married life because a married life is just a part of our life (let ourselves go on).

(35) Tianwei's mother tells Tianwei that one's feeling is framed by his or her mindset and experiences, and the same is true of Wei-en. Her mindset on love is framed by her experiences during childhood. She always needs love but never receives it. Tianwei has always loved Wei-en, and so does Ruifan. But Wei-en's subconscious orders her that she has never been loved, so Wei-en does not feel their loves. Do not let this kind of feeling press yourself. You must be happy to love and to be loved.

#### 7) Points of view

The story is narrated by the leading character, Xie Anzhen. In the first scene, Xie Anzhen introduces herself to the audience while other characters do not. It means that the whole story is narrated through her point of view.

#### 8) Special symbols

(1) Red high-heeled shoes communicate that the woman who wears them is a mistress (Ruixian calls her "a bitch"). In this scene, the camera has close-ups of the shoes rather than the wearer, and then discloses the face of the wearer, who is Wei-en.

(2) Wonton is compared with a married life. It means when wrapping wontons, the wonton sheet should wrap the material firmly; otherwise, they will separate from each other when it is boiled. Like a married life, a husband and wife should strengthen their relations; otherwise, their family can be broken.

(3) Chocolates are in many gift boxes. The woman who wears red high-heeled shoes sneakily puts them in front of Ruifan's and Anzhen's house. There are notes on these boxes written with sex appeal expressions, such as "I want you," "I love you," "You look very nice," with the red lipstick lips.

(4) The ceramic vase is a medium object leading Tianwei to meet Anzhen.

(5) The heart-shaped carrots in the lunch box were prepared by Anzhen for Ruifan. It communicates her love for Ruifan.

(6) Anzhen compares love between Ruixian and Kangde with frozen food. It means their relation is bleak, and they are not committed with true love.

(7) Wei-en buys a pink necktie for Ruifan because she wants him to change his looks. Ruifan always wear cool colored clothes.

(8) Wei-en buys a red robot model for Ruifan because she wants him to have a colorful life and when he sees the model, he will remember her. Then, he decides to break up with her, and he picks up the model and puts it at the same place instead of throwing it away. It means that he cannot leave her. And then Anzhen sees the model on the headboard in her and Ruifan's bedroom, and she is very angry and throws it to the floor. The model represents Wei-en, but Ruifan puts it in his and Anzhen's bedroom, which is a private place for Ruifan and Anzhen. It means that Ruifan welcomes Wei-en to his family, so Anzhen is angry.

(9) Mice on a pedal machine is compared with Ruifan's and Wei-en's life, which is struggling ceaselessly but achieving nothing.

(10) The picture of Wei-en and Ruifan on the computer desktop background of Wei-en means that Wei-en loves Ruifan as a lover, not a brother-in-law. She wants Ruifan to be with her.

(11) The jigsaw family photo of Ruifan and Anzhen with a picture of Wei-en's face inserted means that Wei-en is jealous of Anzhen's happy family. She wants to have a family like this, so she inserts her face's picture in Anzhen's.

(12) Ruifan gives a heart-shaped pendant with the date endorsed to Wei-en as her birthday present and the date endorsed is her birthday.

(13) Dartboard; when we are throwing darts, we must stare at the dartboard only because the dart target is on the dartboard. It means that when we do something, we usually focus on the target but overlook the process or methods or anything on the way to reach the target.

(14) Curry: normally we eat curry with rice and put it on the rice, but Ruifan likes to eat them separately. He thinks that it is not necessary to put the curry on the rice. In comparison with married life, it does not mean that a married couple cannot separate. Sometimes, it might be better than living together. The same is true



of Ruifan's and Anzhen's relationships; it looks like they cannot separate because they have been married for more than 10 years, but finally, they can.

(15) Wedding rings of Ruifan and Anzhen: Anzhen looks at her finger, which is without a wedding ring. She closes her eyes, and smiles with tears. It means that her married life with Ruifan has already ended.

(16) Wedding photo of Ruifan and Anzhen: after Anzhen and Ruifan get divorced, Anzhen takes their wedding photo off the wall in the bedroom. The wedding photo and everything in this room fills her with nostalgia.

(17) White sneakers: this is a binary opposition to the red high-heeled shoes. When Wei-en breaks up with Ruifan, she takes off her red high-heeled shoes, which she always wears, but wears white sneakers instead. The camera has a close-up of the white sneakers and then moves to Wei-en's face. This kind of camera angle is applied when Wei-en wears the red high-heeled shoes.

#### 9) Values

The drama presents the value of monogamy, which is challenged by a man that is unfaithful. However, the social norms shape the result for the challengers. Ruifan and Wei-en, who behave in contradiction to the social norms, receive negative effects. Ruifan has to quit his job and cannot find a new one because his behavior is unacceptable. The CEO of his company is a woman who is sensitive about this issue. She cannot promote Ruifan if he still does not improve his behavior. Like Ruifan, Wei-en, who is an intervener in Anzhen's and Ruifan's family, is also insulted by other people in the society. She is condemned as a mistress. Both of them are disgusted by people. For example, the apartment landlady where Wei-en rents her room does not allow her to live in her apartment anymore even though Wei-en pays her a rental fee. Ruifan is unemployed and cannot find a new job. No one welcomes them. For whatever reasons, being an intervener of another family is immoral. People cannot forgive him or her easily.

Apart from the above 8 narrative components, the drama also communicates the following values and beliefs.

#### (1) The belief in superstition and fortune

The belief of praying for one's wish and that for the first person who can light an incense stick and put it in the incense burner the wish he/she made will come

true. Anzhen believes in fortune tellers. When she is in trouble, she will go to see a fortune teller. For example, when she suspects that Ruifan may have a new lover, she goes to see a fortune teller to tell her whether it is true or not. She starts to doubt her belief that trust is a basis of married life. Onsen can wash bad luck off. While seeing a meteor, one must make a wish quickly and tie a knot on one's clothes to make the wish come true. Making a wish while blowing out birthday cake candles.

(2) The belief in this world, the next world, the law of karma, and other beliefs related to Buddhism

Anzhen's mother tells her that Ruifan is not a bad guy but maybe, as the fortune teller said, in the last world, he owed Wei-en and Anzhen also owed him. Therefore, in this world Ruifan and Anzhen must repay. The Truth of Life "If you do good things, good things will happen to you. If you do bad things, bad things will happen to you". The suppression of anger, forgive and forget.

(3) Food culture

Taiwanese families wrap wontons and eat them as a main course while Thai people eat wontons as an appetizer or it is eaten together with other dishes such as noodles. The modern Taiwanese family drinks tea from glasses, not tea cups. In the drama, there are many kinds of international foods, including Chinese and western foods such as sweet and sour stir-fry, steamed fish with soy sauce in Anzhen's family, and spaghetti and wine in Tianwei's family. This represents the influence of western culture on the Taiwanese. Foods cooked by yourself embed our story and feelings.

(4) The belief in festival celebrations

The Taiwanese family members celebrate Chinese New Year Festival together. They have family reunion dinners, and the adults give red envelopes to the children. It is believed that during New Year, there must not be anger or quarrels with others, especially during the New Year's celebration meal.

(5) The value of taking care of children, who are vulnerable groups

When adults begin to quarrel, they will take the children to another place so that they will not see a bad example.

(6) The value of love and harmony in the family

Grandfathers and grandmothers want to have many grandchildren in an extended family while they think that it does not matter how many family members,

love, harmony, and respect each other matter. The strong relationships among family members allow them to discuss many issues and exchange opinions. For example, Ruifan always discusses with Kangde and Anzhen always discusses with Ruixian.

(7) The sexual value of being self-contained to preserve the virginity of women

In the modern age, the sexual value of being self-contained to preserve the virginity of women is changed in negative way from the past. Women flirting with men is commonly found. They do not care whether the men they are flirting with are single or not.

(8) The value of the wife serving husband

Anzhen drives for Ruifan. It is not commonly found that a wife drives for her husband. Anzhen serves everyone in her family including Ruifan's parents. The ancestors said that "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach." Therefore, a wife enchanted by her husband must be good at cooking. Ruifan's mother expects that her daughter-in-law must be good at cooking.

(9) The value of one child in the Chinese family

Anzhen's mother wants Anzhen to have more than one child. It represents that modern Taiwanese families do not follow the Chinese one-child policy as in the past.

(10) Organization culture

In Ruifan's workplace, the competition for promotion is strong. Someone tries to be low profile to avoid enemies. The organization culture of the company where Ruixian and Anzhen work are: 1) Every day before starting working, employees must line up and shout the company's motto. This can motivate employees to work effectively; 2) senior employee who have more experience coach the new employees; 3) talking on phone about personal business is not allowed during working hours.

(11) Social accountability

Using a tote bag while go shopping. Don't drink and drive

(12) Trust between husband and wife

The wife is afraid of 3 things: a car crash, ghosts, and an intervener. Ruixian suggests to Anzhen how to notice that a husband has a new lover. 1) The

husband changes his looks, his behavior, and his habits. 2) The husband is more kind than before. He buys an expensive gift for you without any reason because he tries to compensate for his mistakes. 3) The most important indicator is that the husband is usually not at home and has some excuses like a meeting or entertaining customers. He does not let his wife track him. On the other hand, on the husband's side, Kangde develops his own theory, which states that the husband's guilt is developed step by step and can be measured by objects given by the husband to his wife. In the first step, the husband just thinks about his new lover. It does not matter; he does not need to do anything. In the second step, the husband holds his new lover's hands. The husband should flatter his wife to make her happy and trust him. In the third step, the husband kisses his new lover. He should buy a special gift for his wife when he goes back home. Once the husband does something wrong, he cannot be trusted by his wife.

#### (13) The influence of western culture

Wei-en is familiar with American culture since she has studied there. She thinks that lovers hugging and kissing in public is common but the Taiwanese perceive that it is not suitable.

#### (14) Wisdom of life

Someone has traditional ways of life and someone has strong determination regarding their ways. Anyway, most people will not do anything much different from traditional ways of life. During the second honeymoon trip, Anzhen and Ruifan discuss the meaning of life. Anzhen thinks that it is worth living if we can do something for the one we love. Only the weak persons perceive that the world is unfair. Too good persons usually are oppressed. Anzhen is optimistic. She thinks that although our love possession (husband) is lost, we ourselves still live and continue fighting for our life. The destiny just teaches us a new lesson. The real brave person is the one who is brave to be himself/herself. Tianwei tells Anzhen that Anzhen is always hurt by others because she is afraid of conflict. She must be brave to speak for her rights. In order to achieve success, the combination of strength and weakness is required. Tianwei's mother believes that "money and property are just materials; you cannot take them with you." And she believes that "nothing is impossible in the world."

#### (15) Concept and expression of love

Love is not a possession; some space should be left between two lovers; otherwise, it is like keeping a pet. One who falls in love is both crazy and silly. The expression of love is different between people in eastern and western cultures. People from western cultures focus on hugging and kissing while people from eastern cultures keep their feelings in their mind, which others cannot understand. Wei-en perceives the meaning of love, that lovers must miss each other every second and never be separate from each other. Love is love, with no supporting reason.

(16) Hobbies and play

The hobbies and play in the drama are playing sports and taking the children to see sports competition and exercising. The game “rock paper scissors” is used to decide who must wash the dishes after the meal.

(17) Points of view about males

Men must have responsibility. Men tend to love women who look weak and pitiful because they look lovely. No one achieves success without obstacles, but men must be flexible.

(18) Points of view about females

Waltz dancing makes females look charming. Tianwei’s mother believes that the modern working woman might not good at cooking and doing household chores.

(19) Concept of the intervener

It does not mean that a married man who still finds another lover loves the new lover, but he has the pressure of a “middle-age crisis.” Normally, men are so playful and flirtatious but the types of expression vary from direct to indirect. Flirting is the way to escape from problems and being an intervener is a solution. Some men think that their daily life is so boring, so they would like to find something exciting. These women are poor because they think that it is real love and romantic feeling. The man himself does not know; he deceives himself. The dirty clothes can be washed, but the married life which the intervener makes dirty cannot be cleanly washed. In the world of love, the one that is not loved is an intervener. It does not matter who comes first.

(20) Debt of gratitude



When you live in an other's home, you must be hard-working, grateful, and patient.

#### (21) Other values

Music represents the listener's self. Wei-en loves sad and lonely melodies while it is full of exquisite.

#### 10) Ideology

##### Authoritarianism

Ruifan has more power than Anzhen while Anzhen is his wife. Anzhen can do everything for Ruifan. When they get divorced, it is like Anzhen's world is broken. She is very sad but then she can change herself. Good things start coming to her. She succeeds in her work and becomes popular. Ruifan regrets that he left Anzhen. He asks Anzhen to return but Anzhen refuses. During this time, Anzhen has more power than Ruifan. The wife dominates the husband expressing her power. She goes to the nightclub where her husband entertains customers. Furthermore, she usually goes to her husband's workplace and brings lunch boxes for her husband and his colleagues. She presents that she is Ruifan's wife in order to prevent Ruifan from receiving the attention of other women.

##### Feminism

Ailin is a working woman. She works as a Division Head. She is self-confident and independent. She is a candidate of Ruifan for Deputy General Manager. For Anzhen, after getting divorced from Ruifan, she goes to work. She is promoted to be a car showroom manager. However, the content reflects a patriarchal society in many aspects. Ruifan is the Division Head but Wei-en is an administration officer, which is a lower position. Ruifan creates conflict among the female characters; for example, Anzhen slaps her sister. Ruifan forces Anzhen to sign the divorce certificate while Anzhen is in the hospital. Ruifan is Anzhen's husband, but he also finds a new lover. In terms of work, a man who succeeds in work will support his family life while a woman who succeeds in work will be perceived as tough, even though the woman also needs to succeed in work.

Nevertheless, the story presents a man who is married but he still finds a new lover. It indicates that a woman is an object, and he does not care about her feelings. He can easily love and leaves her whenever he wants. However, social

norms do not allow polygamy. A second wife or mistress is perceived as an intervener and is unacceptable. Although Ruifan and Anzhen get divorced, Wei-en is perceived as an intervener. She cannot disclose her status.

Moreover, the new paradigm narrative also focuses on “narrative time.” The period of time in the narrative is not necessarily equal to the real period of time of the events. In the TV drama called “The Fierce Wife,” the narrator applies the law of selection to select the time structure for the narrative in the following patterns. 1) Scene: the period of time in the narrative is equal to the real period of time of the events. Most of the contents in the drama are narrated in this pattern. 2) Pause: the period of time of the events is zero because the time is stopped for clarification or explanation. For example, the period of time of the events is stopped and turned back. For example, Anzhen is reminded of her mother’s teaching her during her childhood that “life is sweet, and so is our future” and is turned back to the past when Ruifan was Ailin’s boyfriend. 3) Ellipsis: the period of time in the narrative is zero because the events are cut or skipped; for example, the event of Wei-en was Tianwei’s girlfriend when they studied overseas. 4) Summary: the period of time in the narrative is shorter than the real period of time of the events; for example, Tianwei has a backpack trip for 1 year but it is narrated only in one scene.

#### **4.1.2 Analysis of the Narrative Components of “Mia (Wife) 2018”**

##### **1) Plot**

The Thai TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018” began broadcasting the first episode on television on 28 May, 2018. The sequences of the narrative according to its plot are as follows.

##### **Exposition**

(1) The first scene is Aruna’s house. The drama introduces Aruna and her daily life to serve her husband and daughter to the viewers. Aruna is a housewife, and she wakes up early before her husband. Then, she cooks and wakes up her husband (camera has close-ups at breakfast, which is wontons, water, boiled eggs, and orange juice). She prepares clothes for her husband by choosing the shirt with a lucky color for the day. She believes in fortune but her husband does not. Then she wakes up her daughter. Her husband is named Thada. He likes spicy and salty food. Aruna

does not allow him to eat unhealthy food. Thada usually adds fish sauce to the wontons behind her back. She does not have breakfast, and drinks coffee only. After that, Aruna drives Thada to work and then goes to the temple to pray. Her wish is for her husband, not for herself. She wishes her husband success in his work and loves her only. While she prays for her wish at the temple, the camera switches rapidly between the images of God and Thada's face.

(2) The second scene is Thada's workplace. The drama introduces Munin to the viewers. She works in the position of Sales Department Head and competes with Thada's team. Munin and Thada are candidates for Sales Manager. Munin is Thada's ex-girlfriend but they broke up because Thada had a new lover. Munin knows Thada very well, for example, what kind of coffee Thada likes and more details about coffee. Thada likes coffee with sugar but without cream. When Munin looks at Thada, it looks like she still loves him. Munin is serious about work and she is still single. Thada and Munin stay close because they have to work together.

(3) Tharee and Chatchai are husband and wife. Tharee has been Aruna's friend since they were students. Tharee is Thada's sister. Tharee and Chatchai usually quarrel because Chatchai is so playful and flirtatious. He always makes Tharee get jealous easily, but he is never dishonest. Tharee gets angry easily and hates liars. She usually threatens Chatchai that she will ask him for a divorce. But she really does not intend to do that. She just warns Chatchai.

(4) In the airport scene, Kanya comes back from America. She has a quarrel with a husband and wife couple because she flirts with the wife's husband. This scene presents Kanya's habit of flirting. Kanya will live with Aruna for a while. Aruna's mother tells her that Kanya's father has always helped Aruna's father, so Aruna's family has a debt of gratitude to Kanya's family. Aruna should take care of Kanya. Kanya tells Aruna that her father (Kriangkrai) married a new woman, so Kanya becomes an outsider and has no need for her parents. This presents the background of Kanya—that she comes from an unhappy family in which the parents broke up.

(5) Aruna cheers up Thada during the sales promotion event. She meets Munin for the first time in the event. Thada introduces her to Munin. Aruna feels that

when she is standing aside Munin, her appearance is not as beautiful as that of Munin. Tharee tells her to pay more attention to her dress and make-up styles to improve her personality.

(6) Thada buys high-heeled shoes for Aruna to wear on the company's party day. Aruna is very glad and hugs Thada but on the other hand she feels that red is not suitable for her personality.

(7) Wasin meets Aruna for the first time at the car showroom where Tharee works. He misunderstands that Aruna works there as a sales representative.

(8) Kanya enters Aruna's and Thada's bedroom. While she is picking up Aruna's red high-heeled shoes to try, Aruna goes back to see Kanya in her bedroom and she is angry.

#### Rising Action

(1) Chatchai sees that Munin is having lunch with Thada. Munin and Thada are having lunch at the restaurant where they have been together before. Munin remembers that Thada likes roasted beef rice. Aruna calls Thada while he goes to the toilet, so Munin receives her call instead of Thada. Aruna starts to mistrust Munin.

(2) Aruna goes to clean Kanya's bedroom. She finds her broken mirror family photo in a bin and a perfume bottle. The smell of perfume is the same as the smell on Thada's clothes (camera has a close-up of the perfume bottle). Aruna smells the perfume on Thada's clothes again to make sure that it is the same smell.

(3) Kanya starts flirting with Thada and prevents him from going back to see Aruna. Thada lies to Aruna that he is at a meeting when he is staying with Kanya.

(4) Aruna smells Kanya's perfume. She remembers the perfume's smell on Thada's clothes. She is suspicious about the relations between Kanya and Thada.

(5) Thada is angry when he sees Kanya with her male colleagues. Suchat also tells him that he likes Kanya. Thada usually expresses a bad temper to Aruna.

(6) Aruna decides to work with Wasin. She feels that she can be independent from Thada.

(7) Aruna reads information from social media. Someone posts comments on husbands' infidelity. She also listens to Wasin's advice. He advises her

to get rid of her weak points and change her looks. Then, Aruna decides to change her looks.

(8) Chatchai suspects the relations of Thada and Kanya. He warns Thada to give up because Kanya is his wife's sister. Tharee also warns Aruna to nip it in the bud.

#### Climax

(1) Aruna talks openly with Thada. She tells him that she saw him hug Kanya in front of the house.

(2) Aruna tells Kanya to get out of her house.

(3) While Aruna is waiting for Thada to come back home, Kanya calls and tells her that Thada is staying with her. Then, she sends a photo of Thada lying on a bed. Aruna is very angry. She lies to her daughter that her father is very busy at this moment and he will not come back home.

(4) Aruna cries and complains with Tharee that she does everything for Thada but why he has never been satisfied? Tharee tells her that Thada never stops to satisfying his passion. His bad habit is not Aruna's fault but Aruna just trusts the wrong person.

(5) Wasin tells Aruna that Kanya has a mental disorder.

(6) Aruna tells Thada to go away from her house.

(7) Thada lives with Kanya but their life is not simple. Kanya cannot be a good wife as Aruna can. She cannot cook, prepare clothes or do laundry like Aruna can. Kanya is so jealous that Thada has annoyed her. They always have a quarrel, and after the quarrel, Kanya goes out to drink and comes back home drunk. Whenever Thada visits Aruna and his daughter, Kanya is jealous and tries to get attention from Thada by making up a story. For example, she makes a video clip while she is cutting her wrist to make Thada misunderstand that she will commit suicide. The other case is she intentionally falls down from the motorcycle to make herself hurt. She hopes that Thada will hurriedly visit her at the hospital.

(8) After breaking up with Thada, Aruna has financial problems. So, she calls Wasin and asks him for a job.

(9) Thada always goes to work late. He does not have perfect looks as usual. His work is smooth but he must keep his relations with Kanya in secret.



### Resolution

(1) Wasin sends a message through LINE to cheer up Aruna. When Aruna reads the message, she feels better and decides not to give up. She changes her looks by going to exercise at the fitness center, buys new clothes, and changes her hair style. She studies car information seriously to prepare for a new job. Wasin would like her to be “Super Sale” for his “Super Car.” Aruna can learn very well and listen to the good advice of Wasin. Everything turns to be better whether Aruna’s new looks, her job, or relations with Wasin.

(2) Aruna and Thada separate. They agree that although they will live separately, they still will perform the parents’ roles.

### New complications

(1) Kanya goes to see Aruna’s mother. Kanya tells her that she is pregnant and Aruna’s mother should tell her to get divorced from Thada. Aruna’s mother is very surprised.

(2) Kanya tells Thada that she is not pregnant but she needs to tell a lie because she wants Aruna to get divorced from Thada. Kanya requests a house from Thada but Thada refuses. He will give his house to Aruna and his daughter only. He insists that Kanya that not telling a lie again.

(3) Aruna and Thada have a quarrel about their daughter. Thada tells Aruna that Aruna cannot prevent him from seeing his daughter. Actually, the problem is that Aruna does not prevent Thada but Kanya does. Kanya blames Aruna that she is using her daughter as an excuse to see Thada when he comes to see his daughter. Aruna warns Thada to remind Kanya not to go beyond her roles.

(4) After her parents get divorced, Nuda changes very much. Her behavior becomes more aggressive. She likes to bully her friends at school because she is jealous of them. She is angry with them when they show that their fathers buy something for them because Nuda does not live with her father anymore and her mother is so busy that she does not spare time to take care of her.

### Resolution

(1) Aruna and Thada have an appointment at the District Office to sign a Certificate of Divorce. After that, they walk separately in front of the District Office. While walking, they remember the past when they lived together.

(2) Munin invites Aruna to be the moderator of her online magazine, where she is an editor. Aruna is not sure that she can do it, so she refuses Munin with the reason that she is afraid of not having time to take care of her daughter because she and Thada got divorced. Munin feels sorry about Aruna and tells her that she is glad to see Aruna stronger. A single mum has to work more to earn a living. Munin gives Aruna some time to think about it. Finally, Aruna agrees to be the moderator for Munin.

(3) Suchat asks Thada to quit his job because his behavior is not suitable. The Company Board of Directors is concerned that the executive management officer not only be a competent person but also a good one, especially in terms of family. After quitting his job, Thada cannot find a new job because his behavior is unacceptable for any employers. Kanya and Thada have a quarrel about financial problems, and then they have to move to a new house to reduce the rental cost.

(4) After working for Munin, Aruna becomes very popular and has many fan clubs. This benefits her full-time job, and her sales increase.

(5) Aruna consults Doctor Sasimon (Wasin's mother) about Nuda's problem. Doctor Sasimon advises her that, in general, from children's perspectives, their homes consist of parents. Wherever their parents are, that place is their home. Aruna follows her advice and calls Thada to discuss this matter. Thada tells Aruna that he will take care of his daughter while Aruna goes to work because now he is unemployed. He promises that he will not do anything beyond his roles.

(6) Thada will go to find a job in the upcountry areas because he would like to live separately from Kanya for a while. He asks Aruna to see Nuda on the weekends. Aruna agrees because Thada is still Nuda's father. Although they got divorced, Nuda did not. They cannot give up their parents' roles and should do their best.

(7) Kanya goes to see Nuda at school and takes her out. She would like to get revenge on Thada because he does not come back to see her and threatens to break up with her. She would like Thada to feel like her when she is waiting for and loses a loved one. Aruna and Thada look for Nuda until the evening. When they find Nuda, Aruna is very angry and slaps Kanya. She warns Kanya that if Kanya does not

give up, she will call the police. Wasin suggests Thada to stay with Aruna to protect her, and then he shows the scar hurt by Kanya to Thada. Thada must not be submissive to her. Finally, Thada asks Kanya to break up and goes to work in Rayong Province.

#### Ending

(1) Thada goes to stay with Aruna for one night and will go to Rayong Province in the morning. Thada asks Aruna if he will bring the family photo with him.

#### Emerging complications

(1) Thada works at the new company in Bankhai District in Rayong Province. He works smoothly because he has a lot of experiences and high competency. The Chinese customers like him, so the company owner invites him to work in China. Thada thinks about it but has not yet made a decision. Kanya knows where Thada works, so she applies for a job at the same company where Thada works.

(2) Aruna is confused about whether she should love Wasin or not. She is concerned about Nuda and her age. She thinks that she should not be at risk because now her life is smooth. She just feels good when she stays with Wasin.

(3) Thada comes to see Aruna at her workplace. He consults Aruna about Kanya, who follows him to the new company. He thinks he will go to work in China to escape her.

(4) Thada meets Wasin. He tells Wasin that Kanya has followed him to the new company, so he will go to work in China to escape her. He asks Wasin to help him take care of Aruna and his daughter.

(5) Wasin comes to see Aruna late at night. He asks Aruna for love and tells her that whether Aruna accepts or refuses, he will be Aruna's friend forever. Then Wasin goes to hang out alone and is reminded of the past events of him and Aruna.

#### Resolution

(1) Wasin asks Aruna to take care of his car showroom until he comes back. He will travel to somewhere no one knows.

(2) Thada writes a letter to Aruna on the day he goes to China. He returns the house keys to Aruna and tells her to take care of herself because he may be

very busy for the first few weeks in China and cannot come to visit Aruna and Nuda. He tells Aruna to be open-minded and be happy as she should be. Do not stick to the unpleasant experiences he gave her. On the way to the airport, Kanya runs to follow Thada and calls him, but Thada does not look at her.

(3) Wasin uploads his photos and writes captions every day. Aruna also looks at his photos and reads his captions every day and waits for the new photos. If he does not upload the new ones, Arna would feel disappointed. Aruna takes care of Wasin's works. She sits in his office and looks at the badge with the quote "You'll never walk alone." Aruna performs a working woman's roles and housewife perfectly. During her leisure time, she sees Wasin's photos.

#### Ending

(1) After Thada goes to work in China, Kanya lives alone. She always flirts with other men. The wife of the foreigner whom Kanya flirts with hires some gangsters to hurt Kanya and warns Kanya not to get involved with her husband anymore. Kanya is injured and is admitted to the hospital. Aruna goes to visit Kanya. When she sees Kanya at the hospital, she sympathizes her. Aruna recalls the past events since Kanya has moved to her house until she slapped her when Kanya kidnapped Nuda. Kanya does not recover. While she is sleeping, Aruna tells her to take good care of herself and she leaves. Aruna is responsible for all of Kanya's medical expenses.

(2) Kanya recovers. The nurse tells her not to worry about the medical expenses because Aruna has already paid. Kanya is very glad to know that Aruna has visited her. She cries and recalls the scene in which Aruna cooked wontons for her and helped her.

(3) Kanya wears slippers walking out of the hospital alone. She wears the same dress as she wore on the day she came to the hospital. She calls her father to ask for money to travel back home but her father does not talk to her. She goes to sell second-hand clothes and perfume at the market to earn some money.

(4) Kanya peeps at Aruna and Nuda outside Aruna's house. She smiles and recalls that Aruna visited her at the hospital and paid all of her medical expenses. She whispered to herself, "Sister, I have to go now, see you later." Then, she gets a taxi and goes to the airport to travel back to New York.

(5) Tharee gives birth. She has a son. She named him “ManU.” Aruna records a video and sends it to Thada. Thada is very pleased to get a grandson. He looks at a family photo on his desk.

(6) Thada comes back from China and goes to see Aruna at her workplace. They go out to have lunch together. Thada tells her that his work is smooth and Thada teases her that she is very popular now. Aruna tells him that Munin plans to produce a new program. Thada is so surprised that Aruna and Munin have become close friends. Thada tells Aruna that he still loves her.

(7) Munin and Aruna will organize a big event. The theme of the event is “Once in a lifetime.” Aruna will share her experiences with the audience in the event and have a live broadcast. The audience can be engaged in this event by sending their short video clips no longer than 2 minutes. The video clips’ contents must be related to the event theme. Then, Munin and Aruna will choose the best ones and edit them to be viral clips. The objective is to inspire the viewers.

(8) Wasin is in Florence, Italy. He uploads video clips and photos with captions for Aruna every day. Later, Wasin has an accident and is in the hospital. Aruna worries why Wasin does not reply to her.

(9) In the event organized by Aruna and Munin, Wasin comes back. Aruna, Thada, and Wasin share their stories on the theme “Once in a lifetime” with the public. After the event is over, although Aruna hesitates, she decides to love Wasin.

## 2) Theme

The main theme of the drama is love. Love presented in the drama is so complicated. The feelings of the characters are implicit and present love in many forms. The love of husband and wife is explicit while the jealous love of the mistress is implicit. Friendship, which is transformed to love, is implicit and then explicit. The husband himself has conflict in his mind about what kind of love he should choose, what kind of love would make him really happy. Furthermore, there are the other couples’ loves of the supporting characters. The couple of Tharee and Chatchai always have quarrels because Tharee never trusts Chatchai. Actually, Chatchai does not love anyone except Tharee. Kanya’s parents do not appear in the drama scene, but the viewers can perceive their existence through Kanya’s story. She says that her



parents are divorced and left her. The love of this couple represents a disappointed life. The main theme which the producer would like to emphasize is the definition of love and the real love seeking of each character.

The sub-theme of the drama is morality. The drama script suggests that immoral actions will bring about suffering. For example, Thada and Kanya are dishonest with Aruna. Finally, their lives are not happy. The drama script presents the worth of doing good deeds like Aruna. She is a good wife and mother, although in the end she does not have a perfect family as at the beginning, but her life is better than in the past. She has good friends who always support her when she is unhappy. Aruna is an optimistic person. Wasin sees the good points in her so he falls in love with her. On the other hand, Kanya gets a negative effect from people in the society because she betrays Aruna.

### 3) Conflicts

#### Conflict between husband and wife

(1) Thada and Aruna have serious conflicts because of Kanya, so they are divorced.

(2) Chatchai and Tharee always quarrel because Tharee is angry with him because of his flirting. The situation gets worse that Tharee threatens him she will be divorced. But finally they are not divorced because they love each other. Tharee is always jealous of Chatchai because she loves him.

#### Conflicts within the character's mind

Aruna is confused. She is not sure whether she can love Wasin or not. She worries about Nuda's feeling. She is older than Wasin and is afraid of risk if she starts a new love with Wasin. She just feels good when she stays with Wasin but she is not sure it is love. She is still concerned about Thada but cannot love him as before.

#### Conflicts between the characters and surroundings

(1) In everyone's point of view, Thada is a perfect guy. It is impossible for him to do bad things, but he has conflicts with this. He has the burden to disguise as everyone's expectation. He needs freedom to do anything he wants. His solution is having relations with Kanya because of the impulse, but then he feels guilty for what he did.

(2) According to social norms, people perceive that a second wife or mistress is a bad woman who destroys the family of others and devalues herself. Kanya knows that she intervenes in her sister's family and makes her sad, but she cannot deter herself. She loves her brother-in-law and would like to own him. She needs love because she never received it from her parents. Kanya is patient with being insulted by the people surrounding her. She can do anything for Thada.

In summary, "Mia (Wife) 2018" constructs meanings mostly through conflict between the husband and wife and through some conflicts within the individual character's mind. The solution to the conflict between the husband (Thada) and wife (Aruna) is divorce. In terms of the conflicts within the character's mind, each leading character has conflicts within his/her own mind. Thada is confused about whether he still loves Aruna or loves Kanya. Then he is sad that he has made the wrong decision. Aruna is confused about whether she still loves Thada or not. Does she love Wasin or not, or is she just happy when staying with Wasin? Is it love? She is not ready to begin a new love with anyone. If she decides to love Wasin, she is also concerned about how Nuda feels. Kanya is confused about whether she loves Thada or just wants to own him because she is jealous of her sister. She is not as happy as she expected while living with him. Wasin is also confused about the extent to which he can disclose his real feeling to Aruna. Then he can find out the reason that he loves Aruna but does not know when this feeling occurs. What will he do if Aruna returns to Thada? Finally, all conflicts can be solved.

#### 4) Characters

##### Aruna



Figure 4.9 Aruna

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Aruna is a beautiful and gentle woman who has simple life. She is a good wife and mother. Aruna is a housewife, simply-dressed with soft-tone color clothes. She wears her hair in a bun and does not put on makeup. Every day she drives her husband to the workplace and encourages him to work. Her catch phrase is “fighting.” She is optimistic. She is good at cooking. Her signature menu is wonton. She always brings lunch to her husband and his colleagues. She believes that when she wishes something, she will pray. When she prays, she always makes a wish for her husband rather than herself. She is a flat character, which means she only has a good side. Her dream is her husband’s success in work and that her daughter be healthy because she is always sick. She is always concerned about her family and perceives that she is an ordinary housewife. When she and Thada become divorced, the audience can see her on the other side. She is strong and never gives up. She believes “Don’t be afraid of change” and “Whatever already has happened, it is always good.” Sometimes it is so difficult, but she believes that we have enough power to deal with things; just never give up.

Thada



Figure 4.10 Thada

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Thada is Aruna's husband. His image is good. He has high competency and is successful in his work. He works as a Head of the Sales Team as Munin. Their teams compete in sales. He and Munin are candidates for Sales Manager. He loves his family and has a very good wife as Aruna. He and Aruna have one daughter named Nuda. He is handsome, so he is attractive to many ladies although he is not single. He is a role model of a husband who has never been unfaithful. His image is changed to be negative. He is dishonest with his wife. He has an influence on all of the female characters' (Aruna, Kanya, Munin) behaviors. He is a round character, which means that he has both good and bad sides. He is good at the beginning of the story but gradually changes to have negative behavior.

## Kanya

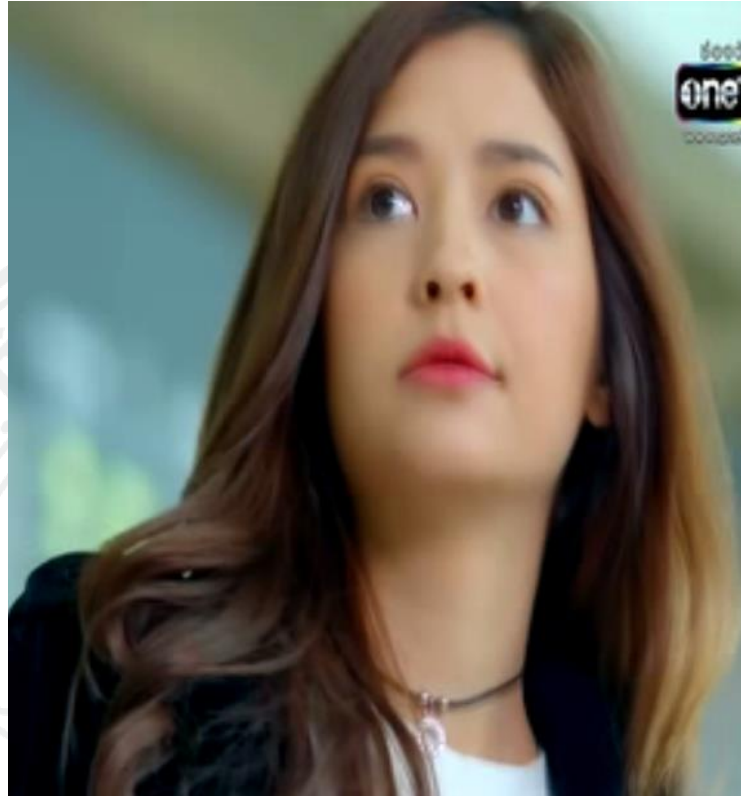


Figure 4.11 Kanya

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Kanya is Aruna's cousin. During childhood, Aruna has ever lived with Kanya's family before Kanya and his father moved to New York. She grew up overseas, so she is extroverted and assertive. For casual wear, she likes to wear a T-shirt and jeans but when she goes to work, she dresses in a working woman's style. She is beautiful, so she is attractive to many male colleagues in her office. Her parents are divorced, so she has to come back to Thailand and will live with Aruna temporarily until she gets a job. She is aggressive and jealous. She cannot control herself when she gets angry. She needs love because she never got it from her parents. She believes that she will get what she wants and will fight until she gets it. She is a round character, turning from a bad to a good character. At the end of the story, she



feels guilty about what she has done. She also has a good side but the drama mostly presents her bad side.

Wasin

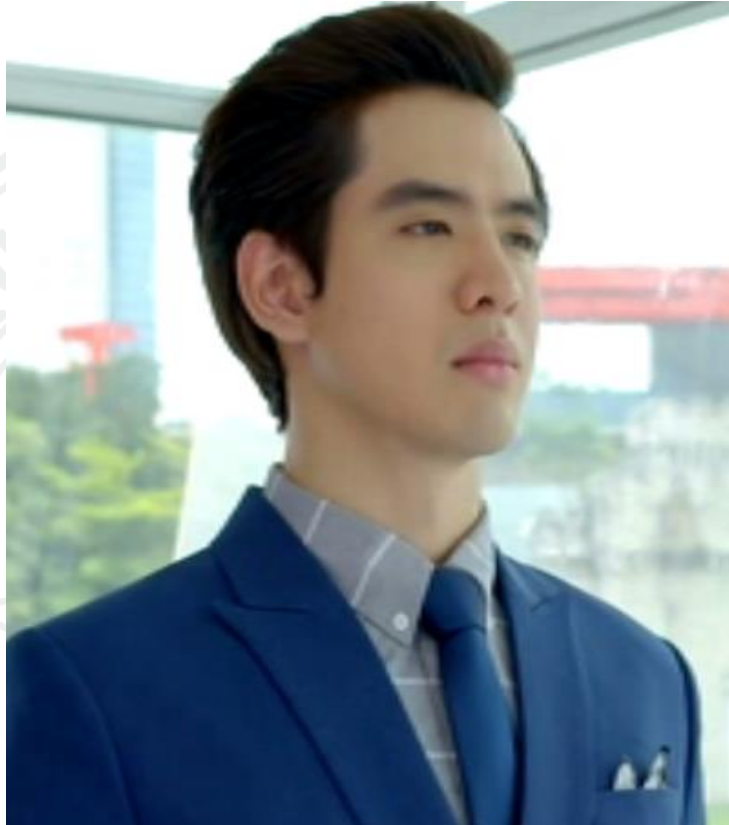


Figure 4.12 Wasin

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

He is the owner of the car showroom where Aruna and Tharee work as sales representatives. His nickname is “young millionaire.” He loves and adores his mother. He always talks to his mother and consults her. He believes that it is a commitment to do what is said. Everything must have its deadline. If we can do what we say and are strict about the deadline, we will get respect from others. Wasin is self-centered and indulgent. He is a perfectionist. He falls in love with Aruna. After he knows Aruna, he changes his habit from self-indulgence to being more sympathetic with other people. He has learned from Aruna that a perfect thing is not necessarily 100% perfect, but as

perfect as it should be is enough. He is a round character, which means he has both good and bad sides.

Tharee

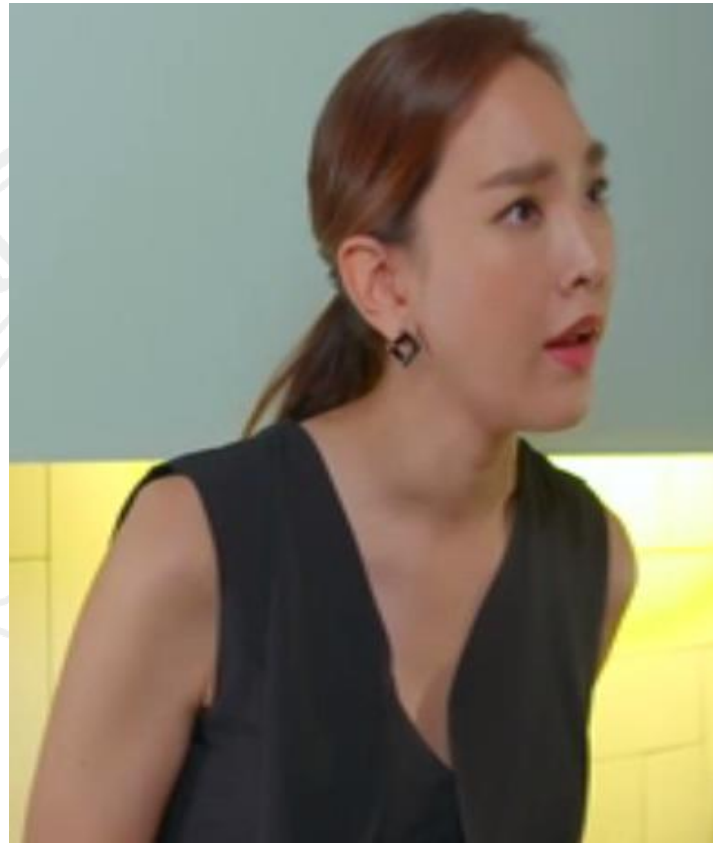


Figure 4.13 Tharee

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Tharee is Thada's sister. She has been a close friend of Aruna since she was a student. She dresses in a modern working woman's style. She works as a car sales representative. She does not like Kanya flirting with Thada. She gets jealous easily because her husband (Chatchai) is very flirtatious. She is a good consultant for Aruna, especially regarding husband-related matters. She always warns Aruna to beware of a husband's infidelity and Aruna follows her advice. She is a friend who shares is a friend who cares of Aruna. She is very frank, loves shouting, and easily gets angry but she is kind. She is a flat character, which means she only has a good side.

Chatchai



Figure 4.14 Chatchai

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Chatchai is Tharee's husband, so he is Thada's brother-in-law. His roles are friend and brother of Thada, so he can be a good consultant for Thada. He works at the same company as Thada but his position is lower than that of Thada. He is a team member of Munin. He is so playful and flirtatious. He always makes Tharee gets jealous easily, but he is never dishonest. He loves his wife very much. He is a flat character, which means he only has a good side.

## Munin



Figure 4.15 Munin

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Munin works as the Head of the Sales Team. She is a competitor of Thada. She is an ex-girlfriend of Thada and still loves him until now. She has a secret affair with Suchat, the company executive. Munin works hard and is single. She is usually an appreciated person who has good work performance. She is Thada's candidate for Sales Manager. She is a round character. She loves a challenge, fighting, and never gives up, especially in work. She wants to return to love Thada but if she knows that Thada is married, she gives up. Her relations with Thada focus on work only.

Suchat



Figure 4.16 Suchat

Source: ONE 31 Channel (2018)

Suchat is a company executive. He has a secret affair with Munin. All of his colleagues perceive that Munin is promoted because she has an affair with him. He is handsome. He is so playful and flirtatious, like a playboy. He does not love anyone, even Munin. He is a round character. His bad side is playful and flirtatious but his good side is that he has experience and he usually teaches Thada about family life. He cheers up Aruna to fight and overcome the obstacles in her life. He cares about his subordinates, including their families.

#### 5) Setting

The settings and camera angles are very important in the drama “Mia (Wife) 2018,” especially the camera angles. Almost all of the events in the drama take place



in the downtown of Bangkok, the capital of Thailand. There are a few settings in other provinces and foreign countries: settings in Chiang Mai and Phuket where Thada and Munin go to meet customers; settings in China where Thada goes to work and in Italy where Wasin is on travel. The main setting is Aruna's and Thada's house. The minor setting is Thada's workplace. After Thada quits his job, the minor setting is the car showroom where Aruna works. These settings convey the meaning of family and the importance of work. Before Aruna gets divorced, she plays the roles of mother and wife, serving her family within the house, for example cooking and doing household chores and extends her roles to outside, such as driving for her husband and daughter and taking lunch (wontons) to her husband and also his colleagues at the workplace.

Work is also important, especially for Thada, who is a leader of the family and Munin, who is single and is dedicated to work. Thada plays the roles of father and the head, supervising his subordinates. The setting at Thada's workplace also communicates the relations between Thada and Kanya, which are different from what Aruna sees at her house and the relations between Suchat and Munin. The setting in the car showroom shows that Aruna also has competency to work besides staying at home as a housewife.

Apart from the above settings, there are many other settings in the drama, for example, the temple where Aruna always goes to pray for her wish, Nuda's school where the activities on Father's Day are organized and Nuda has an accident, the playground near Aruna's house where Thada and Kanya always have a secret date before going back home to see Aruna, the hospital where Nuda, Wasin, and Kanya are admitted because of an accident, sickness, and injury respectively. Thada and Chatchai usually go to the riverside to talk and discuss secret issues of his relationship with Kanya. Thada and Kanya also usually talk to each other there because they do not want Aruna to know. Wasin tells Aruna that the river can make us feel good and lets her try to inhale, exhale, and shout at the river to reduce stress.

Besides the drama setting, the drama also sets real places as the setting and allows the people surrounding at that moment to participate. The producer has public relations and announces the schedule to make this scene in advance. The public square in front of Siam Paragon is used as the setting for organizing the events of Aruna and Munin in the drama.

Apart from the place setting, social media are a component in the setting. In the drama “Mia (Wife) 2018,” the social media play an important role. Almost every character uses social media in his/her daily life. They use Google, LINE, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and the selfie function in smartphones. The main role of the social media can be seen in the video clips of Aruna. She demonstrates cooking wontons, “Khanom Look Chup” (fruit shaped mung beans), and orange cake. At the end of each clip, she provides some tips for the viewers. Most of the tips are inspirational. She tells the viewers to be strong, to never give up, and to keep going to overcome obstacles in life. The TV programs hosted by Aruna and directed by Munin are broadcasted through social media with 98K views. Aruna is very popular.

#### Camera Angle

In the drama “Mia (Wife) 2018,” camera angles play an important role. Camera close-ups and rapid repeated shooting communicates strong emotion and excitement, especially in the scene where Thada and Kanya stay close, touch, and kiss and some scenes when the characters express verbal and physical violence.

#### Songs

Apart from the theme song, the drama “Mia (Wife) 2018” uses popular songs in the scenes.

#### 6) Dialogues

In the drama “Mia (Wife) 2018” there is a chee-up phrase, “fighting,” in the dialogues of almost all of the characters. For example, Aruna tells Thada when he will go to an evaluation meeting; Kanya and Thada speak to each other on the day that Kanya goes to a job interview; Suchat cheers up Aruna about her family problem; Wasin’s mother cheers him up about his love with Aruna; and Munin cheers up Wasin to be patient if he wants to be Aruna’s boyfriend because Aruna is very popular and she has many fanclubs.

##### (1) Dialogues between Thada and Aruna

Thada and Aruna talk politely to each other. They never use rude words either before or behind their daughter. Both of them always call each other “Darling.” This means that they love each other very much.

### (2) Dialogues between Tharee and Chatchai

Chatchai and Tharee talk to each other as new lovers. When Tharee is in a good mood, she talks to Chatchai sweetly but she shouts at Chatchai because she does not like his flirtatious behavior. She does not allow him to come back home late.

### (3) Dialogues between Aruna and Wasin

During working hours, Aruna calls Wasin “boss.” Wasin’s tone of voice is also snobbish because he is her boss. But after working hours, Aruna and Wasin are friends. The dialogues between them are in a friendly tone. Aruna consults Wasin and Wasin gives her advice.

Aruna presents a car to Wasin. She tells him that this car is an old model but not outdated. It is an old model but not an old thing. If we take good care of it, we can use it for a long time.

Aruna tells Wasin that after she gets married, her world will change to be her husband’s world. Then, when she has a daughter, her world will become her daughter’s world. Besides the wife and mother roles, she cannot perform other roles anymore.

Wasin writes captions comparing his scar with sufferings in the real life. He says that some scars can be deleted but scars in the heart cannot.

### (4) Dialogues between Wasin and his mother

Wasin loves his mother very much. He always consults her. His mother’s roles are both as mother and friend. The dialogues between Wasin and his mother have a friendly and intimate tone.

### (5) Dialogues between Munin and Kanya

The dialogues between Munin and Kanya are in a sarcastic tone. Apart from verbal, they also use physical violence.

The dialogues in the drama are full of sarcastic words, similes, and metaphors. The following are some examples of these dialogues.

### (6) Dialogues between Thada and Kanya

Kanya suggests Thada to order some foods which are different from the foods cooked by Aruna. It means that Thada should be bored with Aruna’s food (compared with Aruna herself) and tries some new ones (compared with Kanya).

Thada leaves Aruna and lives with Kanya in a small new house. Thada tells Kanya that he would like this house to be their. Kanya thinks that “small house” is compared with a small wife; it looks as though he is warning her to be aware of her status.

(7) Dialogues between Aruna and Kanya

Aruna warns Kanya that she uses perfume too much and the smell is too strong. Kanya does not follow Aruna’s warning but offers Aruna to use her perfume. Aruna tells Kanya that something can be shared with others but personal belongings cannot be shared (she compares Thada with her personal belongings and does not allow Kanya to use hers).

Aruna warns Kanya to dress properly, not too sexy. Kanya tells her that she cannot behave like Aruna, who has a humdrum life, dull like the taste of Aruna’s wontons.

(8) Dialogues between Tharee and Aruna

Tharee does not agree with Aruna allowing Kanya to live with Aruna. She does not trust Kanya. She is afraid that Kanya flirts with Thada. The wife’s sister having an affair with the husband is a classical case. Aruna should be careful.

Aruna tells Tharee that she must cook wontons for Nuda every day because Nuda loves them. She does not care if others will be bored with her wontons (Aruna compares wontons with herself and she knows that Thada is bored with her).

Tharee warns Aruna to nip in the bud the affair between Thada and Kanya.

(9) Dialogues between Aruna and Nuda

Aruna always cooks wontons for Nuda and Thada. Nuda tells Thada that he must not be bored with them and change to eat other kinds of food. Aruna tells Nuda that they are good for one’s health but they do not have seasonings. Thada eats them regularly and he might be bored but he knows what he should eat (Aruna compares wontons with herself and Thada is bored with her and turns to Kanya. However, Thada should know which one he should choose).

(10) Dialogues between Munin and Suchat

Munin asks Suchat whether he ever loves someone or not. Suchat tells her that love does not exist in the long-term and it brings trouble. He feels comfortable using the word “buddy” instead of “lover.”

Suchat tells Munin that some women look simple and patient, but they can do something unpredictable and dangerous (Suchat mentions Aruna).

(11) Dialogues between Wasin and Kanya

Wasin offers whisky to Thada. Thada refuses but Kanya says that it does not matter if one drinks whisky from the same bottle of others if they do not want to drink it anymore (Kanya compares whisky with Thada and she does not mind drinking it after Aruna).

(12) Dialogues between Thada and Suchat

Thada discusses clothing design with Suchat. Suchat tells him to change his design to look more sexy because the simple and elegant style does not match the current trend (he implies that the simple style of a wife like Aruna might not work for Thada like the sexy style of Kanya).

Thada asks Suchat if he will change his car. Suchat tells him that he is bored with the old one likes Thada, but he cannot say exactly; if he finds a good one, he will use it forever (Suchat compares cars with women).

(13) Dialogues between Thada and Wasin

Thada invites Wasin to watch a football match on television at his house. Thada and Wasin cheer different teams. Likes Aruna, Thada still loves Aruna and keeps Wasin from her but Wasin does not give up trying to win her heart.

7) Points of view

The story is narrated by the leading character, Aruna. From the first scene, the drama presents Aruna’s and Thada’s family. It shows the details of Aruna’s daily life. Then, the story continues and relates to Aruna. Aruna gets involved with every character. This means that the whole story is narrated through her points of view.

8) Special symbols

(1) Wontons. Aruna’s mother teaches her to cook wontons. The recipe is descended from her grandmother. Wontons are compared with family. All of the family members must be in harmony and maintain strong relations, like wontons,



which are wrapped firmly and never are separated even if they are boiled. The signature of Aruna is wonton soup. Nuda loves to eat her mother's wonton soup every day. Aruna usually brings wonton soup to Thada's colleagues. When Wasin is in the hospital, Aruna cooks wonton soup for him. It means that the relations between Aruna and Wasin are developed because normally Aruna cooks wontons for her family members or close friends only. Furthermore, Wasin says that wontons are a symbol of change, change from old to new, or a change in season. Chinese people eat wontons to celebrate New Year's (connection with Chinese culture).

(2) Red high-heeled shoes. Thada buys them for Aruna, but Kanya usually wears them without Aruna's permission. This means that sisters can share belongings and the husband is not an exception. Aruna wears them on the day she has a job interview. This means that during an important event, Aruna needs Thada to be with her.

(3) Red represents passion. This is connected with Kanya, who has high passion. Besides the red high-heeled shoes, Kanya also uses red lipstick which is opposite from Aruna, who has a light-color tone for makeup or does not put any makeup on at all. Munin tells Aruna that her red high-heeled shoes are beautiful but Aruna tells her that red does not match her personality. Munin tells her that maybe Thada would like his wife to look colorful and red expresses high passion.

(4) Red lipstick. Kanya cannot control herself when she gets angry; she usually expresses anger by throwing things and rubs the red lipstick on a mirror. Kanya teaches Nuda about makeup and tells her that a certain makeup style is attractive to men.

(5) "Khanom Look Chup" (fruit-shaped mung beans). Aruna's mother compares good deeds with "Khanom Look Chup." Delicious "Khanom Look Chup" should have both a good appearance and taste. Good deeds are the same. It should be presented in a good package, so it can be seen easily.

(6) Wedding ring. When Aruna knows that Thada is unfaithful, the camera has a close-up of the wedding ring on her finger. It means that their married life might change. Then, Aruna and Thada make an appointment at the District Office to sign the divorce certificate. While getting dressed, both Aruna and Thada pick up the wedding ring, look at it and put it on her finger. After Thada goes to work in

China, when Aruna washes her hands, she puts the wedding ring beside the sink (the camera has a close-up of her finger without the wedding ring). The wedding ring, which can be worn and taken off occasionally, means that the married life of Thada and Aruna has not completely ended but they cannot return to being husband and wife as before. Thada and Aruna have father and mother roles to play. On Thada's side, his life with Kanya is not smooth. He looks at the wedding ring on his finger and remembers the husband-wife relations between him and Aruna and that Aruna treats him perfectly.

(7) Rabbit dolls. Thada buys a small one for Nuda but Wasin buys a big one. The small rabbit doll represents Thada and the big one represents Wasin.

(8) Family photos of Aruna and Thada in their bedroom, on the smartphone wallpaper, and on Thada's working desk. The camera does a close-up of the family photos in the following events. When Thada is enchanted by Kanya, the camera focuses on the family photos to communicate that the warm and happy family will change. When Thada stays with Aruna for one night before he goes to the upcountry area, Thada notices that the family photo in the bedroom has disappeared. He asks Aruna to give it to him so he can take it with him to the upcountry area. This means that although Aruna and Thada cannot live together as a family, family is still important for Thada. Wherever he goes, he will bring his family with him. Tharee has a child and Aruna records a video clip sent to Thada. Thada is very glad and looks at his family photo on the desk. He remembers the warm and happy family of him and Aruna.

(9) The badge written "You'll never walk alone" in Wasin's office; this badge reminds Aruna that Wasin will never let her walk alone—he will be with her.

#### 9) Values

##### (1) The belief in superstition and fortune

Aruna prepares shirts with a lucky color of the day for her husband. The belief of praying for one's wish and preparing offerings. The offerings should be 7 kinds of fruits with 7 colors put in rows from light colors to dark ones. To make a wish comes true, it is necessary to be concentrated and sit in the front row. Aruna always prays for Thada. She wishes Thada success in his work and loves her only. The belief in a curse; a curse can be done like praying but do not eat the offerings or

throw them away. Husband and mistress will hate each other. Breaking a glass or mirror is a bad luck for Thai people. While Thada and Kanya kiss in the park, Aruna is at home and breaks a glass covering the photo frame.

(2) The belief in this world, the next world, the law of karma, and other beliefs related to Buddhism

Aruna's mother teaches her that happiness or suffering is defined by our mind. The law of karma is true. Thada knows that he does many things wrong with Aruna and he does not deserve forgiveness from Aruna. He should be responsible for what he does.

(3) The sexual value of being self-contained to preserve the virginity of Thai women

At present, the sexual value of being self-contained to preserve the virginity of Thai women is changed in a negative way. Women flirt Thada are seen in the drama. They know that Thada is not single but they do not care.

(4) Organization culture

Building teamwork to be like a family. When considering staff to be promoted, the Board of Directors of the company where Thada works takes the family status of the staff into consideration. They perceive that staff at a high ranking must have a good family. This affects the organization's image.

(5) Married life

Husband and wife should respect each other. Aruna warns Tharee that to maintain a married life smoothly, do not let your emotions overwhelm reason. Tharee must be patient and not challenge Chatchai to get divorced. The word "divorce" is used only once, and is not used regularly because of its strong emotion. Husband and wife should be honest with each other. Aruna's mother teaches her that to maintain a married life smoothly, she must be patient. Aruna says that when husband and wife get divorced, it does not mean they must quarrel before the daughter. They can be good friend and parents. Getting divorced does not mean failure in one's whole life; it means failure in married life but it must be continued.

#### (6) Debt of gratitude

During her childhood, Aruna and her family lived with Kanya's family before Kanya and her father moved to New York. Now Aruna should allow Kanya to live with her.

#### (7) Doing the same as most people do

In the dialogues of the drama "Mia (Wife) 2018," there are some phrases commonly found, such as "Anyone can do it" and "Following social practice." This means that you can do something because most people do it. But actually it does not mean that it is good or right. The following are some examples of doing the same as most people do. Tharee suggests that Aruna go to the company party with Thada to present the social and family status to the public. Munin suggests that Aruna can bring Nuda to work with her because most of the single mothers are working and taking care of their children at the same time. Tharee agrees with this and suggests that Aruna take good care of Nuda to prevent her from having problems.

#### (8) Other values

The car can represent its owner's characteristics. Humans are so complicated; their physical appearance might be very different from what is inside them. The new generation does not mean young in age but young in lifestyle. Some elder persons have modern lifestyles. For example, they love travelling, studying photography, or some single mothers take their children around the world. New ideas are good, but we should not overlook the old foundation. Suitable is better than perfect. Most people think that doing things should be perfect but they overlook the suitability and comfortability.

### 10) Ideology

#### (1) Authoritarianism

The power of the leading character, who is the husband, has an impact on the female characters, both his wife and daughter, even Kanya, who is an intervenor. If Thada chooses Kanya, he will make Nuda suffer. In the meantime, the power of the husband is reduced because the policy of the company where Thada works takes the family status of the staff into consideration when the staff will get promoted. The family background of the staff must not destroy the company's image.

For this reason, the husband cannot do anything he wants. Moreover, if the wife and the mistress do not compete for the husband, his power is also reduced.

## (2) Patriarchy

In Munin's point of view, men win in all circumstances. If men succeed in work but are still single, people will perceive that they are hard working. Men who both succeed in work and family life will be praised by people in society. On the other hand, women who are hard working will be perceived as old maids.

## (3) Feminism

Nuda agrees with her mother when Aruna wants to go to work because all of her friends' mothers go to work. Munin has an attitude that she will not be controlled by men's power, especially in terms of work. Women can present their high competency without having an affair with any men. Therefore, Munin does not associate with men seriously. This is according to her dialogue with Kanya, which states the following: "I compete with him for the work position, not for him. I come here to work, not to look for a husband. Thada should be careful; if he fails, I can get his position more easily."

Moreover, the new paradigm narrative also focuses on "narrative time." The period of time in the narrative is not necessarily equal to the real period of time of the events. In the TV drama "Wife (Mia) 2018," the narrator applies the law of selection to select the time structure for the narrative in the following patterns. 1) Scene: the period of time in the narrative is equal to the real period of time of the events. Most of contents in the drama are narrated in this pattern. 2) Pause: the period of time of the events is zero because the time is stopped for clarification or explanation. For example, the camera rapidly shoots at Thada's and Munin's faces alternatively when the two characters stay close and stare at each other. Then, the time is paused and turns back to when Thada was Munin's boyfriend. Then, Munin found that Thada had a new lover. This is why Munin broke up with Thada. 3) Ellipsis: the period of time in the narrative is zero because the events are cut or skipped; for example, the event of Kanya was Wasin's girlfriend when they studied overseas. 4) Stretch: the period of time in the narrative is longer than the real period of time of the events. For example, when Thada and Kanya kiss, the camera shoots at them repeatedly to stretch the period of time in the narrative to be longer than the real period of time of the event.



5) Summary: the period of time in the narrative is shorter than the real period of time of the events, for example, using CG in the scene written “7 months later” to shorten the period of time in the narrative to be in one scene while the real period of time of the event is 7 months. Another technique of photography is using double exposures within one scene to communicate that the real period of time of the event passes for many days or months.

#### 4.2 Intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV Drama Called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV Drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018”

The gap between textual relations in the reproduction process is called “intertextuality” between the original text and the secondary text. The leading characters are the main characters in the intertextuality chain in the reproduction process. The leading characters of both dramas are women that are wives and mothers. They reflect image, status, rights, and social norms in a particular context. When the text is reproduced by referring from the materials of the original text, intertextuality emerges.

In an intertextual analysis between the Taiwanese TV drama called “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV drama called “Wife (Mia) 2018,” the researcher analyzes the narrative components concerning the extent to which convention, extension, reduction, and modification occur. The following are the descriptive results.

Table 4.1 Characteristics of Intertextuality between the Taiwanese TV Drama “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV Drama “Mia (Wife) 2018”

No.	Narrative Components	Characteristics of Intertextuality			
		Convention	Extension	Reduction	Modification
1	Plot	√	√	√	√
2	Theme	√			
3	Conflict	√			

No.	Narrative Components	Characteristics of Intertextuality			
		Convention	Extension	Reduction	Modification
4	Character	√	√	√	√
5	Setting	√	√	√	√
6	Dialogue	√	√	√	√
7	Point of View	√			
8	Special Symbols	√	√	√	√
9	Values	√	√	√	√
10	Ideology	√	√		

### 1) Plot

The intertextuality of the plots between the Taiwanese TV drama “The Fierce Wife” and the Thai TV drama “Mia (Wife) 2018” is comprised of convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

#### Convention

(1) The family life of Ruifan and Anzhen in the Taiwanese TV drama “The Fierce Wife” ends with divorce as well as the family life of Thada and Aruna in the Thai TV drama “Mia (Wife) 2018.”

(2) In the Taiwanese TV drama “The Fierce Wife,” while Anzhen is disappointed with her family, she changes her looks, supervised by Tianwei. She goes to work as a sales representative at Tianwei’s car company. Then she becomes popular because she is a moderator in the TV program. This is the same as Aruna in “Mia (Wife) 2018.” While she is very sad and disappointed with her family, she also changes her looks and goes to work as a sales representative for Wasin’s company. There are some adaptations in the details. The car sold by Aruna is a supercar. Aruna is not an ordinary sales representative; she is a “Supersales person of a Supercar.” “The Fierce Wife” does not emphasize the characteristics of Anzhen or the car sold by her. However, Aruna also becomes popular because she is a moderator of the TV program just like Anzhen.

### Extension

(1) “The Fierce Wife” does not have the plots of Anzhen’s daughter having an accident at school and Tianwei being sick, but “Mia (Wife) 2018” has them. While Nuda and Wasin are in the hospital, Aruna goes to the hospital every day to take care of her daughter. At this moment, she has a chance to be closer to Wasin. The relations between Aruna and Wasin are more developed. Aruna can see the gentle side of Wasin; he is very kind to children. Aruna cooks wontons for Wasin and they celebrate New Year’s together on the balcony of the patient’s room. This scene is a highlight scene and many viewers have post comments on Facebook about it. They capture the characters’ dialogues and photos and widely share them on social media.

(2) In “The Fierce Wife,” after Ruifan breaks up with Wei-en, Ruifan goes to work in the upcountry area. Wei-en goes back to America. The intertextuality of the plot to “Mia (Wife) 2018” has some extensions. After Thada breaks up with Kanya, Thada goes to work in the upcountry area but Kanya does not agree to break up. She tries to find out where Thada works and then follows him, so Thada must escape from her again and he decides to go to work in China.

### Reduction

(1) The intertextuality of the plot from “The Fierce Wife” to “Mia (Wife) 2018” has the reduction of some of the main contents. In “The Fierce Wife,” Anzhen has an accident while test drive. When she is in the hospital, Ruifan visits her and forces her to sign the divorce certificate. Anzhen cries while she was signing it. This scene is very important and indicates that the de jure husband-wife relationships between Anzhen and Ruifan have completely ended. “Mia (Wife) 2018” does not have this scene but has some scenes of Nuda and Wasin in the hospital which are mentioned in the extension. Instead, Aruna and Thada go to the District Office to officially sign the divorce certificate, which means that their de jure husband-wife relationships has ended.

(2) At the end of the story, “Mia (Wife) 2018” has a scene with Aruna and Munin organizing an event but “The Fierce Wife” does not have such a scene.

### Modification

(1) The first scene of “The Fierce Wife” is a temple, where Xie Anzhen introduces herself to the viewers. She runs into the temple to be the first person that

can light an incense stick and put it in the incense burner. She believes that if she is the first person that can put an incense stick, her wish will come true. The viewers can see the appearance and personality of Anzhen—that she simply dresses and looks clumsy. She is patient, determined, and cares about her husband more than herself. On the other hand, the first scene of “Mia (Wife) 2018” is Aruna’s house. The drama introduces Aruna and her daily life in serving her husband and daughter to the viewers. Aruna is a housewife, and she wakes up early before her husband. Then, she cooks and wakes up her husband (camera focuses on the breakfast, which is wontons, water, boiled eggs, and orange juice). She prepares clothes for her husband by choosing the shirt with a lucky color for the day. She believes in fortune but her husband does not. Then she wakes up her daughter. Her husband is named Thada. He likes spicy and salty food. Aruna does not allow him to eat unhealthy food. Thada usually adds fish sauce to the wontons behind her back. She does not have breakfast, and drinks coffee only. After that, Aruna drives Thada to work and then goes to the temple to pray. The drama does not present a scene of Aruna running into the temple to be the first person that can light an incense stick like Anzhen. Her wish is for her husband, not for herself. She wishes that her husband will be successful in his work and will love her only (Anzhen does not pray for her husband to love her only). While she prays for her wish at the temple, the camera switches rapidly between the God’s images and Thada’s face. Aruna sits in the first row when she prays. “The Fierce Wife” does not present the details of Anzhen’s daily life like Aruna’s.

(2) Anzhen in “The Fierce Wife” has become popular because one of Ruifan’s colleagues quits his job in the company and goes to work for a production house. Ruifan suggests that he invite Anzhen to be a moderator of his TV program. Ailin supports Anzhen by working as her personal manager. On the other hand, in “Mia (Wife) 2018,” Aruna posts her video clips of cooking demonstrations, and then she becomes popular. Munin is an editor of an online magazine and she invites Aruna to be a moderator for her program. Then Aruna and Munin work together on many new TV programs.

(3) In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” Wasin has an accident while he goes to Italy but in “The Fierce Wife,” Tianwei does not have an accident, but he has a backpack

trip and composes a book. In the end, the relationships between Wasin and Aruna are as lovers, but the relationships between Tianwei and Anzhen still are as good friends.

## 2) Theme

The intertextuality of the theme between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” remains the same; that is, the main theme is love and the sub-theme is morality.

## 3) Conflicts

The intertextuality between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” remains the construction of meaning through conflicts, mostly through conflict between husband and wife and through some conflicts within the character’s mind. The solution to the conflict between husband and wife is divorce. In terms of the conflicts within character’s mind, each character has conflicts within his/her own mind.

## 4) Characters

The intertextuality of the characters between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” is comprised of convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

### Convention

(1) All of the leading characters From Anzhen to Aruna, from Ruifan to Thada, from Wei-en to Kanya, from Tianwei to Wasin, from Ailin to Munin, from Ruixian to Tharee, from Kangde to Chatchai, from Mengmeng to Nuda, and from Manager Zhuang to Suchat. The characteristics of each character might have some differences between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018,” but they are the same overall.

(2) Wife’s mother Anzhen’s mother in “The Fierce Wife” is an agriculturalist in the rural area. Anzhen and her family go to visit her during their leisure time. “Mia (Wife) 2018” does not present clearly what Aruna’s mother does. However, both mothers play the same role. At the beginning, Anzhen’s mother asks Anzhen to allow Wei-en to live with her temporarily just as Aruna’s mother asks Aruna to allow Kanya to live with her. Both mothers are good consultants for their daughters. When their daughters are in trouble, they will call their mothers to consult them because they do not live together. Both mothers will come to see their daughters and soothe them. Both mothers teach their daughters to cook wontons. As mentioned



earlier, they compare wontons with married life and family. This means that when wrapping wontons, the wonton sheet should wrap its stuff firmly; otherwise, the ingredients will separate from each other when it is boiled. As in a married life, a husband and wife should strengthen their relations; otherwise, their family can be broken. However, there are some reductions and extensions related to the mothers in both dramas. Anzhen's mother has an operation but Aruna's mother does not. Anzhen's mother visits Anzhen but she does not help Anzhen take care of Mengmeng, but Aruna's mother visits Aruna and helps her to take care of Nuda while Aruna goes out for work.

(3) Characteristics and background of Wasin's mother Wasin's mother and father are divorced. Wasin's mother does not get married with the new lover. She is a psychiatrist. Her hobby is writing articles to create inspiration.

#### Extension

(1) There are some modifications of the intertextuality of the characters, from "Manager Zhuang" in "The Fierce Wife" to Suchat in "Mia (Wife) 2018." Manager Zhuang looks older than Suchat. Manager Zhuang is fat but Suchat is handsome, like a playboy. The roles of Suchat have a wider scope than Manager Zhuang. Manager Zhuang plays his roles mainly in the company. He has dialogues with Ruifan and Ailin in work-related matters. After work, he has a secret affair with Ailin. On the other hand, Suchat plays his roles as the executive of the company. He is Thada's and Munin's boss. Apart from having an affair with Munin, Suchat extends his role interactions with other characters. For example, he gives advice to Thada on his family matter, he is a customer buying a car from Aruna, and he gives advice to both Thada and Aruna on their personal matters.

#### Reduction

(1) The husband's parents in "Mia (Wife) 2018" are reduced. Aruna refers to Thada's mother only once but she does not appear in the drama. She tells Thada that Thada's mother suggests her to go to the temple and how to prepare the offerings. On the other hand, Ruifan's parents play many roles. They always support Anzhen because Anzhen is a good daughter-in-law. They always go to Ruifan's and Anzhen's house to have dinner together. When Ruifan is in trouble and comes back to see his parents, his parents warn and give him good advice. They dislike Wei-en.

Ruifan's father supports Anzhen when she is discredited by fake news released by Wei-en.

#### Modification

(1) The intertextuality of the character Xie Anzhen in "The Fierce Wife" to Aruna in "Mia (Wife) 2018" has some modifications. Aruna worked before she became a housewife but Anzhen never does any jobs besides being a housewife. Therefore, Aruna has more knowledge and experience than Anzhen. When Aruna decides to start working, she can learn the new job quickly, but Anzhen needs coaching from Tianwei. Aruna has more taste in dress and hairstyle than Anzhen. She can change her looks by herself but Anzhen needs coaching from Tianwei.

(2) Wei-en in "The Fierce Wife" likes wearing the red high-heeled shoes. The first scene introducing Wei-en shows her wearing red high-heeled shoes with miniskirt but in "Mia (Wife) 2018" the first scene introducing Kanya shows her wearing sneakers and jeans. However, Wei-en and Kanya have the same characteristics; that is, both of them like flirting.

#### 5) Setting

The settings and camera angles play an important role in "Mia (Wife) 2018" while "The Fierce Wife" rarely communicates by camera angles. A couple of examples of using camera angles to communicate are a close up on the red high-heeled shoes and sneakers of Wei-en. When Wei-en breaks up with Ruifan, she changes her red high-heeled shoes to sneakers.

The intertextuality of the settings between "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018" is comprised of convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

#### Convention

(1) The setting in the park where Wei-en and Ruifan have a quarrel and then fall down and kiss in "The Fierce Wife" is the same as the setting in the park where Thada and Kanya kiss.

#### Reduction

(1) The setting of the antique shop where Anzhen meets Tianwei for the first time is reduced in "Mia (Wife) 2018." Aruna meets Wasin for the first time at the car showroom where Tharee works.

### Modification

(1) The setting of a yard with a wall where Anzhen and Tianwei throw bottles at the wall. Tianwei suggests Anzhen to throw bottles at the wall to release stress. In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” the yard with a wall is modified to be the riverside. Wasin says Aruna that river can make us feel good and lets her try to inhale, exhale, and shout at the river to reduce stress.

(2) The communication devices in “The Fierce Wife” show that the period of time in the drama is not in the digital age. For example, the mobile phones that the characters use are not smartphones. The main communication channels of the characters are mobile phones and sending SMS. Social media are not widely used, while in “Mia (Wife) 2018,” social media play an important role. Almost every character uses social media in daily life. They use Google, LINE, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and the selfie function in smartphones.

### Songs

“The Fierce Wife” mainly uses the theme song in the setting depending on the appropriate events in the story. On the other hand, “Mia (Wife) 2018” uses the popular songs in the scene besides the theme song (convention and extension).

### 6) Dialogues

The intertextuality of the dialogues between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” are convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

(1) The dialogues in “The Fierce Wife” mostly contain the cheer-up phrase “fighting.” The phrase is used between Anzhen and Ruifan to communicate love and encouragement between husband and wife. The phrase is transferred to the dialogues in “Mia (Wife) 2018” in an extension form. The phrase is used apart from between Aruna and Thada, but it is extended to the dialogues of almost all of the characters.

(2) The phrase spoken by Anzhen and Ruifan in “The Fierce Wife” which is transferred to the dialogues in “Mia (Wife) 2018” in a conventional form is “Darling.” Aruna and Thada always call each other “Darling,” which communicates the love between them.

(3) The convention form of intertextuality between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” is the plot when Tianwei test drives with Anzhen and Wasin

test drives with Aruna, but the dialogues have some modifications. While Anzhen is test driving with Tianwei, she tells him personal matters about her family but Tianwei asks her to focus on the car because it is during working hours. On the other hand, when Wasin test drives with Aruna, he urges Aruna to tell him personal matters about her family but Aruna is not willing to do so because she does not trust him. She distracts him to focus on the car.

#### 7) Points of view

The whole story of both dramas is narrated through the same points of view; that is, the points of view of Anzhen and Aruna, who are the first wife.

#### 8) Special symbols

The intertextuality of the special symbols between the Taiwanese TV drama “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” are convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

(1) Wontons. The conventional form of intertextuality of both dramas is that they have a similar concept of wontons. Wontons are compared with married life or family. All of the family members must be in harmony and maintain strong relations like wontons, which are wrapped firmly and never separate even though they are boiled. However, the form of wontons is modified. The wontons in “The Fierce Wife” are like gyoza (Japanese fried dumplings), but the wontons in “Mia (Wife) 2018” are wonton soup.

(2) Red high-heeled shoes. The communication of meanings and using camera angles are modified. In “The Fierce Wife,” Wei-en loves to wear the red high-heeled shoes and the camera shoots at the shoes before moving to her face. The red high-heeled shoes convey the meaning of the mistress’s shoes. On the other hand, the red high-heeled shoes belong to Aruna but Kanya likes to wear them without getting Aruna’s permission. This conveys the meaning that sisters can use belongings together and the husband is not an exception.

#### (3) Wedding ring (convention)

(4) Special symbols in “The Fierce Wife” that are reduced in “Mia (Wife) 2018” are chocolate, heart-shaped carrots in a lunch box, frozen food, a pink necktie, a red robot model, mice on a pedal machine, a photo of a husband and mistress, a jigsaw of a family photo where the mistress’s photo is inserted on top of

the wife's photo, a heart-shaped pendant with the date endorsed, a dashboard, curry, and white sneakers.

(5) The wedding photo of Ruifan and Anzhen in the bedroom in "The Fierce Wife" being extended to be the family photo of Thada, Aruna, and Nuda and the family photo in "Mia (Wife) 2018" is very important because it appears in many scenes.

(6) A special symbol that is modified in accordance with the Thai context in "Mia (Wife) 2018" is "Khanom Look Chup" (fruit-shaped mung beans).

(7) The special symbols that are not in "The Fierce Wife" but are extended in "Mia (Wife) 2018" are the badge written "You'll never walk alone" in Wasin's office and Nuda's rabbit dolls.

#### 9) Values

The intertextuality of the values between "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018" is comprised of convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

##### Convention

(1) The belief in superstition and fortune, this world, the next world, the law of karma, and other beliefs related to Buddhism. The leading characters of both dramas believe in praying for a wish and mainly make a wish for their husband. However, there are some differences in details. Anzhen in "The Fierce Wife" believes that being the first person that can light an incense stick and put it in the incense burner, the wish she made will come true. On the other hand, Aruna in "Mia (Wife) 2018" believes that to make a wish come true, the one who prays for the wish should sit in the front row and prepare the offerings. Anzhen suspects that Ruifan may have a new lover, so she goes to see a fortune teller to ask her if it is true or not. While Aruna does not go to see a fortune teller, she curses the one who gets involved with her husband.

(2) The sexual value of being self-contained to preserve the virginity of women presented in both dramas is the same. From the past to the present, this has changed in a negative way. Women flirting with men is always seen in the drama, even having an affair with the husband of another women.

(3) Both dramas present married life in the same way. Husband and wife should respect each other and be honest. They should be patient for their children.



(4) Both dramas communicate that the mistress destroys other's families. It is immoral and unacceptable by people in the society.

(5) Both dramas present organization culture in the same way. When considering the staff to be promoted, the Board of Directors of the company takes the family status of the staff into consideration. They perceive that staff of a high ranking position must have a good family. It affects the organization's image.

(6) The debt of gratitude

Extension

(1) In "Mia (Wife) 2018" there are perspectives of the first wife toward the second wife and the second wife toward herself, but in "The Fierce Wife" there is a perspective of the intervener overall.

Reduction

(1) The organization culture of the company in "The Fierce Wife" is reduced in "Mia (Wife) 2018." Every day before beginning work, the employees must line up and shout the company's motto. This can motivate employees to work effectively.

Modification

(1) The communication of bad luck in "The Fierce Wife" is when Anzhen breaks a mirror of the family photo frame while in "Mia (Wife) 2018" Aruna breaks a glass. This means that this concept of the Taiwanese and Thais is similar. Breaking glass brings bad luck. The broken mirror of the family photo frame in "The Fierce Wife" is modified to be a broken glass in "Mia (Wife) 2018".

10) Ideology

The intertextuality of ideology between "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018" is comprised of convention, extension, reduction, and modification as follows.

Convention

(1) Authoritarianism

Both dramas present the power of the leading character, who is the husband and has an impact on the female characters, whether his wife, mistress, or his colleague (ex-girlfriend).

## (2) Patriarchy

Ailin's points of view in "The Fierce Wife" are transferred to Munin's in "Mia (Wife) 2018." Men win in all circumstances. If men succeed in work and are still single, people will perceive that they are hard-working. Men who both succeed in work and family life will be praised by people in society. On the other hand, the women who are workaholics will be perceived that they are old maids.

## (3) Feminism

Nuda agrees with her mother when Aruna wants to go to work because all of her friends' mothers go to work. Munin has an attitude that she will not be controlled by men's power, especially regarding work. Women can present their high competency without having an affair with any men. Therefore, Munin does not associate with men seriously. According to her dialogue with Kanya, she states: "I compete with him for the work position, not for him. I come here to work, not to look for a husband. Thada should be careful; if he fails, I can get his position more easily."

### Modification

## (1) Feminism

In "The Fierce Wife" family members do not agree when the housewife also goes to work. Most of the working women are single. On the other hand, in "Mia (Wife) 2018," Nuda agrees with her mother when Aruna wants to go to work because all of her friends' mothers go to work.

## **4.3 The Construction of the Meanings of "Wife" through the Narrative Components in "Mia (Wife) 2018"**

"Mia (Wife) 2018" constructs the meaning of "wife" through Aruna, a leading character who is the wife. The social construction of the reality of "wife" can be divided into the following 7 components compared with the encoding levels in the TV drama (Fiske, 2011).

1) The social construction of reality in terms of the demography of wife

Aruna is around 35-40 years old. She was a working woman before she got married and became a housewife. She is in a middle-class family. She performs the role of a wife and mother. At the beginning, she is a housewife, and then she has problems with her husband, so she finds a new job. Finding a new job at her age might be difficult. Fortunately, Wasin offers her a job as a sales representative for his super cars. Therefore, she does not have financial problems, although she and her husband are separated.

2) The social construction of reality in terms of physical appearance, personality, and the dressing style of the wife

Aruna is a housewife, dresses simply with soft-tone colored clothes. She wears her hair in a bun and does not put on makeup. She is a gentle woman. After she and her husband are separated, and she changes her looks and finds a new job. She dresses in the style of a modern working woman, wears high-heeled shoes, and has a modern hair style. She is more confident and stronger.

3) The social construction of reality in terms of the habits and emotional maturity of the wife

Aruna has high emotional maturity. She is patient and optimistic. She does not believe in what is not proven by herself. She believes in superstition and fortune.

4) The social construction of reality in terms of the wife's roles in her family

Aruna wakes up early before her husband. Then, she cooks and wakes up her husband. She prepares the clothes for her husband by choosing a shirt with a lucky color for the day. She is a mother, a wife, and an important person in her family. Wife must serve her family perfectly, especially for her husband. She must be patient for herself and her children.

5) The social construction of reality in terms of the relationships between "wife" and other characters

Aruna gives priority to her daughter. She would like to take care of her rather than going to work. Aruna serves her husband and daughter. She is honest and trusts her husband. She believes that her husband will not have any new lovers. Her dream is for her husband to succeed in work, and that her daughter be healthy because she is always sick. She is always concerned about her family and perceives that she is an

ordinary housewife. Although she and her husband get divorced, their husband-wife relationship does not end. She is concerned that her daughter needs to have a father. She agrees that although Thada is not her husband anymore, he can be Nuda's father. He can perform the father's role. In the meantime, Aruna maintains good relationships with other characters; Tharee, who is her close friend, Munin, who is Thada's ex-girlfriend, and Suchat, who is Thada's boss, Wasin, who is her boss and then develops a relationship with her to be a lover—everyone gives her friendship because Aruna is good. Even in relation to Kanya, who is a mistress and intervenes in her family, Aruna still cares for her when she is in the hospital. She thinks that no matter what Kanya does to her, Kanya is her sister.

6) The social construction of reality of the “wife” in other dimensions

Aruna is positioned as a flat character, which means she has only a good side. When she and Thada are divorced, the audience can see her on the other side. She is strong and never gives up. She believes that “Don't be afraid of change” and “Whatever already has happened, it is always good.” Sometimes it is so difficult, but she believes that we have enough power to deal with things; just never give up.

7) The social construction of reality to communicate the values of the wife

The wife should serve her family perfectly, especially her husband. She must be patient for herself and her children. She should save money and spend it carefully. Being a wife in 2018 is difficult because she has to deal with her husband's infidelity. She must be strong, up to date, and deal with problems carefully. However, dealing with the intervener problem should not be a burden of the wife only; the husband must be responsible for what he has done. If the wife does her best but cannot satisfy her husband, she does not need to hold him but should let him go the way he wants.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESEARCH RESULTS REGARDING THE AUDIENCE'S VIEWS**

This chapter presents the research results concerning the perception and interpretation of the meanings of “wife” by the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018” in order to answer Research Question 1.2.3, “How does the audience of the TV drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018” perceive and interpret the meaning of “wife”? Are there any similarities and differences between the meaning of “wife” interpreted by the audience and the meaning constructed by the producer of the drama?”

The audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018” responded to the drama in various ways and through various channels. They mostly engaged with the drama through the ONE Lakorn Facebook fan page and the Pantip website. Considering the forms of the audience engagement, it was found that the audience tended to post images, video clips, and messages that reflected their own identities, such as being a husband or wife in real life, having a similar experience with the characters in the drama, being single but wanting to be in a relationship like the characters in the drama, and taking sides with the characters they liked. This is in line with the cultural study theories of Michel Foucault and Karl Marx (Michel Foucault, 1988; Karl Marx, 1852 cited in Thitinan Boonphap Common, 2013), which suggested that the identity of humans is created based on surrounding social contexts. Humans need to choose the “raw materials” existing in their social contexts in order to create self and identity. The social media are a space full of images, video clips, messages, and content, which are considered significant raw materials in the creation of self and identity in the present day, known as the early postmodern era. This is also consistent with the findings of Thitinan Boonphap Common (2017), which indicated that new media function as a space to express individual identity. Particularly, social media are an important space for expressing self and identity in various dimensions.



## **5.1 Drama Engagement of the Audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018”**

Mia (Wife) 2018 is a 28-episode television drama, which aired in Thailand on the ONE Channel during 28 May-28 August 2018. In May, the drama gained 171 comments, 864 shares, and 2 million views. In June, there were 720 comments, 2,331 shares, and 3,835,000 views. In July, there were 2,986 comments, 14,363 shares, 5,700,000 views. In August, there were 4,174 comments, 25,904 shares, and 12,533,000 views. During the on-air period, the audience engaged with the drama through the ONE Lakorn Facebook fan page in various forms as follows.

### **5.1.1 Making Overall Comments about the Drama**

“It is a good drama reflecting the current society.” “It is addictive and sensible. Being a good wife does not guarantee that your husband will not cheat on you.” “Such drama should not be shown. That man slept with the two sisters. Like women in ancient times, those two sisters are unable to raise money to support themselves so they need to endure sharing a husband with another woman. The younger sister is so bad to snatch her sister’s husband, although there are so many men out there. The production team should produce dramas with an exemplary message in order to set a good example for the audience nationwide.” “This drama is a chapter of my life.” “The wife, the mother of a child, is like an expensive coffee cup, while the mistress is a toy or a paper coffee cup that is cheap and disposable.” “The ending is not satisfying.” “It should not end like this. She should reconcile with Thada. I pity their child, who is clinging to the father. But it is just a drama though.” “One thing that makes this drama famous and able to attract the viewers’ attention is the well-written script.” “The ending is good. Aruna should start a new life and meet a better man than Tada.” “This drama uses a lot of songs that bring tears to my eyes.” “In this era, TV dramas should end like this. Many western movies or series also have this kind of ending. The hero and heroine do not need to always talk to each other.”

### **5.1.2 Linking This Drama with the Original Drama “The Fierce Wife”**

One audience captured “The Fierce Wife” screen and commented that “Mia (Wife) 2018 is similar to “The Fierce Wife.” I cried a lot watching this drama. If it ends like the Taiwanese version, I will be upset.”

### **5.1.3 Linking This Drama with Other Dramas**

“Kanya should be with Karan and Malaiwan.” “I thought Jairerng is bad. But Kanya is worse.” “Kanya and Caramai have the same kind of psychosis.” “If the wife is so possessive of her husband, the mistress will be more eager to snatch him. The wife in this drama is so stupid, unlike Dr. Wikanda in Mia Tee Tra,” who is very clever.” “The story is similar to Nam Soh Sai. That guy is very selfish and has nothing.” “Buang Saneha is more hurtful.” “Do not give him any chance. He is such a bad guy. He chained his wife and cut her head to be a treasure-guarding ghost.” “In other dramas played by Pong, I hope he can reconcile with the heroine. But for this drama, I think the heroine should break up with him and select Boss instead.” “I recommend you guys to read Sai Sawat, a novel written by Ayuth.” “Khun Ubon was reborn to get her husband back.”

### **5.1.4 Commenting on the Drama Content Related to Their Real Lives**

“This drama teaches us to take care of ourselves. It is not enough for women to have a kind heart; you should be beautiful inside and outside. You should respect both yourself and your husband. Everything is important. There is no reason to be a good but ugly wife. Your husband will be proud if he has a good and beautiful wife.” “I do not want to be like that. I try to always look good, although I am not that pretty.” “Men like beautiful women, whereas their wives simply wear normal clothes.” “It is like my real life. He introduced me as his wife but in the end he went with another women.” “I have dressed frumpy for so long; it’s time to change, right?” “This drama is fierce because of the wife’s sister. The problem is relatable to this rotten society.” “This is the reason why there is frequent news of wives slapping mistresses. If the incidents in the news are like this drama, those mistresses deserve to be slapped.” “There are many people who are similar to Kanya in the society. They lack empathy for others and never think that what they do is wrong.” “Aruna’s reason is very

natural. I have experienced something like this. I can forgive but will never get back together with him. Because I will always remember what he did to me and how he slept with others. It is better to not meet each other and forget everything. I think this drama is alright. I am satisfied with almost everything.” “It is true. What he did cannot be forgotten. I can forgive him but everything will not be the same.” “It is hard to forget what he did. Everything will never be the same after getting back together. I probably don’t trust him anymore and may be suspicious of his behavior all the time. Due to his previous wrongdoing, it is difficult to believe him again.” “There was a scene when Thada said that Wasin can take care of her a lot better than him, which reminds me of what my ex-husband said to my new husband. My ex-husband also wore glasses like Thada. These days I’d like to thank my ex-husband, a womanizer, for telling me that “If I love him, I need to let him have other women.” How dare he said that! Nobody can accept such behavior. I feel thankful for his flirting behavior because it made me finally meet a better man.”

#### **5.1.5 Linking the Drama’s Characters with the Cast Members**

“I am really not into the character played by May. I keep thinking about her story with Jay and always pity her. It is difficult for a pretty girl like her to change her style and wear football attire.” “I like Bee so much. I enjoy all of her dramas.” “May looks so beautiful and expensive. Marie looks fairly average but her acting is very good. She nails it in this drama.” “Thada, today you make me tired of Pong. I want to jump kick him because of his words. He is such a bad and selfish guy.” “I am really into this drama because of the cast members. I hate Pong now.” “Why does Pong always have a mistress in every drama he plays?” “Pong is pitiful. Everyone hates him and turns to admire the new national husband’s smile.” “Pong’s acting wins as a man who is unfaithful to his wife.” “May looks so gorgeous.” “In Sod Story, she is very innocent in the role of Moddaeng. In this drama, her role as Kanya is superb.” “Marie’s acting is really natural and impressive. She makes the whole country hate her.” “Bee’s performance is excellent.”

### **5.1.6 Commenting about the Characters' Appearance and Personality**

"I like the leading actor. He does not hide that she is his wife, although she dresses plainly. It shows that he respects her." "I want Bee to get a makeover." "I like that he shows off his wife." "Bad woman meets bad guy." "I like a guy like Wasin. He is cute." "I love Munin." "Looking forward to seeing Aruna becomes gorgeous and arrogant. Put out the fire and then move on." "Pete is handsome. He is a buddy." "Based on the script, Kanya should be stylish. But it appears that her clothes are not quite beautiful. Munin looks fine. Her clothes are pretty." "Everything is good, except for the hairstyle." "Thada deserves to lose her. He lost a diamond while collecting a worthless stone like Kanya. Both of them are bad and deserve a chaotic life." "They are driven by lust. They do not know right and wrong. It serves them right." "Their clothing and expression should be better in the ending scene. Those clothes make Wasin look like Aruna's youngest son." "Can Aruna say what she really feels?" "I like Aruna when her hair is shorter and more stylish."

### **5.1.7 Commenting about Various Situations in the Drama**

"If Aruna reconciles with Thada at the end, I will attack ONE Channel." "Good job, Aruna." "I hate Kanya. There should be a scene where Munin slaps her hard on the face." "Let them fight. They match each other." "She should get divorced and then go out with Boss." "Throw him away and find your new man." "It hurts when she always thinks about family, whereas he never thinks the same." "She wants her child and husband to have a good life. She sometimes forgets about herself." "While she is busy making a living, he has an affair." "Before chasing the sister out, please look at your husband. If he really loves you and your child, he will never do something like that, even if she is naked before him. You should just chase both of them out." "The mother told her to endure. For what? She will not be happy living with such an unfaithful man. Just end it and start a new life. It is difficult but one day it will pass and she will regret wasting her time with him." "I want to give Aruna a hug." "Please get divorced. This is 2018. Women can stand on their own feet." "I want Boss Wasin to pair up with Kanya." "Boss, you should hit on Munin." "The most sensational scene for me is when they went to buy trees at Jatujak Market. The song is the best." "No matter how bad she is, the bond between sisters is unbreakable."

They basically have a good mind.” “Goodbye, Kanya. It serves you right.” “I feel a little sympathetic towards Kanya.” “Do not forgive him for having an affair.”

Apart from posting text comments, the audience also expressed their feelings and opinions toward the drama in other forms as follows.

#### 1) Sending stickers, images, and video clips

Six people sent stickers, images, and video clips in May, 26 people in June, 33 people in July, and 162 people in August.

#### 2) Using hashtags

In May, 1 person used #TeamWife. In June, 2 people used #Sointoit, 1 person used #Thada, 1 person used #Malethings, 1 person used #Reallyintoit, 3 people used #TeamAruna, 1 person used #Feelintoit, 1 person used #Thisisreallife, 1 person used #Iamintoit, and 1 person used #Donotlovethusbandtothepointyoufindnofaultinhim. In July, 1 person used #Newhusbandiswaiting, 1 person used #NinNa, 1 person used #Iamsointoit, 1 person used #TeamBoss and #Mia2018, 1 person used #TeamAruna, 6 people used #TeamBoss, 1 person used #Lovemomthemostrintheworld, 1 person used #Whocares, 1 person used #Amitoomuch, 1 person used #Toointoit, 1 person used #Wifeisintoit, 1 person used #Teamnewhusband, 1 person used #TeamBossWasinAruna, 1 person used #TeamWasin, 1 person used #Throwingwontonbowl).

#### 3) Posting the scenes captured from the TV screen

In July, 1 person posted a picture of Thada with the caption “It serves you right,” 1 person posted a picture of drama advertisement, 1 person posted a picture of wonton bowl being thrown at Thada, 1 person posted a picture of smiling Wasin with the caption “That’s it. It serves you right, Thada,” and 1 person posted a picture of Wasin and Aruna in the kitchen. In August, 1 person posted a picture of Aruna and Wasin drinking red juice with the caption “Munin, they drink from the same glass,” 1 person posted a picture of Thada and Wasin wearing football attire with the caption “VS,” 1 person posted a picture of Aruna and Wasin in the kitchen with the caption “Smack,” 1 person posted a picture of Wasin with the caption “I am falling in love with an older woman,” 2 people posted behind the scenes pictures, 1 person posted a picture of Kanya crying after Thada left her with the caption “Come back, Thada. You forgot your shoes,” 1 person posted a picture of mobile screen and commented about the chat messages, and 1 person posted a picture of Aruna and



Wasin on the terrace at the hospital with New Year's fireworks in the background and wrote the caption "My pillow is almost torn."

#### 4) Posting the pictures adapted from the drama scenes with captions

In July, 1 person posted a picture of Aruna leaning on Wasin's shoulder together with Nuda and wrote the caption "Later, let's talk about Father's Day next year. Boss did not say it. I said it myself. I always imagine thing every Monday," and 1 person posted a picture of Kanya with a product and wrote a sale message. In August, 1 person posted a picture of drama advertisement and jokingly compared it with other pictures.

#### 5) Posting the pictures from the cast members' Facebook pages with captions

In July, 1 person posted a picture of Wasin with the caption "Dodge, here comes the Boss." and 1 person posted a picture of Wasin with the caption "Just throw Thada away." In August, 1 person posted a picture of an actor with the caption "Boss, if Aruna ignores you, please date this man instead. It will be epic."

#### 6) Posting their own pictures with captions

In July, 1 person posted a picture of herself hugging a child at the Mother's Day event with the caption "I play a role as father and mother at the same time. I participate in the Father's Day event as well. I do everything to make him happy," 1 person posted a picture of food with the caption "Thada, this delicious dish is available at 7-eleven," and 1 person posted a picture of dog poop on the lawn with the caption "Mixed dog poop is ready for you at the kitchen."

#### 7) Creating new dialogues

In June, 1 person posted "Thada, Kanya is itching," and 1 person posted "Sis Na, Kanya does not care." In July, 1 person posted "No, I don't go back because the new husband is so hot," 1 person posted "Na, do you have wonton soup for me?" and "Yes, please find it in the toilet," and 1 person posted "Boiling wonton soup is ready. Let me splash it all over your face." In August, 1 person posted a cartoon image of Aruna and Wasin with the title "Aruna or Fatty Na" and wrote the dialogues "Aruna: I'm a fatty. Do you love me? Wasin: I love you."

#### 8) Posting songs and music video clips on YouTube

In June, 1 person posted the song “I’m OK without you” by Gam Wichayanee. In July, 1 person posted the song “While Waiting for Him” by Pop Pongkool.

#### 9) Posting pictures from other dramas for comparison

In July, 1 person posted a picture from the drama Buang Saneha.

#### 10) Reconstructing the ending scene

In August, 1 person posted that in the end Aruna will grow old alone because she chooses no one. Nuda becomes a beautiful girl. After being rejected by Aruna, Wasin comes back to date Nuda. Thada took Ploysai to see pandas in China. Kanya followed them but could not find Thada. She met Linhui and finally dates him. The story ends happily.

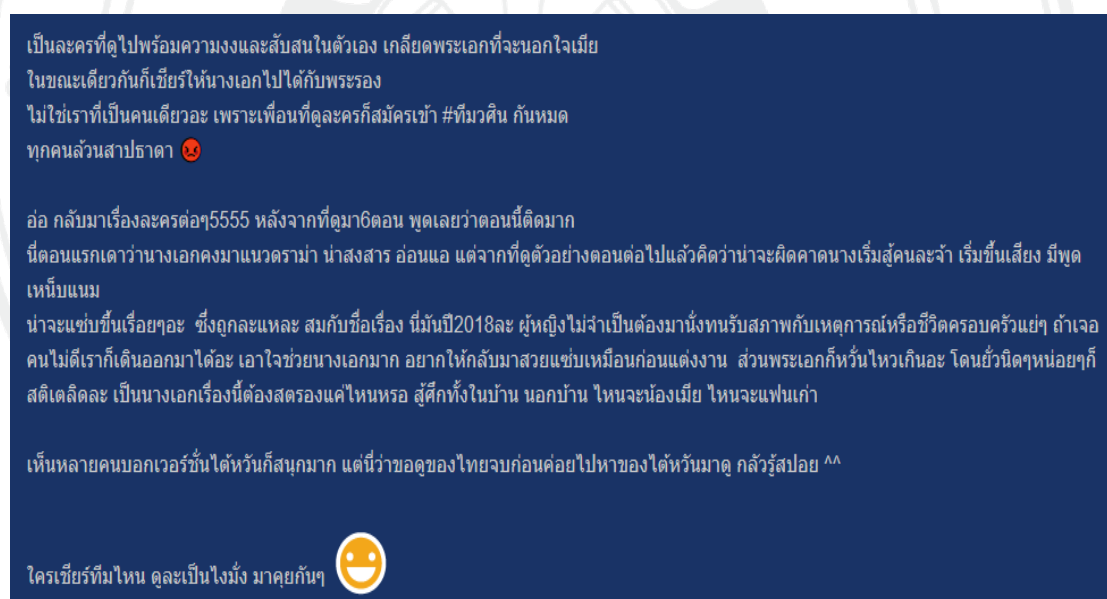


Figure 5.1 Engagement of the Audience Through Pantip’s Thread

Source: Pantip (2018)

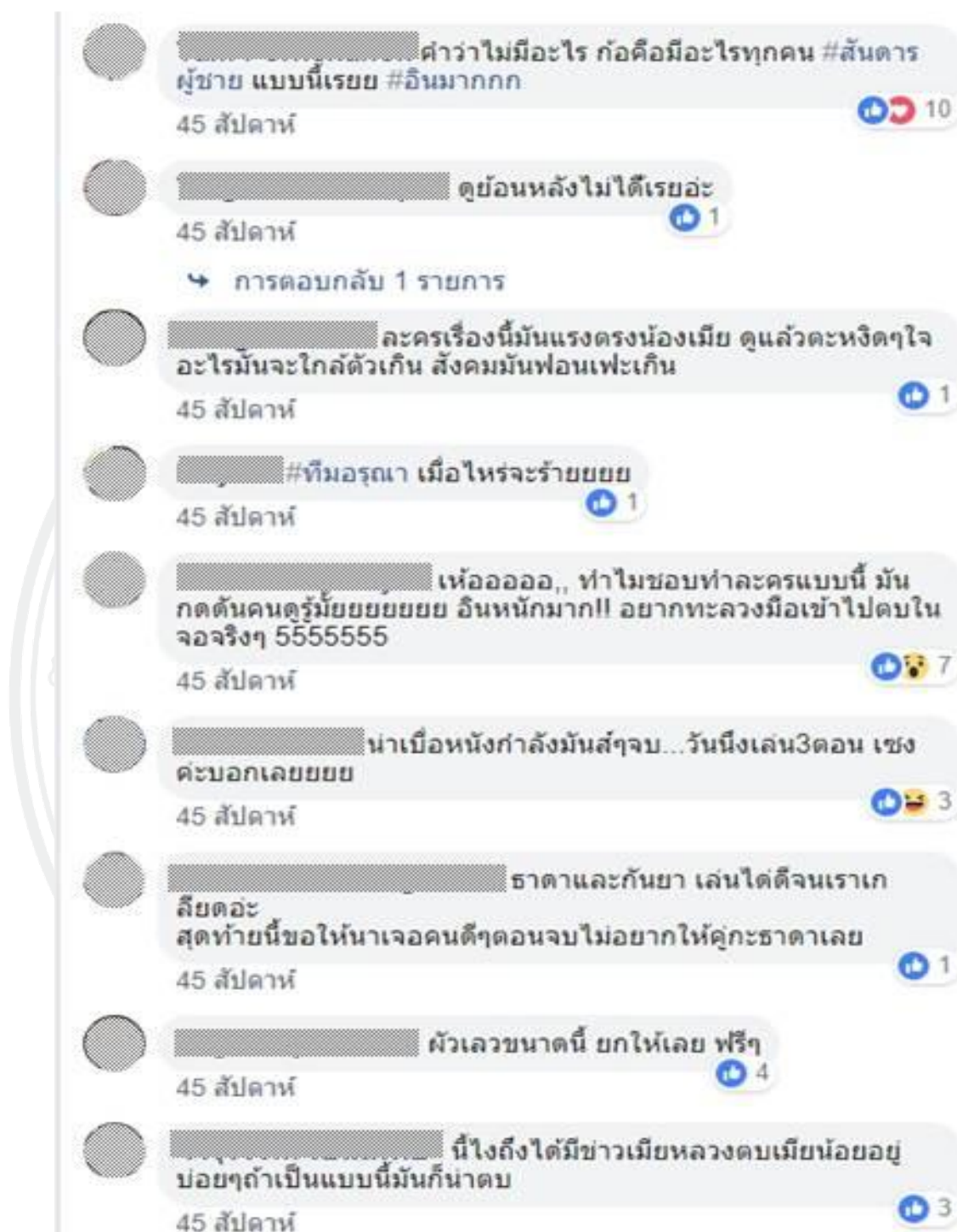


Figure 5.2 Engagement of the Audience Through ONE Lakorn's Facebook Fan Page  
Source: ONE Lakorn (2018)

## **5.2 The Results Obtained from the In-Depth Interviews on the Perception and Interpretation of the Meanings of “Wife” by the Audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018”**

The researcher carried out in-depth interviews with two groups of key informants. The first group of key informants was comprised of 15 women, who are de jure and de facto wives in their real lives. They either used real names, social media names, or anonymous identities. Their age was between 30-59 years. They were domiciled in all parts of Thailand, including Bangkok. Their occupations included organizational employees, housewives, gardeners, government officials, teachers, and entrepreneurs. Their education varied from secondary school to master's degree. They mostly watched “Mia (Wife) 2018” on television. In case they could not watch it live, they would watch the missed episode on online media such as YouTube and LINE TV via mobile phone and desktop computers. They engaged with the drama through ONE Lakorn's Facebook fan page, Pantip threads, and other websites. They posted comments, shared quotes and impressive dialogues, read others' comments, exchanged opinions with others, and viewed trending scenes. The factors making these viewers like and engage with this drama were the cast members, the acting, the realistic script that reflected the problems occurring in current society and how the characters chose to solve those problems, an interesting plot that was addictive, refreshing, unpredictable, and modern and did not stick to the traditional role of women in the past, scenarios that aimed at empowering women and providing legal knowledge to women who are more disadvantaged than men, similar to the Club Friday program, which also highlighted adultery stories and clear and concise storylines that were easy to understand, continuous, and reasonable, although some actions of the characters may have been excessively exaggerated.

“The drama reflects that having an affair is normal in this society. It can happen anywhere with anybody of any age in any family. But the ending may not be as beautiful as the drama” (Paweena Chalayonnawin, personal communication, June 10, 2019).

“Married men having an affair is a family problem that is normally found. However, we have to admit that it is not a common problem for any family. Being

unfaithful to your spouse or having affairs with others is unacceptable because it makes the family fragile” (Anonymous 2, personal communication, July 14, 2019).

“I like the ending of this drama. It ends without revenge. They forgive each other as friends” (Ya Kob Makhamthao, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

“Some parts of this drama are similar to my life. I separated from my husband not because he had an affair. We broke up because of incompatibility. If I were Aruna, I would do the same thing. However, I and Aruna have different societies; we need to focus on suitability and solve the problems on our own” (Anonymous 1, personal communication, July 12, 2019).

“This drama is different from my family life, although I feel that some women try to seduce my husband due to his good career and position. My husband always knows their motives and does not play along. If I face the same problem, I will not divorce or give up because I do not want my child to have divorced parents” (Munchusa Aung, personal communication, June 30, 2019).

“This drama only shows the wife’s point of view. At present, some married women may have relationships with someone other than their husbands because they want to find the happiness that is missing in their marriage life. The times have changed. They know right from wrong but they cannot stop themselves. I will not judge if their adultery is right or wrong because I do not stand in their shoes” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

The second group of key informants was composed of 5 single and married men and women with no experience of being a wife. They either used real their name, the social media name, or an anonymous identity. Their age was between 20-49 years. They lived in the northeastern and central regions of Thailand, including Bangkok and vicinity. Their occupations included organizational employees, new graduates, government officials, and teachers. Their education was at the bachelor’s degree level. They normally watched “Mia (Wife) 2018” on television. If they could not watch it live, they would watch the missed episode on online media such as YouTube, LINE TV, Watchlakorn.com, and other online drama websites. This group of key informants engaged with the drama through ONE Lakorn’s Facebook fan page, Pantip threads, and other websites. They posted comments about plot and characters, shared quotes, and shared content. The factors making them like and engage with this drama



were ONE Channel's marketing promotion, the high popularity of the drama, the realistic plot reflecting the real life of people in the current era that enables them to better understand family life, natural dialogues that were not fake, the differentiation from other previous soap operas that they had watched since childhood, full flavored stories, a concise and addictive storyline, focusing on sensational scenes despite the hastening end, the fact that the drama content was too harsh but truly reflects real life problems, good cast members with great performance, and a reasonable script.

"This drama presents the thoughts and feelings of Aruna, who represents a wife in ancient times. She has been gradually and tragically pressured to transform herself from a traditional housewife into a new-generation wife, who can make the audience amazed by her actions in every episode" (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

"It is a drama about marriage betrayal that is well made. Its plot is quite similar to other dramas but the storytelling and acting of the cast members are different. The character of Boss Wasin can attract a lot of viewers. There are several types of married couples. This couple is just one type among others. No couple is the same, just as each individual is different from others. The drama just reflects one form of relationships in society" (Anonymous 1, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

The data collection period was between June and October 2019 (the interview questions are shown in Appendix A).

Based on the interview results, the two groups of key informants perceived and interpreted the meanings of "wife" through "Aruna," who is the main character or the wife in "Mia (Wife) 2018." According to the encoding model of Fiske (2011), their perception and interpretation of the meanings of "wife" could be divided as follows.

1) The social construction of reality concerning the demographic characteristics of the wife

The key informants, who are wives in their real lives, mostly thought that the age and occupation of the wife does not affect the family, while the factors that can affect the family are the attitude toward family life and the family time management of each individual. Some of them believed that the occupation of the wife has an effect on the family income, whereas the age of the wife has no impact.

They thought that Aruna is lucky because she earns a lot of money and her family can live a comfortable life. However, some key informants thought that the age and occupation of the wife have an effect on the family for various reasons as follows.

“The age of the wife affects the job search. If she is old, it will be difficult to find a job. In the drama, Aruna is capable. She has no problem finding a job. Having no job makes the wife feel inferior. Sometimes when the husband is tired of making money, he will be upset and wonder why he needs to take care of her” (Nareerat Wongsin, personal communication, June 17, 2019).

“The maturity of the husband and wife is important. Their true colors will gradually show after an early stage of marriage. They need to constantly adapt to each other in order to live together. Maturity makes them able to control their emotions and have more patience” (Anonymous 1, personal communication, July 12, 2019).

“The wife’s occupation affects the family because nowadays the husband alone cannot earn enough money. The expenses are higher than the income. If they have a child, the money earned by the husband will be spent on their child, while they also have to pay for a home loan, a car loan, water and electricity bills, and much more” (Anonymous 4, personal communication, July 30, 2019).

“Getting older means you have fewer job options. The wife’s job has an impact on the family. If her job does not allow her enough time to take care of her child, her child must be raised by someone else, which will lead to a lack in the mother-child relationship. When the wife has to take responsibility for everything, including housework and office work, it will result in a drained body and mind and poor relationships among the family members” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

Some key informants, who run a business at home, thought that the age and occupation of the wife have only a few effects on the family. They also thought that whether the age and occupation of the wife will affect the family or not depends on the husband as well. A good husband will understand his wife, who has to fulfill two roles at the same time. A selfish husband will never help his wife do the housework. There are very few people like Aruna. Break-up problems frequently

occur. There are many couples, where the wife does both housework and office work until she has no time to take care of herself.

On the other hand, the married man in the second group of key informants with no direct experience of being a wife thought that the age and occupation of the wife have a great impact on the family.

“It can be said that the age and occupation of the wife is the most significant factor making the family survive or ruined. My wife is a bank employee, who works hard like a slave in the King Rama V era. She barely has time for her husband. I almost never see her face each month. She works hard like a professional construction laborer. It deteriorates her health and makes me bored with this relationship. Our marriage life is getting worse. It seems that we have only two choices: waiting for it to end or bearing with it until we die” (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

However, the single male key informants thought that the occupation of the wife will affect the family if she works so hard that she has no time for her family. They also thought that the life experience of the wife has an effect on the family, while the age of the wife has no effect. The single female key informants thought that the age and occupation of the wife do not affect the family. They believed that a balance of responsibilities is more important. If any part is ignored, it may cause problems.

2) The social construction of reality concerning the physical characteristics, personality, and clothing of the wife

The key informants, who are wives in their real life, thought that Aruna’s housewife clothing was appropriate, simple, and feminine, and the working clothing after her makeover also looked good and appropriate. However, some of the key informants thought that her working clothing looked fake and unnatural and the hairstyle was also unpleasant.

Some of the key informants did not like to dress themselves up, while some of them did not stay pretty all the time but occasionally dressed up for professional purposes. They suggested that the wife’s clothing can lead to family problems, depending on each individual case. Some wives may like to dress up in simple and modest clothes that are suitable for their personality. Some wives may like

to dress pretty and look good all the time. Some wives may like to always keep up with fashion trends. Most of the key informants said that they normally dressed according to the occasions.

“Aruna dresses modestly, which is normal because she is a simple housewife. She does not dress up to please her husband because she believes that he does not love her because of her outer appearance. I always dress casually and do not wear bold clothes. I usually wear no makeup but will meticulously dress up when I have to attend social events or meet my husband’s colleagues. If the wife dresses nicely, it will make the husband look good as well” (Munchusa Aung, personal communication, June 30, 2019).

“I agree with how Aruna dresses in the drama. Some women do not take care of themselves after having a child or a husband and even forget to appreciate the colorful and beautiful things around themselves. Therefore, it is important to take care of yourself and always dress appropriately. Although I do not dress up beautifully all the time, I never let myself look horrible. I need to care about the person living with me and keep our marriage life interesting and healthy” (Anonymous 3, personal communication, August 22, 2019).

“Aruna dresses politely. Her clothes are beautiful and appropriate for each occasion. My dressing style is a bit similar to her style. Sometimes I wear suits and pants with high heels” (Anonymous 5, personal communication, August 31, 2019).

“I like Aruna’s costumes in the drama because how we dress can affect the workplace productivity. Especially, Aruna is a car salesperson. She has to maintain her good appearance and modern style in order to sell her products. In real life, I like to wear modest and beautiful clothes that are appropriate for the workplace settings” (Nim Matarach, personal communication, July 9, 2019).

“Aruna inspires me to dress up and look good like her. Personally, I am different from Aruna in the drama. I dress casually in t-shirts and shorts with an oily face and frizzy hair. When at home, I wear no makeup and do not care about beauty at all. But, when I go to work, I will neatly dress, put on makeup, and arrange my hair to make myself look the best I can. My clothes must look good but do not need to be brand name or so stylish” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

In the second group of key informants with no direct experience of being a wife, the male key informants thought that Aruna dresses appropriately as a housewife and a working woman. The single female key informant thought that in the beginning of the drama Aruna does not dress nicely. A housewife does not need to dress in old-fashioned clothes like that. Some key informants made no comment about her clothes. They thought that it is her personal taste and she can wear whatever she likes based on suitability.

“In the opinion of men, Aruna dresses appropriately as a traditional housewife during her kitchen housewife era. When she works as a car salesperson after getting divorced, she dresses stylishly and sleekly like a modern office lady” (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

“In the beginning, Aruna did not dress well. She should take care of herself more. After the makeover, she looks more beautiful and modern but her bangs are neither pretty nor suitable” (Waraporn Kaewwong, personal communication, July 6, 2019).

### 3) The social construction of reality concerning the traits and emotional maturity of the wife

The key informants, who are wives in their real lives, mostly thought that Aruna is a family lover, who fulfills her housewife duty to the fullest. She is incredibly strong and also has a resolute mind and high patience. Although sometimes her mind is in a bad state because she was poorly treated, she has the courage to move on. She is sensible, calm, thoughtful, modest, reasonable, and optimistic. She knows how to forgive and takes her role as a wife and mother seriously. She is gentle and honest, exceptionally performs her wife duties, and can rely on herself. She is a good follower and also has positive attitudes and logical child-raising principles. However, some key informants thought that Aruna was too weak.

“Aruna is a normal, good human being. She is happy when good things happen and becomes sad when bad things occur” (Paweena Chalayonnawin, personal communication, June 10, 2019).

“Aruna is a strong, clear, and righteous person. If she was a real person, she would be a decent, moral, ethical, and reasonable woman” (Nareerat Wongsin, personal communication, June 17, 2019).



The key informants had some traits that were quite similar to those of Aruna. They were also modest women and good followers with strong determination. When being abused, they had the courage to walk away from that point. They were a family lover and a good mother. They properly performed their role as a wife, a child, and a mother. They adhered to the motto “do your best first, show little feeling, let things go, and be positive.”

“A married couple must weigh the pros and cons of living together. If the pros are more than the cons, they should continue living together. Their marriage life will go smoothly if they can adjust themselves and accept each other’s flaws. If they cannot adjust themselves, they should be given three chances before separating from each other” (Anonymous 1, personal communication, July 12, 2019).

Some key informants thought that they were similar to Aruna because they were reasonable, clear, and gentle with their children, loved their family, and always had positive thinking.

However, some of the key informants thought that their traits were different from those of Aruna because they are always overthinking, too sensitive, and weak. Unlike Aruna, who is too calm, they are impatient, think fast, do things fast, strictly adhere to their principles, and earn their own living. They cannot fully perform their housewife duty because they spend most of their time at work. They are tough and willing to take risks. One key informant thought that she is very different from Aruna because she is not half as good as Aruna in cooking and taking care of her husband, although she tries to fully perform her role as a wife.

“When a problem occurs, Aruna will wait until the situation becomes clearer. But I cannot wait. I will nip it in the bud” (Nareerat Wongsin, personal communication, June 17, 2019).

“I am not an ideal housewife. I am bad at cooking and doing housework. I rarely teach my children and always let them do what they want without scolding them because I want to compensate for not spending time with them. I am always good with them, as I do not want them to think that I do not care about them or do not love them” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

Apart from expressing opinions about Aruna’s traits, some of the key informants gave more information about their own traits, that although they are

impatient, easily get mad, and are self-centered, they love their family, have responsibility, and do not take advantage of others. They are also honest, moral, and easy going. They do their best each day, never expect much from others, rely on themselves, and always do moral things.

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the male key informants thought that Aruna is like a normal good wife, who lives for her husband, family, and children and is sensitive, gentle, and determined. The single female key informants thought that Aruna is kind hearted. After being cheated on by her husband, she takes care of her child and herself more. They thought that Aruna has a simple personality and looks like a typical woman. She lets herself look frumpy until her husband takes her for granted. However, her strength is that she is honest, loves her child, and wants to have a perfect family.

“Aruna is a simple woman and a typical good wife, who lives to care of her husband and child. Due to various pressures, she needs to transform into a strong working woman in order to survive. She is driven to do what she needs to do. I am a man but I had faced a similar situation when my company, which used to be so powerful, needed to close down because of an economic crisis. I struggled to find solutions for my family amidst the crisis” (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

4) The social construction of reality concerning the lifestyle and role of the wife in the family

The key informants, who are wives in their real lives, mostly thought that the wife in this drama is a good housewife, who devotes herself to taking care of everything for the husband. Some of the key informants thought that she is more like a nanny, not a wife. The role of the wife in this drama varies according to the lifestyle and personality. Aruna is a gentle and modest housewife, who takes care of the house well, while Aruna's friends seem to be more aggressive because they mainly work outside the home. The role of the wife also depends on age. Aruna is older than Kanya so she is more considerate and moral and can better perform her role as a wife. Kanya is a problematic teenager, who lacks love and needs attention from someone, so she does not act as a typical wife in the family.

“People tend to think that wives must be good and mistresses must be bad. In this drama, the wife is so kind and endures everything for her family no matter how much she is mistreated. The mistress is self-centered, always makes a loud noise, and seeks attention from the husband and others. For example, she jumped from the motorcycle to make herself injured so that the husband comes to take care of her instead of being with the wife and their child” (Photjamanphaji Taweewangphol, personal communication, October 5, 2019).

The key informants also said that they play their role as a wife differently. Some of them devote themselves to taking care of the family, take on the leading role in making household decisions, act as the friend, girlfriend, and mother of their husbands without them knowing it, and become their husbands’ planner and manager without pressuring them. Some key informants live separately from their husbands and raise their children alone. Their husbands are still the father of their children but no longer live together with them.

Some of the key informants compared the role of the wife in the drama with their role in real life and found some similarities, such as the role of being a good housewife and a family lover. They said that they take responsibility for both housework and office work and can effectively fulfill their duty. Their role in real life is quite similar to that of Aruna, who follows her husband’s lead and takes care of the husband and family well.

However, some of the key informants said that the role of the wife in the drama is different from their role in real life. The wife in the drama has to do all of the housework, take care of the child and husband, and deal with many other problems. On the other hand, this group of key informants works outside the home and are responsible for only dropping off and picking up their children at school. They hire a housekeeper to cook and do all the housework. Their husbands and relatives also help them take care of and teach their children. Their husbands spend time with the family more than the husband in the drama. For some of the key informants, who are mainly responsible for household chores, whenever they feel tired, their husbands will help them with the housework. For some of the key informants, their role is broader than that of the wife in the drama. They have to do everything for the family, comprising being a family leader, dealing with all of the family matters, paying for bills, and

paying attention to all of the family members. Apart from going to work 7 days a week, they need to take care of the husband and children and do all of the housework as if they are a servant. Some key informants act as the family leader, while their husbands are the follower.

“The role of the wife in the drama is different from mine. In real life, I am the family leader, while my husband is the follower. I have decision-making power” (Anonymous 4, personal communication, July 30, 2019).

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant thought that the role of the wife in the drama is different from his wife’s role. He said that his wife has much more burden than Aruna.

“My wife works hundreds of times harder than Aruna. She has to take care of her old and sick parents, while working as a bank employee. It is known that those who work for banks seldom have time for family so their husbands are likely to ask for a divorce” (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

The single male key informants thought that in this drama the wife’s role was different from the mistress’s role and that the wife’s role varies in each period of time.

“Regarding the role of the wife in this drama, the wife (Aruna) is a perfect housewife, who can transform into a capable working woman to earn money for the family. The mistress (Kanya) has an inferiority complex and mental illness. As she lacks family affection, she needs love, good financial status, and a stable family” (Choo-earth Chusatan, personal communication, July 15, 2019).

The single female key informants stated that the wife in this drama is a good wife, who perfectly takes care of all the family members but she should live her own life as well. They also thought that Aruna completely fulfills her role as a wife.

5) The social construction of reality concerning the wife’s relationships with other characters

The key informants, who are wives in their real lives, thought that the wife in the drama has a happy relationship with her husband and child. She is always a responsible wife and a good mother. Although she needs to get divorced, she accepts it and adjusts herself to the situation. She is able to look after her child and earn income to support the family. The key informants thought that Aruna can

maintain a good distance with her husband and child, as she is calm and performs her role well. Some of the key informants thought that the relationship among the husband, wife, and child in this drama was built based on their roles and duties. The husband goes out to work, while the wife takes care of the child and housework. The wife loves the husband and child and considers them as someone she needs to look after in order to create a warm family. The husband and wife are aware of the parenting duty and always give love to their child. It can be said that the relationship among the husband, wife, and child in this drama is quite good. They solve family problems based on the love for their child and self-respect. In terms of the husband-wife relationship, they feel attached and care for each other like a family. They have lived together for so long that they forget about their sweetness and passionate love, which makes the other woman able to interfere and ruin their marriage life. Some of the key informants thought that the wife is a mother to her child but does not act as a wife to her husband. The husband keeps distance from the wife, abandons his burden, and takes advantages of her.

“The fact that Aruna dedicates her life to taking care of Thada and Nuda reflects her great love for the family. Their marriage life will go smoothly or not depend on the love and understanding of two people. Dishonesty is the greatest obstacle to maintaining married life because it enables the third person to interfere and easily ruin the family bond” (Photjamanphaji Taweewangphol, personal communication, October 5, 2019).

The relationship among the wife, husband, and child in this drama is dynamic. Before the husband's adultery, they had a happy relationship like a normal family. After the husband's adultery, the key informants thought that he was so selfish in abandoning his wife and child. If he really loved the family, he should have stopped himself from the beginning. He should not have let the other woman bother his wife. Some of the key informants thought that the relationship between the female protagonist and the female antagonist was too close. Although the female antagonist receives her karma at the end, this kind of story is risky to the audience that does not use discretion while watching it.

Some of the key informants said that they have a poor relationship with their husbands in real life. They get paranoid and worried when their husband does



not return home but they have a good relationship with their children. Some of the key informants said that their marriage life is better than that of the drama characters. Their husbands take care of them well and always have time for the family. Their children fully receive love and care from the father. Their family relationship is in perfect harmony. All of the family members have their own responsibility and each of them can fulfill it well.

One key informant thought that the relationship among the wife, husband, and daughter in this drama is different from hers. She lives with her husband like a close friend without clearly defining roles for each other. She and her husband help and support each other according to occasions and capabilities. One key informant, who does not have a child, thought that her husband is a family leader, who loves and respects his wife. She wants to be a good wife and a good mother in the future.

“At present, I may not be able to look after my husband as well as Aruna because I need to work outside the home and do not have enough time. As a housewife, I can cook and do housework like Aruna. I think I can take good care of my husband but I do not know whether he will agree with me or not” (Niimnoon, personal communication, July 15, 2019).

“My husband does not have problems with women. I would not know if he had an affair because I am not interested in monitoring him. I am quite confident in my husband. Therefore, our relationship is quite good. My husband acts as a good family leader as usual” (Anonymous 5, personal communication, August 31, 2019).

“Their role varies according to age. Compared to Kanya, Aruna is older and more thoughtful. She has morality and performs her role in the family well. Kanya is a problematic teenager, who lacks love. Kanya does not perform her role as a wife in the family. She just wants someone to pamper her. The daughter is the main variable. In the drama, the wife and husband love their daughter so much” (Ying Jiroch, personal communication, July 24, 2019).

“My husband has had an affair for 7 years but the three of us, parents and child, still live together in harmony. This is because I understand that happiness and suffering depend on how we think. Nothing remains the same. Things change over time. We should accept what happens, do logical things, not try to win, not use

emotions, and take a good care of our beloved child. The relationship with the husband remains the same but our love is not the same. I no longer have passionate love for him. Due to financial conditions and social status, we need to live together for our child” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

In the second group with no direct experience with being a wife, the married male key informant thought that the relationship among the wife, husband, and daughter in this drama is normal. The single male key informants thought that the wife in the drama loves the husband, while the husband is unfaithful. The relationship between the wife and child is full of love and care. The single female key informants thought that the wife in the drama has a good relationship with the husband. However, as the wife does not dress up to look pretty, the husband thinks of her as a sure thing at home and looks for a more beautiful girl. The husband does not appreciate what the wife does for him but he still loves her. Aruna is old-fashioned and does not take care of herself. She should improve herself at this point. The relationship between the wife and the daughter is very good. The father also loves the daughter but not as much as the mother does.

“I think the relationship among the wife, husband, and daughter in this drama is good. But Aruna is too plain for her husband. She plays her role as a mother well” (Anonymous 1, personal communication, July 25, 2019).

#### 6) The social construction of reality concerning the wife in other dimensions

The key informants, who are wives in their real lives, thought that Aruna is a decent person. She tends to do good deeds rather than bad deeds. Sometimes she acts fiercely because she cannot hold her anger and wants to fight back. She is capable and has high patience. This character is created to have a kind mother, lovely friends, and a good job. In real life, there is nobody that has all good things like her. Aruna is not that kind to forgive everyone without thinking much. However, she is not that cruel to hurt someone, although sometimes she is angry and emotional. Aruna is a strong woman. She has courage to start a new life and pays attention to everything she does. She is a fast learner and is able to adjust to any given situation. Aruna is a very good character. She is not evil at all. She can be a role model for every married woman. However, some of the key informants thought that this character is too good.

Aruna makes them aware that they should not rely on their husband alone and self-reliance is the best path.

“Aruna is an ordinary woman. She is not a monk. As a human, she needs to play various roles in life, which can make her confused. When Wasin expresses his love to her, if it is in a normal situation, Aruna can just accept it and become his girlfriend. However, in this case, Aruna cannot immediately accept his love because she is a married woman. She needs to contemplate between being a good woman who loves the family and being a bad girl by refusing to go back to Thada because he hurts her so much. Aruna needs to love herself. Therefore, she decides to accept Wasin’s love. As a woman, she needs someone to love her and take care of her heart. Aruna chooses to leave the pain behind in order to heal her heart and prepare for her new love” (Photjamanphaji Taweewangphol, personal communication, October 5, 2019).

Some of the key informants said that they themselves have both good and bad sides. They kindly take care of everything for their husbands but they can be merciless as well. They are strong but do not hurt others. When they are attacked, they will respond in a logical manner. Some of the key informants said that they are mediocre. They do not allow someone to abuse them and never use violence in response to abusers. They look at the world with neutral eyes. They are good to those who are good to them. They are evil to those who are evil to them. Some key informants thought that they are very similar to Aruna. If they experienced the same problem of an unfaithful husband, they would do the same as Aruna. On the other hand, some of the key informants said that they would dare not do the same thing as Aruna and would need to bear with such a problem.

“Aruna is a combination of good and bad. I am satisfied with this kind of character. I am actually an easy person. I tend to let others do as they want in order to end the problem. I do not want to have any conflict, so I stay quiet” (Ya Kob Makhamthao, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

“I have been cheated on by someone I love the most and it is so hurtful. This may be because I have been dating him since high school and he is also my first and only man in my life. When the affair started, I felt weak and did not dare to make any decisions until my husband thought that it was a normal problem and I could

accept it. Therefore, the problem has never been solved” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant thought that Aruna is a normal human being with many emotions. The single male key informants thought that Aruna can be good or bad depending on the situation. Aruna is honest with her own feelings and always cares for her child’s feelings. The single female key informants also thought that Aruna can be good or bad according to the situation. She is bad when she wants to counter-attack the other woman. At the end, she should date Wasin and only allow Thada to be the father of her child without living together. Aruna should open her heart to a new man. Aruna is a gray character. She is indecisive and unable to make decisions quickly in terms of breaking up with the husband and dating Wasin.

“Aruna is a normal human being, who can be good, evil, mad, tired, resolved, confused, and stubborn. She is not different from other people. Aruna is a married woman. She should not easily fall for the boss. Maybe she follows the concept that older women prefer younger men” (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

#### 7) The presentation of the value of being a wife

The key informants, who are wives in their real lives, thought that a “wife” is a life partner, who helps to create the family and children, and a married woman, who needs to adjust herself to family situations. Regarding the role and importance of the wife in the family, the wife acts as a mother. A family cannot go on without her. The wife should be a good mother to her children and a good spouse to her husband. The wife has a duty to look after and teach her children to be good people in society and also has to play a role as a perfect housewife, who is good at both housework and office work. The wife must be strong, confident, and be able to take care of her husband, children, and family well. Moreover, the wife must be honest, economical, and so on.

“The importance of the wife is reflected in the saying that “A good wife leads you to a peaceful life.” A good wife will understand, support, and encourage the husband, while a strict wife makes the husband feel inferior. My husband and I started as friends. After marriage, he let me take the lead. If I take a lead in everything, he

will have no chance to think on his own. Therefore, sometimes I motivate him to lead me. He said that staying at home with me is like living with his mother. He has gotten used to receiving orders. I have seen many similar couples, where husbands let wives take the lead without knowing it. Men are the elephant's front legs but women are mahouts. Wives can take a lead but should not unpleasantly control their husbands. Some women use their eyes, emotions, and facial expressions to control their husbands like a boss orders her subordinates. If those husbands have freedom and meet other women outside, they will lose themselves and feel that they have dominant power" (Nareerat Wongsin, personal communication, June 17, 2019).

"Mia (Wife) 2018" talks about a wife in modern times. Nowadays, women are still not equal to men. They are still cheated on by their husbands and need to quit their job to raise their children at home. In this age, there are evil and immoral women trying to snatch someone's husband without caring about social norms or sins. This drama makes the wives in modern times aware of changes. It is time for wives to speak up and call for their rights. They should not be mistreated by their husbands. Being single mothers is not a bad thing. It is a better solution than having to endure unfaithfulness for life. Men and women may quit their role as husband and wife but they remain the parents of their children. "Mia (Wife) 2018" represents a tough wife, who can adjust to any given situation, like Aruna. In the modern age, a wife should rely on herself when having a family problem. She should not endure it in order to maintain a happy family life. A wife should be good at housework and office work, have the ability to solve life problems, and possess self-reliance skills.

"Mia (Wife) 2018 suggests that the world has changed and women are no longer the "elephant's hind legs." Women should not be left uneducated as in ancient times. In the current society women and men are equal and can walk side by side without having to be leaders or followers. We are wrongly taught that women must be the elephant's hind legs. At present, women know men's tricks. Men are physically stronger but sometimes women are mentally stronger than men. A couple should be compatible with each other; otherwise there will be a problem" (Ying Jiroch, personal communication, July 24, 2019).

"Mia (Wife) 2018 refers to a modern woman, who chooses to get divorced, not because she is dumped by a man, but because that man is not good



enough for her love” (Photjamanphaji Taweewangphol, personal communication, October 5, 2019).

The meanings of “wife” in the key informants’ opinions included the legal wife of the husband and the woman that is chosen to be a spouse or mother of the child. It is socially known that the woman who lives with her husband should either undergo a wedding ceremony or sign a marriage certificate (or both), which shows that people place importance on a marriage certificate. In the past, husbands had to be leaders and work to support the family. In the present day or the age of equal rights and freedom, wives can be family leaders and good mothers and also have a stable career, which indicates that people place importance on equality between women and men. The “wife” is a woman, who acts as a good housewife and mother. Nowadays, having a warm family, consisting of parents and children, comprises life happiness. The wife helps fulfill and sustain the family. The “wife” is a person who sacrifices herself. The “wife” is a person that is responsible for everything in the family. The “wife” is a married woman with increased duties and responsibilities. A wife should properly fulfill her duties based on the teachings of the Lord Buddha, which explained the 5 duties of the wife as follows: 1) be well-organized; 2) be kind to surrounding people; 3) avoid adultery; 4) manage family finances well; and 5) never get lazy. This shows that the key informants give importance to the role and duty of the wife.

“The meaning of “wife” in my opinion is similar to the concept of the traditional Thai wife. A wife must look after her husband and children, take care of housework, cook the food, clean the house, and fulfill other related duties. The thing that is different is that nowadays most wives need to work outside the home like men do. As wives are not slaves, their husbands should help them do some household chores as well. However, based on my direct experience, wives are still the slaves of their husbands. Although the society has changed, husbands still have more power in the family” (Anonymous 6, personal communication, August 2, 2019).

The wife that is most suitable for the current Thai society must be more capable than the husband. As Thailand is a Buddhist society, people who will become husband and wife must have the same precepts in mind. In the Thai society, wives should have social equality with husbands in terms of career and presence in social

events. Wives should have the ability and power to lead the family, make decisions, express their opinions, break free from the control of husbands, and live their own lives without having to follow the husband's orders. They should have various knowledge and skills, be able to solve immediate problems, possess positive thinking, and be adaptive to a changing environment. They should have versatile skills to do housework and office work, effectively manage time, look after the family, completely fulfill their role as wives, take care of themselves, and support their husbands. The role of the wife in the current Thai society is not different from the past. The wife still needs to do all of the housework and look after her husband and children. The difference is that at present the wife can earn money to support the family. In some families, wives can make more money than the husbands. The term "wife" is not only about the role of the wife but also includes the love and support from her husband.

"The wife, who is most suitable for the current Thai society, must be strong, calm, and capable of dealing with people, work, and life. As this world is getting more wicked every day, only strong people can survive" (Paweena Chalayonnawin, personal communication, June 10, 2019).

"Wives must always endure, understand, and forgive what their husbands do, whether wrong or right. I think this concept is not quite fair for women. But our social structure is like this. When wives, as part of the social structure, are faced with unfaithful husbands, the society creates such a concept to heal their feelings. It is the wives' responsibility to use intellectual intelligence to understand the social structure and survive their own lives (because they are forced to)" (Photjamanphaji Taweesawangphol, personal communication, October 5, 2019).

"In today's Thai society, women do not need to marry if they cannot find good enough men. These days women can live alone because they can earn money to support themselves" (Anonymous 5, personal communication, August 31, 2019).

An ideal wife must recognize her duties, take care of herself and family, give advice to her husband, avoid causing problems and burdens in terms of housework and other matters, support her husband, help to create a good family, not cling to her husband, make her husband love, understand, and devote himself to her,

act as a good mother, look after her children together with the husband, fulfill her role as a wife, make the husband's family and colleagues accept and respect her, take good care of herself, have the ability to work both inside and outside the home, look after all of the family members well, love herself, and always live her life in a composed and calm manner.

The key informants had a beautiful image about how an ideal wife properly takes care of her family, husband, and children without acting as a slave to the husband and family. An ideal wife should be able to talk to her husband about what is right and wrong, not agree to do everything just to avoid conflicts with the husband, and not endure the husband that puts himself at the center of the universe. She should speak up and make her husband realize that the mistreatment of wives is not allowed in the current society. An ideal wife must have sufficient knowledge so that she can continue living her life without collapsing if she is abandoned by the husband.

Some of the key informants thought that the ideal wife and the wife that is the most suitable for the current Thai society are the same because both of them need to act as a sister, friend, and mother in the family. Some of the key informants thought that the wife should be capable of everything, including housework and office work, in order to make the family happy. Some of the key informants thought that the wife should be by the husband's side, help the husband perform tasks that do not require physical strength, and share responsibilities with the husband.

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant gave a further comment as follows.

“Mia (Wife) 2018 is a true representative of wives in today's society. In the year 2018, there are many lustful men, who are ready to have an affair with their wives' sister, although their wives are cute and sexy, yet a little bit old-fashioned. A wife is someone I love and want to see her face more than two times a month. My ideal wife must be a beautiful, sexy, Chinese woman with fair skin, who lives a simple life and does not like to show off expensive things like other women do on social media. Actually, my wife is an ideal wife but she works so hard that she forgets her husband. The wife who is suitable for the current Thai society must have time for

her husband and children. That's all" (Kobz Kanokshoti, personal communication, June 12, 2019).

The single male key informants thought that "wife 2018" is a physically and mentally strong wife, who can adjust to any given situation. A wife is a woman, who takes care of her husband and children and plays an active role in the Thai society. An ideal wife is a housewife, who looks after her husband. The wife that is most suitable for the current Thai society should have physical and mental strength to handle housework and office work. The single female key informants thought that "wife 2018" is a modern wife in the 4G era, who dresses up nicely and goes to work outside the home. She can walk together with her husband in every situation and act as a good wife and good mother without having to always stay home. A wife is a person that spends her life with another person as if they are the same person. A wife is a female spouse that lives with her husband for the rest of her life, as monogamy is important and accepted as a social norm. An ideal wife is a woman that takes care of her family, husband, children, and works in a balanced way and receives respect and compliments from her husband and others. The wife that is most suitable for the Thai society must be modern, able to keep up with digital technology, and pay attention to dharma and temples. However, the characteristics of an ideal wife may vary depending on each family's circumstance.

"Wife 2018 refers to a drama about wives broadcasted in 2018. I do not mean to annoy you. I really think that ONE Channel named this drama because it is broadcasted in 2018. You can see that there is no year specified in the title of the original version" (Anonymous 1, personal communication, July 25, 2019).

"An ideal wife should not easily give in to her husband. She should make him give in to her instead. Nowadays, women are more submissive than men. The wife that is most suitable for the Thai society should be like Aruna. She agrees to do everything, including changing herself, in order to be with the husband. However, she should not give in to him too much, or else she will look inferior in his eyes. She needs to make him give in to her sometimes" (Waraporn Kaewwong, personal communication, July 6, 2019).

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Conclusion**

The present research, entitled “New Paradigm Narrative and Construction of the Meanings of Thai Television Drama with Cross-Media Content,” aimed to study the intertextuality between a Taiwanese television drama called “The Fierce Wife” and a Thai television drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018” in order to investigate the intercultural communication, values, ideologies, and construction of the meanings of “wife” in the television drama called “Mia (Wife) 2018” through the components of the new paradigm narrative, and to study the perception and interpretation of the meanings of “wife” of the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018.” The research results can be concluded and discussed as follows.

Considering the analysis of the intertextuality between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018,” the researcher found that the components of the new paradigm narrative (plot, theme, conflicts, characters, settings, dialogues, points of view, and special symbols) and the values and ideologies were transferred through various forms of convention, extension, reduction, and modification. Only the theme and point of view were transferred conventionally. The main theme of these two dramas is love and the sub-theme is morality. Regarding point of view, the story was told from the point of view of the main character or the wife, who has to fight to continue living. She does not fight to get her man back like other leading characters in traditional melodramas about married couples, where everybody reconciles and happily lives together in the end. These two dramas show the audience every step of married life, difficulties in maintaining a happy family, and how the main character (wife) solves problems at each stage of her life in order to make the audience with no



direct experience aware of these issues and to make the audience with direct experience adapt the main character's solution to solve their own problems. The two dramas compare the actions and end results of the wife, the wife's cousin, and unfaithful husband, and also place the most importance on husband-wife conflicts, followed by internal conflicts within oneself. The way to resolve the husband-wife conflicts in the dramas was divorce. After the divorce, the situation gets better and each of them can live their own lives. In terms of internal conflicts, every main character has internal conflicts at different times in life.

The values and ideologies concealed in the dramas are transferred in the form of convention, extension, reduction, and modification. The values that are conventionally transferred are the following. 1) The belief in sacred power, superstition, omens, prophecy, incarnation, and the law of karma. The wives in the two dramas believe in paying respect to gods to get what they want and always pray for their husbands. 2) Another value portrayed is that women should be reserved. Both dramas present the idea that women in the modern era are not reserved; they tend to approach an attractive man for example and ask for his phone number first. They even sleep with someone's husband and regard it as normal. 3) Another value portrayed is that a married couple must respect, trust, endure, and be honest with each other for their children. 4) Another value portrayed is that being a mistress is immoral, unacceptable, and causes others' families to break up. 5) Also in the dramas is the idea that, regarding corporate culture, high-level employees must have both professional abilities and a good family because they can affect the company's image. 6) Another value is that of gratitude. The value that is extended is the wife's opinions about the mistress and the mistress's opinions about herself, which appear in "Mia (Wife) 2018," while "The Fierce Wife" only presents the overall opinions about infidelity. The value that is reduced is the Taiwanese corporate culture where all employees must stand in a row and shout the company's motto before work in order to show discipline, create a sense of organizational belonging, and enhance workplace morale. Thai organizations do not have this kind of corporate culture. The value that is modified is the belief that a broken thing is an omen of bad luck. The Taiwanese version uses a broken mirrored photo frame, while the Thai version uses a broken water glass.

The ideologies that are conventionally transferred include the following. 1) Authoritarianism. Both dramas present the power of a man through the husband, who has an influence on the female characters (the wife, mistress, and colleague (his ex-girlfriend)). 2) Patriarchy. If a man is outstanding at work but has no family, people will think that he is very dedicated to his work. If he has both a good job and warm family, the society will praise him even more. If a woman is a workaholic, people will think of her as an old maid or a devil. If she is a housewife, she will be viewed as old and indestructible and will be quickly forgotten. The ideologies that are modified are associated with feminism. In “The Fierce Wife,” when the wife decides to work outside the home, her family does not agree with it because most determined working women are single. In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” the daughter agrees when the mother decides to work outside the home because she sees that all of her mother’s friends are working women and her mother is the only one in the group who is a housewife.

In order to answer the research objective about the perception and interpretation of the meanings of “wife” of the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018,” the researcher compared the meaning of “wife” that is constructed in the drama with the perception and interpretation of the audience obtained from the interviews. The results can be summarized as follows.

The television drama “Mia (Wife) 2018” constructs the social reality of “wife” through Aruna, the main character or the wife. Based on the encoding model of Fiske (2011), the social construction of reality can be divided into the following categories.

### **6.1.1 The Social Construction of Reality Concerning the Demographic Characteristics of the Wife**

The drama constructs Aruna at about 35-40 years of age. Before marriage, she previously worked outside the home so she has some work experience. After marriage, she has been a housewife. In terms of economic status, she is in a middle-class family. Aruna is a mother and wife in the family. She has to work both inside and outside the home. In the beginning, she only worked inside the home. After having a family problem, she lives separately from the husband and searches for a job. Actually, she is quite old to start a new job; it is lucky that Wasin offers her a job. This makes her able to earn a high income to support her child and have no economic

problems when separated from her husband. The drama presents that the age and occupation of the wife affect economic factors, comprising job search and income. Considering the perception and interpretation of the audience, the audience in the first group of key informants, who are wives in their real lives, provided the following comments. 1) The age and occupation of the wife have no effect on the family (oppositional reading). The factors affecting the family are the attitude toward family life and the time management of each individual. 2) The age of the wife has no effect on the family but her occupation affects the income of the family (negotiated reading). The key informants providing this comment were the housewives, who have no regular job and financially depend on the husband. They thought that having no job makes the wife feel inferior. The husband may blame her when he is tired from working alone. 3) The age and occupation of the wife will affect the family or not depending on the husband (negotiated reading). If the husband understands and helps with the housework, the wife, who needs to work outside, will have no problem. 4) Both the age and occupation of the wife affect the family (preferred reading) for various reasons. The age of the wife affects the job search. If she is “old,” it will be difficult to find a job. However, in the drama, Aruna is capable and has no problem finding a job. When she has a job, the wife can rely on herself without asking for support from the husband. Working women tend to get married in their 30s because they want to make their career stable first. The wife is responsible for both office work and housework and also needs to look after her husband and children. When she is unable to fully perform her role as a wife due to a heavy workload, it may cause family problems if the husband does not understand her. In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the married male key informant thought that the age and occupation of the wife clearly have a great effect on the family (preferred reading). The single male key informants thought that the occupation of the wife affects the family if she works too hard and has no time for the family. The age of the wife has no effect but her life experience can affect the family (negotiated reading). The single female key informants thought that the age and occupation of the wife do not affect the family (oppositional reading). A balance of responsibilities is more important—if any part is ignored, it may cause problems.

### **6.1.2 The Social Construction of Reality Concerning the Physical Characteristics, Personality, and Clothing of the Wife**

The drama constructs that when being a housewife, Aruna dresses modestly in light-colored clothes, wears her hair up, puts on no makeup, and often wears sneakers with long skirts. She is always polite and gentle. When she is a working woman, Aruna changes her dressing style to wearing stylish clothing and high-heeled heels, and her hairstyle is short and modern. She looks stronger and more confident. Regarding the perception and interpretation of the audience, in the first group of key informants, those that are wives in their real lives thought that Aruna dresses appropriately according to the situation. When she is a housewife, she dresses modestly and does not wear much makeup. When she is a working woman, she changes her clothes and hairstyle to be suitable for her car sales job (preferred reading). Some of the key informants thought that Aruna was too old-fashioned so she was cheated on by her husband. After the makeover, her working clothes look fake, unnatural, and inappropriate. Her hairstyle is also unpleasant (oppositional reading). The key informants mostly dress according to occasions. They may not dress up elegantly and beautifully all the time but never let themselves look horrible. They wear casual clothes at home but dress up nicely when attending social events. It is necessary to wear clothing that is suitable for the job. The teacher should wear suits and high heels. Gardeners should wear flexible clothes. In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the male key informants thought that Aruna dresses appropriately as a housewife and as a working woman. Her clothing looks realistic (preferred reading). The single female key informants thought that in the beginning Aruna did not dress nicely. A housewife does not need to dress in old-fashioned clothes like that. She should take care of herself more. After the makeover, she looks more beautiful and modern, which is suitable for her job. She has to sell luxury cars so she needs to wear clothes that look beautiful, modern, and expensive. However, her bangs are neither pretty nor suitable (oppositional reading). Some key informants made no comment about Aruna's clothing. They thought that it was her personal taste and that she could wear whatever she liked based on suitability (negotiated reading).

### **6.1.3 The Social Construction of Reality Concerning the Traits and Emotional Maturity of the Wife**

The drama constructs that Aruna has high emotional maturity, patience, and an optimistic mind. When someone tells her a suspicious story about her husband, she does not easily believe it until she has proof. She believes in superstitions and sacred power. Regarding the perception and interpretation of the audience, the key informants in the first group, who are wives in their real lives, thought that Aruna is a normal and good person. She is happy when good things happen and becomes sad when bad things occur. She is a strong, clear, and righteous person. If she was a real person, she would be a decent, moral, ethical, and reasonable woman. Aruna is a family lover, who completely fulfills her housewife duty. She takes her role as a wife and mother seriously. She is gentle, honest, highly patient, and optimistic (preferred reading). Some of the key informants thought that Aruna was too weak and calm (oppositional reading) because, unlike Aruna, they themselves are impatient, think fast, and do not want to wait. In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the male key informants thought that Aruna was like a normal good wife, who lives for her husband, family, and children. She is sensitive, gentle, and determined (preferred reading). The single female key informants thought that Aruna is kind-hearted. She makes herself look old-fashioned and lets her husband take her for granted. However, her strengths are that she is honest, loves her child, and wants to build a perfect family (preferred reading).

### **6.1.4 The Social Construction of Reality Concerning the Lifestyle and Role of the Wife in the Family**

The drama constructs that Aruna wakes up before everyone in the house, takes care of everything for the husband and child, cooks breakfast, wakes up her husband and child, and prepares their clothes. She is a mother, wife, beloved person, and an important member of the family. The wife must fully perform her duties, take care of the house, prepare food, do laundry, look after the husband from the time he wakes up until he goes to bed, and endure all things for the child and her own self. Concerning the perception and interpretation of the audience, in the first group of key informants, the audience, who are wives in their real lives, thought that the wife in this drama was



a good housewife, who devotes herself to taking care of everything for the husband (preferred reading). Some of the key informants thought that Aruna is more like a nanny, not a wife (oppositional reading), and some of the key informants thought that the role of the wife in this drama varied according to the lifestyle and character. Aruna is a gentle and modest housewife, who takes care of her house well, while Aruna's friends seem to be stronger and more aggressive because they mainly work outside the home. The role of the wife also depends on age. Aruna is older than Kanya so she is more thoughtful and moral and can better perform her role as a wife. Kanya is a problematic teenager, who lacks love and needs attention from someone, so she does not act as a normal wife in the family (negotiated reading). The main theme of this drama highlights that the wife must be kind and endure everything for her family no matter how much she is mistreated. The mistress in this drama is self-centered, always makes loud noises, and seeks attention from the husband and others (preferred reading). In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the married male key informant thought that his wife works hundreds of times harder than Aruna because she has to take care of her old and sick parents while working as a bank employee. Those that work for banks seldom have time for family so their husbands are likely to ask for a divorce (oppositional reading). The single male informants thought that in this drama the wife (Aruna) is a perfect housewife who can transform into a capable working woman to earn money for the family, while the mistress (Kanya) has an inferiority complex and a mental illness. As she lacks family affection, she seeks love, good financial status, and a stable family (preferred reading). The single female key informants thought that the wife in this drama is a good wife, who properly takes care of all family members but she should live her own life as well (negotiated reading).

#### **6.1.5 The Social Construction of Reality Concerning the Wife's Relationships with Other Characters**

The drama constructs that Aruna gives first priority to her child. She will not go to work if there is no one to take care of her child at home. She does everything for her child and husband. She trusts and loves her husband very much. She believes that her husband is a very good person and will never cheat on her. She always encourages

her husband in his work. She wants her husband to have a good job and her child to be smart and healthy because her child often gets sick; she is only concerned about the family. She thinks of herself as a normal housewife. Although she and her husband are divorced, she does not completely cut the relationship with him. She understands that her child needs a father. Although Thada is no longer her husband, she allows him to fulfill his role as a father at any time. For example, he can come to visit his daughter, take her for a trip, and attend the father's day event at her school. At the same time, Aruna can maintain a good relationship with other characters, including Tharee (her close friend), Munin (Thada's ex-girlfriend), Suchat (Thada's boss), and Wasin (her boss, friend, and boyfriend). All of them have a good friendship with Aruna. She is nice to everyone, even Kanya, who snatches her husband away. In the end, Aruna visits Kanya in the hospital and pays for her medical expenses because she cares about Kanya as a cousin. As for the perception and interpretation of the audience, the key informants in the first group, who are wives in their real lives, thought that the relationship between the husband, wife, and child in this drama was built based on their roles and duties. The husband goes out to work, while the wife takes care of the child and housework. The wife loves the husband and child and considers them as someone she needs to take a good care of in order to create a warm family. The husband and wife are aware of their parenting duty and always give love to their child. It can be said that the relationship between the husband, wife, and child in this drama is quite good. They solve family problems based on the love for their child and self-respect (preferred reading). Some of the key informants thought that the wife is a mother to her child but does not act as a wife to her husband. The husband keeps a distance from the wife, abandons his burden to her, and seems to take advantages of her (negotiated reading). Some of the key informants thought that the relationship between the female protagonist and the female antagonist was too close. Although the female antagonist receives her karma in the end, this kind of story is sensitive to the audience who does not use discretion when watching (oppositional reading). In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the married male key informant thought that the relationship between the wife, husband, and daughter in this drama was normal (negotiated reading). The single male key informants thought that the wife and husband in the drama loved each other. The

relationship between the wife and child was full of love and care (preferred reading). The single female key informants thought that as the wife does not dress up to look pretty, the husband thinks of her as a “sure thing” at home and looks for a more beautiful girl. The husband does not appreciate what the wife does for him but he still loves her. The husband and wife seem to have a good relationship but Aruna is too plain for her husband. Although she can look after her husband well, Aruna is old-fashioned and does not dress up nicely. She should take care of herself more. The relationship between the wife and the daughter is very good. The father also loves the daughter but not as much as the mother does (preferred reading).

#### **6.1.6 The Social Construction of Reality Concerning the Wife in Other Dimensions**

The drama demonstrates that Aruna is a consistently good person (flat character). When she experiences a twist of fate, the audience gets to see her strength. She does not give up on life because she adheres to the concepts “Do not be afraid of changes” and “Whatever happens is always for the best.” Although sometimes it is difficult to start from scratch, everyone is strong enough to do it. Considering the perception and interpretation of the audience, the key informants in the first group, who are wives in their real lives, thought that Aruna is a good character. She tends to do good deeds rather than bad deeds. Sometimes she acts fiercely because she wants to fight back. She is a capable person with high patience. Aruna is not that kind to forgive everyone without thinking much. However, she is not that cruel to hurt someone, although sometimes she is angry and emotional. Aruna is a strong woman. She has courage to start a new life and concentrates on everything she does. She is a fast learner and is able to adjust to any given situation. Aruna is a very good character. She is not evil at all. She can be a role model for every married woman (preferred reading). Some key informants thought that this character was created to have a kind mother, lovely friends, and good job. In real life, there is nobody that has all good things like her. Aruna is too good a character (negotiated reading). In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the married male key informant thought that Aruna was a normal human being, who can be good, evil, mad, tired, resolved, confused, and stubborn. She is not different from other people

(preferred reading). Aruna is once married, she should not easily fall for the boss. Maybe she follows the concept that older women prefer younger men (oppositional reading). The single male key informants thought that Aruna can be good or bad depending on the situation. She is honest with her own feelings and always cares for her child's feelings (preferred reading). The single female key informants also thought that Aruna can be good or bad according to the situation. She is bad when she wants to counter-attack another woman (preferred reading). Some of the key informants thought that Aruna is a gray character. She is indecisive and unable to make decisions quickly in terms of breaking up with the husband and dating Wasin (oppositional reading). In addition, the audience perceives that Aruna is capable, smart, charming, and good at cooking (preferred reading).

#### **6.1.7 The Presentation of the Value of Being a Wife**

The drama demonstrates that a wife must fully perform her duties, look after the house, prepare food, do laundry, take care of everything for her husband from waking up until going to bed, serve her husband in bed, endure all things for her own self and children, do all household chores, raise her children, make the family happy, be faithful to her husband, save family expenses, and carefully spend money. The characteristics of the wife in "wife 2018" are similar to what the drama demonstrates. However, it is difficult to be the wife 2018 because in this era there are many distractions and people tend to be selfish and have low morality. When a family problem occurs, the wife 2018 has the strength to calmly solve the problem and can adjust to changing situations based on the love for her children. However, the problem of infidelity cannot be solved by the wife alone; the husband must have enough maturity as well. If what the wife has done is good enough for her, but not for him, she should let him go because both of them have different precepts. It is too burdensome to get the husband back.

Concerning the meaning of "wife" according to the perception and interpretation of the audience, the key informants in the first group, who are wives in their real lives, thought that "wife" refers to a life partner, who helps to create a family and children. A wife acts as a mother in the family. A family cannot go on without a mother. A wife should be a good mother to her children and a good spouse



to her husband. Having a complete family, consisting of father, mother, and children, comprises life happiness. A wife gives encouragement and significantly fulfills the family. A “wife” is a person that sacrifices herself and is a person that is responsible for everything in the family. A “wife” is a married woman with increased duties and responsibilities. A wife should properly fulfill her duties based on the teachings of the Lord Buddha (preferred reading). Some of the key informants expect that a husband must look after his wife (negotiated reading), and some of them defined “wife” as the legal wife of the husband and the woman that is chosen to be a spouse or mother of a child. It is socially known that a woman must either undergo a wedding ceremony or sign a marriage certificate (or both) before living together with her husband (negotiated reading).

In the second group of key informants with no direct experience with being a wife, the married male key informant defined a “wife” as someone the husband loves and wants to see her face more than two times a month (linking to real experience). The single male informants defined the “wife” as a woman that takes care of her husband and children and plays an active role in the Thai society (preferred reading). The single female informants defined “wife” as a person that spends life with another person as if they were the same person. Both of them advise each other when facing problems (negotiated reading).

Regarding the meaning of “wife 2018” from the perception of the audience, the key informants in the first group, who are wives in their real lives, thought that “wife 2018” was the wife in the modern age, where there are many evil and immoral women daring or trying to snatch someone’s husband without guilt or fear of social norms. She must be able to rely on herself and should not endure family problems just because she wants to maintain a perfect family life. She must be a modern woman, who is smart, thoughtful, aware of her own value, independent, and is able to take care of herself and family well when problems occur. She must be capable and self-reliant. “Wife 2018” is a modern, strong, and determined wife, who can support her family without relying on others and knows how to live a happy life. “Wife 2018” is a modern woman, who chooses to get divorced, not because she is dumped by a man, but because that man is not good enough for her love (preferred reading).



Some of the key informants defined “wife 2018” by focusing on the equality between women and men (negotiated reading). They thought that “wife 2018” refers to wives in modern times, where women are still not equal to men. They are still cheated on by their husbands and need to quit their job to raise their children at home. The world has changed and women are no longer the “elephant’s hind legs.” Women should not be left uneducated as in ancient times. In the current society women and men are equal and can walk side by side without having to be leaders or followers. It is time for wives to speak up and call for their rights; they should not be mistreated by their husbands. Being single mothers is not a bad thing. It is a better solution than having to endure unfaithfulness for life.

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant defined “wife 2018” as a true representative of wives in today’s society full of immoral and lustful men (preferred reading). The single male informants thought that “wife 2018” is a physically and mentally strong wife, who can adjust to situations (preferred reading). The single female informants thought that “wife 2018” is a wife that does not need to always stay home. She can dress up nicely and go to work outside the home (negotiated reading). “Wife 2019” not only takes care of the family and housework at home but also goes to work outside the home. She is a modern wife in the 4G era, who acts as a good wife and mother in the family and can walk together with her husband in every situation (preferred reading).

## 6.2 Discussion

“The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” are television melodramas full of emotional sensitivity and intensity. The plot is about marriage life, conflicts, rivalry, and jealousy. The characters in these two dramas are not flat or one-dimensional like the characteristics of the melodrama characters that Ath Kupongsak (2010) described in his concept of television dramas. Each of them is a round character with both good and bad traits depending on the situation. Both dramas present the husband-wife relationships by focusing on “post-marriage life,” which is consistent with the traditional narrative pattern of the husband-wife dramas proposed by Somsuk Hinviman (2015). The story begins when a happy family has to deal with conflicts

and family crises caused by another woman. Based on the theory of Tipphasiri Kaewthet et al. (2018), these two dramas are considered television dramas in the digital age. Their plots are newly created without relying on existing novels. The content is presented on new media platforms, and the audience can engage with the dramas through the new media. At the same time, both dramas still have some characteristics of the television dramas in the analog age, which include the following. The script is written by only one writer. The theme is about heterosexual love and rivalry. The story is narrated based on a traditional narrative sequence, comprising 1) exposition, 2) rising action, 3) crisis, 4) falling action, and 5) ending. However, the two dramas make the first three sequences become more concise according to the characteristics of the television dramas in the digital age. This is consistent with the technological determinism theory of Toffler (1980), which suggests that media are an important mechanism for determining communications and guiding social systems toward changes in human behavior, especially mental changes associated with the thoughts, emotions, and expressions that are internal conditions quickly stimulated by desire. Thus, the dramas in the digital age tend to end in a realistic way, while the dramas in the analog age mostly have a happy ending.

New paradigm narratives place emphasis on the construction of meaning and how to narrate (Fisher, 1987). The process of the construction of meaning applies two rules: the law of selection and the law of combination (Propp, 1968). As mentioned above, “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” adhere to the traditional narrative sequence. In the exposition of the story, the background of the main character (the wife) and her family is introduced to the audience. In the rising action, the relationship between the husband and the wife’s cousin leads to a family crisis. The wife has to find a solution and decide how to live her life. The two dramas introduce problems and demonstrate how to solve those problems step by step until all the problems are resolved. However, “Mia (Wife) 2018” has a more complicated plot and problems than “The Fierce Wife.” As soon as the first problem is solved, another problem arises. The main character is continuously challenged to solve problems with the support and guidance from her mother, friends, and generous acquaintances. This makes the audience eager to know how each problem will be resolved and whether the main character will end up with her husband or accept a new man into her life.

The construction of meaning is carried out through the narration of conflicts. Both dramas place the most importance on family conflicts, including the conflicts in the wife's family and the husband's new family. The wife and husband finally solve all family conflicts with divorce.

The process of the construction of meaning applies two rules: the law of selection and the law of combination (Propp, 1968). In both dramas, the law of selection is applied to select the structure of narrative time in various patterns, comprising the following. 1) Scene: story-time and discourse-time are equal. The two dramas mostly use this pattern. 2) Pause: story-time comes to a standstill for additional explanation. For example, the story-time is paused and turned back to when Anzhen was young and listening to her mother's teaching that "Our life is sweet, so is our future." when Ruifan was dating Ailin, and when Thada was dating Munin. 3) Ellipsis: discourse-time is zero by omitting an event. For example, the dramas omit the moment when Wei-en is dating Tian Wei and when Wasin is studying abroad and dating Kanya. 4) Summary: discourse-time is shorter than story-time, for example, using narrative messages to tell how much time has passed in one scene and using a fast transition shot of the sky at daytime and nighttime to show that many days or months have passed. In addition, "Mia (Wife) 2018" also uses stretch (discourse-time is longer than story-time) when Thada and Kanya are falling to the ground and kissing each other. This shot is repeatedly displayed many times, making the discourse-time longer than the story-time in order to highlight the incident.

According to the point of view of semiology, context is important in defining meanings. Particularly, the socio-cultural context plays the most important role in defining meanings. Culler (1976) stated that an object itself has no meaning until a meaning is encoded through its cultural context. The chosen signified conveys meanings because of other unchosen signified. The meanings of the signified derive from the relations between one signified and another signified in the same structure. Thus, the selection and combination of things signified can construct meanings. The construction of meanings of special symbols in "The Fierce Wife" that are transferred to "Mia (Wife) 2018" can be analyzed and summarized as follows.

1) Wontons: Chinese families usually make wontons at home and eat them as a staple food. "The Fierce Wife" is a story about a Taiwanese family. The

main character or the wife often makes wontons for her family members until wontons become a regular dish on their table. The concept about wontons is that a married couple or all family members must be united like a wonton that is tightly folded. When being boiled or fried, it will not break apart no matter how hot the water/oil is. This concept is transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018,” which is a story about a Thai family. Although Thai families normally do not eat wontons as a staple food, the drama producer still keeps this concept. However, the wontons in these two dramas are different. In “The Fierce Wife,” wontons are folded and then blanched or steamed. People eat them dry like Gyoza (Japanese dumplings). In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” wontons are served in form of wonton soup. Moreover, “Mia (Wife) 2018” also adds a new meaning to wontons. As the wife usually makes wontons only for her family members and close friends, when she makes wontons for the new man in her life, it means that their relationship becomes closer. In addition, both dramas link wontons with Chinese culture. They present that wontons are a symbol of change or transition of seasons, as Chinese people like to eat wontons on New Year’s Day.

2) Red high heels: there is a modification in the content, meaning, and camera angles of the red high-heeled shoes in the two dramas. In “The Fierce Wife,” Wei-en likes to wear red high-heeled shoes. The camera always captures these first and then moves up to her face. Red high heels represent a mistress and are opposite to white sneakers. When Wei-en breaks up with Ruifan, she changes to wearing white sneakers instead of red high heels. In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” the red high heels belong to Aruna. Thada bought them for Aruna but Kanya always wears them without asking for Aruna’s permission, which implies that these two cousins are sharing things, including a husband. In terms of the color of high heels and sneakers, red represents a passionate lover, desire, and lust, while white represents cleanliness and purity freed from love, greed, wrath, and lust.

3) Wedding ring: in both dramas, a wedding ring represents the relationship of a married couple. When one of them takes the ring off, it means that their husband-wife relationship is not the same. However, each of them still needs to perform the duty as the parent of her child.

The special symbol that is adapted to suit the Thai context in “Mia (Wife) 2018” is Look Choup (a Thai dessert), which represents that eating either the skin or



filling of Look Choup alone is not as delicious as eating both of them together. Similarly, a person must be beautiful, both inside and outside. All good deeds should be appropriately presented to others.

Additionally, from the point of view of semiology, there are some meanings behind the short/long narration of each part of the story. For example, from the climax to the falling action of “The Fierce Wife,” the story is gradually told because the drama constructs the background of Anzhen as having a happy family life and her husband always being faithful to her. She is not prepared to encounter such a life crisis so it takes a long time for her to solve the problem. In “Mia (Wife 2018),” Aruna was constructed to have more knowledge and experience than Anzhen. Before marriage, Aruna used to work outside the home. Therefore, she has a certain degree of life experience. Aruna experienced more complicated problems than Anzhen but she could quickly make decisions and solve all of the problems in the end. However, some of the problems were solved on their own, without relying on the ability of Anzhen or Aruna.

#### **6.2.1 The Analysis of the Intertextuality between the TV Dramas “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” Based on the Concept of Cross-Cultural Communication**

Suwat Tasukonth (2016) stated that, before the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Chinese society strictly adhered to traditional customs, resulting in the social acceptance of inequality among people of different genders, ages, and social statuses. The social structure was composed of two classes of people: 1) high-class people were men, who used administrative power to build gratitude among low rankers; and 2) low-class people were women, who had to pay respect to high rankers with administrative power. Therefore, there was a risk of abuse of power, which led to benefit-seeking in such a submissive patronage society.

“Dynastic cycle” is the succession of imperial power, which requires support from noblemen and virtuous intellectuals because their support can affect the stability of the emperor and state. Humanity and compassion (“仁”), virtue and equity (“义”), and tradition and custom (“礼”) are the heart of learning for testing the quality of



humans and society. Therefore, humanity is a necessity for living in society (Suwat Tasukonth, 2016).

Taiwanese people have many distinctive characteristics overlapping in themselves so their personality is quite neutral. Taiwanese and Thai people have similar cultures and religious beliefs (Buddhism), including life philosophy, individualistic ways of life, and Bodhisattva and Mahayana ideologies. The Taiwanese society focuses on equality between women and men. Taiwan is governed by the Three People's Principles of Dr. Sun Yatsen, the first Chinese president, who has been the backbone of the administration of Taiwan until now. Taiwanese people still believe in superstition and have continually performed religious rituals based on traditional beliefs. They burn incense to worship gods, pay respect to ancestral spirits, and strictly adhere to traditional Chinese customs (Dermthae Chaohinfar, 2010). Taiwanese people believe that when paying respect to gods, the first person that puts the incense in the burner will receive a blessing from the gods first. This belief is clearly reflected in "The Fierce Wife." Moreover, the belief in superstition and prophecy is also reflected when Anzhen went to see the fortune teller because she felt stressed about Ruifan's love affair. Her previous belief that trust is the foundation of marriage life began to waver. Humanism, theism, and fatalism are linked. Traditional beliefs are often related to incarnation, heaven, and destiny, which are fundamental beliefs of the Chinese. These beliefs are the opposite of Taiwan's material and economic prosperity.

Most Thai people are Buddhist. Thai social norms and values are mostly based on Buddhist beliefs, incarnation, and the law of karma. Thai people believe in karma so they usually make merit in order to achieve a prosperous future and have a better next life. Moreover, there are many rituals linked to the beliefs in sacred power, auspicious times, prophecy, talismans, superstition, omens, incarnation, karma, and Buddhism, which are transferred from "The Fierce Wife" to "Mia (Wife) 2018" through the main character or the wife. The wives in both dramas believe in paying respect to gods and always pray for their husbands. Both dramas show the same basic beliefs. The difference is that "The Fierce Wife" places importance on putting the incense in the burner first and then receiving blessings from gods, whereas "Mia (Wife) 2018" focuses on paying respect to gods with seven colored fruits, arranged on

a tray from light to dark colors, always sitting on the front while praying for blessings, and wearing clothes based on the auspicious colors of the days. Some religious beliefs are also transferred from “The Fierce Wife” to “Mia (Wife) 2018.” Although there are minor adaptations, those beliefs are appropriately transferred and modified to suit the context of the Chinese Thais in Thailand.

Diligence, frugality, honesty, and Chinese filial piety are considered the power that unites Taiwanese people together. Chinese people in both Taiwan and mainland China are mostly agile, enthusiastic, diligent in work and exercise, not afraid of extreme weather conditions, tough, patient, hard-working, and economical. There is a saying that “This society does not have a seat for lazy people,” which clearly reflects the characteristics of Chinese people from the past until the present. Chinese people’s common pose is standing upright, for example, everybody participating in a meeting with the emperor always standing and Chinese monks always standing while praying. It can be said that Chinese people choose to stand or walk rather than sit or lie down (Dermthae Chaothinfar, 2010). This value is reflected in “The Fierce Wife,” when all of the staff in the company where Anzhen works as a salesperson stand in a row and shout the company’s motto before work in order to create a sense of organizational belonging and enhance workplace morale. There is also a saying that “Divide tasks, work together,” (“分工合作” in Chinese) which makes Taiwanese people focus on working as a team and dividing tasks based on aptitude and expertise in order to achieve organizational success. This belief is reflected in “The Fierce Wife” when Anzhen and colleagues work together in order to achieve the sales target. These beliefs are also transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018” but there are some modifications. The staff in Aruna’s company does not need to stand or shout out the company’s motto every morning. Besides, Aruna works independently as a salesperson without a team. However, the belief about teamwork and organizational competition in “The Fierce Wife,” when Ruifan’s team and Ailin’s team compete with each other in order to get promoted, is transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018” when Thada’s team competes with Munin’s team.

Taiwan has a process of instilling morality and ethical values, for example in how Chinese people are taught to be good, polite, grateful, calm, and able to deal with everyday problems based on traditional philosophies and principles. Similar to

mainland China, Taiwan respects and values the teachings of ancient Chinese philosophers, especially Confucius. Their philosophy textbooks about natural law, morality, virtue, ancient ways of life, and timeless life lessons have been used to teach and train students in educational institutions (Dermthae Chaohinfar, 2010). The teachings of ancient Chinese philosophers are reflected in “The Fierce Wife” and also transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018” as follows. 1) Be good and polite. Ruifan and Anzhen always speak politely to each other. 2) Be grateful to others. Anzhen’s mother and Aruna’s mother always teach Anzhen and Aruna to be grateful to those who help them in difficult times. 3) Be calm and able to deal with everyday problems. In “The Fierce Wife,” there is a popular phrase “Keep fighting” in almost every scene. The characters use this phrase to encourage each other. When Anzhen encounters a family problem, she calmly finds a solution to the problem. In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” Aruna also rises up and does not give up to obstacles.

The content of Confucius’s teachings covers education, self-development, socializing, politics, friendship, morality, and filial piety. Confucius taught that humans should realize that difference is not conflict, as he adopted the concept of “和而不同,” which means “Same way but different.” While Confucius placed emphasis on human ability, Chinese people focus on worshipping ancestral spirits, believe in superstition and heaven, and adhere to traditional customs that are related to incarnation, heaven, and fate. However, the Chinese society can adopt Confucian teachings and maintain local traditions in an appropriate way (Suwat Tasukonth, 2016).

Confucius emphasized that the family is the heart of society, a social institution that has its own status, and is a laboratory for cultivating good attitudes toward life. If a family member has a problem, the society will have a problem as well (Dermthae Chaohinfar, 2010). Although the world has changed and there are fewer extended families today, Taiwanese people still give importance to their family. Family-centered relationships are clearly expressed in “The Fierce Wife.” The drama demonstrates that Taiwanese families celebrate New Year’s together. Adults give red envelopes to the children. Every family member eats together in the house. Although the grandparents want to have a big family with many children, they also think that the number of family members does not matter but what is more important is the love

and unity among all family members. The image of a big family eating together with grandparents is not transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018” because the main character’s family is just a small family in modern urban society. There are only three family members, the parents and child. Particularly, all of them do not need to celebrate the Chinese New Year’s together. The drama just presents that they usually go to the temple and pay respect to the gods.

In addition, Confucius summarized human relationships into five kinds as follows:

- 1) Ruler and subject - Loyalty
- 2) Father and son - Gratitude
- 3) Husband and wife - Honesty
- 4) Elder and younger - Unity
- 5) Friend and friend - Honesty

The relationships between husband and wife relying on honesty is clearly reflected in “The Fierce Wife” and then transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018.” Both dramas emphasize that a married couple must respect and trust each other, endure everything for their children, and be honest with each other. Moreover, Confucius also expressed his admiration toward frugality and working as follows (Suwat Tasukonth, 2016).

**Frugality:** Self-building must be based on frugality. Confucius said the following: “Extravagance is inappropriate. Stinginess is nasty but better than inappropriateness.” The belief about frugality is reflected through Anzhen’s frugal behavior in “The Fierce Wife.”

**Working:** Confucius believed that knowledge must be combined with work because work is proof that knowledge is useful and correct. In “The Fierce Wife,” the company’s staff, no matter whether male or female, must show their abilities in order to get promoted. In addition, the company focuses on work ethics and includes this as the criterion for job promotion. The company determines that those that will step up into top management positions must possess professional abilities, receive respect from colleagues, and have a good family. Confucius also placed importance on self-reliance, morality, and ethics. This kind of corporate culture is transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018” as well.



There is a Chinese saying that “A good example is more valuable than teachings.” Both teachers and parents can be role models for children and guide them to be good people (Dermthae Chaohinfar, 2010). This belief is reflected in “The Fierce Wife” and then transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018.” When the parents start quarreling, they always tell their daughter to play elsewhere so that she will not see the parents’ quarrel, which is a bad example for children.

The philosophy of Confucius has been deeply embedded in Chinese society for centuries. At present, it still affects the Chinese way of life and culture in many ways. Currently, China has become a highly materialistic society with a rapidly growing economy, making Chinese people long for mental peace and harmonious ways to solve social problems. Thus, Confucius’s basic teachings about a simple way of life that avoids taking advantage of society have become a solution to those problems (China Radio Online, 2011).

Based on the concept of cross-cultural communication, the studies on cultural influence and elements (Metta Wiwattananukul, 2016) can be used to analyze the intertextuality between “The Fierce Wife” and “Mia (Wife) 2018” as follows. 1) Worldview: Thai and Taiwanese people have a belief in sacred power, sin, merit, and the law of karma, which is considered a spiritual/non-scientific worldview. 2) Value: when applying the Chinese Values Survey (CVS) (Bond, 1992) to analyze the values conveyed to the audience through “The Fierce Wife,” it was found that “wife” contains four kinds of values (CVS-I, CVS-II, CVS-III, and CVS-IV). CVS-I is the value about self-development, honesty, and patience. CVS-II is the value about the harmonious relationship between husband and wife and the loving relationship between parents and children. CVS-III is the value about social responsibility and humanitarianism, forgiveness, and the husband’s and mistress’s deficiencies. CVS-IV is the value about sufficiency and morality. All of these values are also transferred to “Mia (Wife) 2018.” The audience perceives and interprets these values through the characters’ actions and expressions. However, some audiences disagree with the way that the wife forgives the mistress because they think that the mistress’s behavior is not worthy of forgiveness. 3) Cultural norms and rules: Taiwan and Thailand have the same cultural norms and rules concerning marriage and monogamy. A woman must be proposed to, undergo a marriage ceremony, and sign a marriage certificate before



living together with a man. If their married life does not go well, they must sign a divorce agreement so that they can separate from each other or start a new relationship without worrying about gossip.

Based on the cultural dimension concept of Hofstede (1980), it was found that the dramas intend to present the following: 1) individualism, which mainly focuses on self and family, and 2) high power distance, which separates power in accordance with the individual's roles and positions. For example, the husband works outside the home to earn the family living, while the wife takes care of the husband and child at home. However, the audience thinks that, in the real world, there should be low power distance, which believes that power should be exercised appropriately. The third element presented is masculinity, which focuses on competition, leadership, work-oriented life, and material success. For example, Thada and Munin compete for the sales manager position, Anzhen's and Aruna's career success depends on sales volume, and men's and women's roles are clearly separated. However, the roles of men and women can be flexible. Thada and Munin have equal power in the workplace. If Munin wants to progress faster, she must agree to have a relationship with Suchat. This situation will make her have lower power than him.

In the dimension of authoritarianism, the dramas communicate authoritarianism and relevant ideologies through the characters' verbal and non-verbal languages. The dramas present the competition between patriarchal discourse, which creates a set of understandings that men are above women in every way, and feminist discourse, which creates a set of understandings about equality and women's rights, and also reflect patriarchal domination. In "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018," the wife has the power to construct meanings. The story is narrated through the wife's point of view. The husband is unfaithful to her so he and the mistress are harshly condemned by the society as a punishment. Finally, the husband breaks up with the mistress. He feels guilty and wants to return to the wife. However, the wife does not give him any chance. All of this shows that the narrator is a radical feminist, who believes that women are not only different from men but also better than them in all aspects, whether concerning wisdom or morality. From the wife's perspective, she thinks that the husband behaves wrongly with her and she will never forgive him. Moreover, she does not want to start a new relationship with another man because she can rely on

herself and take care of her child on her own. Looking at this situation from a different perspective, Anzhen still loves Ruifan. She has been living with him for ten years. Ruifan and her daughter are her only world. She cannot start a new life with someone else. In contrast, Aruna accepts Wasin into her life.

In the dimension of feminism, “The Fierce Wife” presents the concept of feminism in Taiwan, which is influenced by western feminist discourse. The lifestyle of Taiwanese women gradually becomes more diverse and independent. They receive higher education and increasingly work outside the home. The drama demonstrates the concept of liberal feminism by emphasizing that no matter how much the society has advanced in terms of freedom and development, women are still inferior to men. For example, the wife still needs to look after her husband at home and work hard for the male company’s owner at her workplace. The marital status of the female characters is also important. In “Mia (Wife) 2018,” Aruna’s divorce scene is long and emotional. The characters’ expression and the close-up shot of a divorce certificate make the audience feel sad. After the divorce certificate was signed, there is another emotional scene emphasizing the end of their husband-wife relationship. In “The Fierce Wife,” Ruifan tries everything to make Anzhen sign the divorce certificate. He even goes to the hospital, where Anzhen is admitted, and forces her to sign it. This shows that both dramas place importance on marriage and divorce certificates, which indicate the husband-wife relationship.

Considering the audience’s viewpoint of the husband-wife relationship and marriage certificate, the audience in the first group of key informants, who are wives in their real lives, mostly thought that a marriage certificate is not important (oppositional reading). Their reasons varied based on their life experiences. Some of the key informants thought that the marriage certificate has no effect on the husband-wife relationship but it helps make both husband and wife feel more secure and confident in their rights as legal spouses. For example, the spouses of government officials have the right to receive medical allowance from the government. Some of them refused to sign the marriage certificate because they want to easily separate from their husbands in case of any problem in the future. This is contrary to the comments in the social media, which tend to give great importance to a marriage certificate. Some of the key informants thought that if the husband and wife love and trust each

other enough, the marriage certificate will have no meaning at all. However, they signed the marriage certificate because of their children. Some of them thought that a marriage certificate is unimportant and only represents the ownership of both spouses. They themselves did not sign a marriage certificate because they do not want to get a divorce later. They believe that a marriage certificate cannot guarantee the love between husband and wife. The marriage certificate is meaningless if one of them is unfaithful. Moreover, marriage registration makes it difficult for the husband and wife to conduct transactions because each transaction requires an agreement from both of them. Thus, marriage registration can also be viewed as a deprivation of personal rights. Many married people lack freedom to make decisions on their own after marriage registration. In addition, if one spouse has an affair with a third person with low financial status, it is useless for the other spouse to sue that third person for compensation and just keep the marriage certificate. Some key informants thought that a marriage certificate has legal importance but it is not a guarantee of a happy marriage (negotiated reading). On the other hand, some of the key informants thought that a marriage certificate is important for a married couple because it is a declaration of marital status, an indication of the legal rights and benefits of spouses and children, and a confirmation of love, sincerity, and honesty between each other (preferred reading). They also thought that marriage registration is an agreement between two people that want to live together. It helps to assure that both of them will be faithful to each other. It represents a legal bond between husband and wife and indicates that the actions of one party will affect the other, both *de facto* and *de jure*. In terms of wives' feelings, they thought that marriage registration is a symbol that their husbands accept and recognize them as legal wives, who can make decisions together and be responsible for everything in each other's lives. A marriage certificate is a legal proof of a marriage and is a symbol of the sincerity between husband and wife. If their husbands signed the marriage certificate with someone else before, they would immediately become mistresses. Thus, they believe that a marriage certificate is very important because it shows that both spouses are confident in each other's love and are ready to live together, both *de facto* and *de jure*. Further, marriage registration shows that both of them respect each other's family.

In the second group of key informants, the married male key informant thought that although a marriage certificate is legally important, it has no effect on the longevity of a marriage (negotiated reading). The single male and female key informants thought that a marriage certificate is an important document to confirm the legal relationship between husband and wife. As the husband can easily abandon his wife, especially after having a child together, the marriage certificate helps to ensure that the wife will receive her share of the marriage property (preferred reading).

In terms of women's emotional management, feminist theory explains that a woman's experience of oppression makes her physically and emotionally suffer. Their suffering and deepest emotions will gradually make them become more emotionally tolerant and stronger than men. It can be seen in the dramas that the wife has suffered from her husband's betrayal and then constantly becomes stronger. Finally, she can rely on herself and continue living her own life. She has better emotional management compared to the husband. When the husband starts a new life with the wife's cousin, his life is not as happy as expected. He is disappointed and is unable to appropriately manage his emotions.

In the dimension of the social construction of reality, "Mia (Wife) 2018" uses Aruna as a representative of wives and Kanya as a representative of mistresses. The law of combination (Propp, 1968) is applied to create the characters in accordance with the concept of the paradigmatic structure of Propp (1968), which indicates what kind of sex, nationality, class, and age can be what character (hero, heroine, villain, and so on), the concept of dividing characters into one-dimensional or multi-dimensional characters of Forster (2005), and the concept of characterization of Boggs and Petrie (2003), which means to characterize through the outside elements of the characters such as body, face, dressing, personality, and so on, through what he/she says in the dialogues to disclose him/herself, through the storyteller (the wife), through external and internal actions, through the actions of other characters, and through binary opposition according to semiology (the wife – the mistress – the husband's ex-girlfriend, the husband – the new man).

"Mia (Wife) 2018" constructs that the wife is a traditional housewife, who always stays at home and takes care of her husband like a slave. Later, the drama adds a new meaning to this character by showing that she is a modern wife, who is able to



rely on herself and earn her own living. The drama makes this character realistic by showing that the wife is like other normal women, who do not put on makeup while staying home, although she is the heroine. The drama constructs the mistress as the opposite of the wife in terms of demographic characteristics (age and occupation), personality, clothing, speaking, and habits.

The values of the wife, which are presented through Aruna, include the idea that the wife must completely fulfill her duties, look after the house, prepare food, do laundry, take care of everything for her husband from the time he wakes up until he goes to bed, serve her husband in bed, and endure all things for her own self and children. However, being a wife in 2018 is difficult because there are many distractions and people tend to be selfish and have low morality. The wife alone cannot solve a love affair problem. The husband must have enough maturity to resolve it. If what the wife has done is good enough for her, but not for him, she should let him go because both of them have different precepts. It is too burdensome to get the husband back. The wife 2018, unlike a traditional wife, is a by-design wife, who is independent and creates her own self, for example in how Aruna makes wontons with her own hands.

However, the audience may interpret the meanings of “wife” differently from the way the drama intends. Kanjana Kaewthep (2013) stated concerning the audience’s interpretation that the audience can choose to interpret the meanings or select only anti-social contents to frame themselves. When comparing the perception and interpretation of the “wife” by the audience of “Mia (Wife) 2018” and the meanings of “wife” constructed by the drama producer, it was found that the social construction of reality regarding the demographic characteristics of the wife, the physical characteristics, personality, and clothing of the wife, the traits and emotional maturity of the wife, the lifestyle and role of the wife in the family, the wife’s relationships with other characters, and the wife in other dimensions, was at the first level (reality) and second level (representation) of encoding based on the encoding levels in TV dramas of Fiske (2011). Therefore, the audience in both groups interprets the meanings of “wife” in various ways (preferred reading, negotiated reading, oppositional reading, and these three forms in combination).



The first group of key informants interpreted the meanings by using their own direct experience. They interpret the meanings in the way that the drama intends when they have the same experience. When they have additional experience, they come up with a negotiated reading. They interpret the meanings from an opposing viewpoint when their direct experience is different from Aruna's life. They thought that this character was created to have all good things, especially good economic status. Aruna has her own house, car, money, good friends, a kind mother, and a warm family, which are different from normal people's lives. If they had the same problem as Aruna, they may need to solve the problem differently. Some key informants adopted an oppositional reading, as they have similar experiences but cannot solve the problem like Aruna due to their personal traits.

The second group of key informants adopted both preferred readings, negotiated reading and oppositional reading. Although they have no direct experience of being a wife, they do not entirely agree with what the drama presents. The audience's opinions and viewpoints are diverse.

### **6.2.2 The Presentation of Feminist Values Through the Role of the Wife in "Mia (Wife) 2018"**

At a deeper level, the meanings of the wife in this drama is constructed through values, ideologies, and economic, and social and cultural contexts, which are considered at the third level (ideology) of encoding based on the encoding levels in TV dramas of Fiske (2011). The perception and interpretation of the audience are as follows.

The drama emphasizes the role and responsibility of the wife to the family, husband, and child, which can contribute to the family's happiness based on Thai traditional ways of life. The wife must look after the husband and child, take care of all matters in the house, prepare food, clean the house, raise the child, and fulfill her duty as a wife. The key informants in the first group, who are wives in their real lives, mostly interpret the meanings in the way that the drama intends (preferred reading). However, some of them interpret the meanings from an opposing viewpoint (negotiated reading). They agree that wives should play a lead role in taking care of the house according to the concept of the traditional Thai wife. However, nowadays

most wives need to work outside the home like men do. As wives are not slaves, their husbands should help them do some household chores as well. Some key informants thought that no matter how much the world has changed, husbands still have dominant power in the family.

Some of the key informants in the first group defined “wife” by focusing on legal rights and marriage registration, while some of them placed importance on the role and responsibility of the wife that are associated with the Lord Buddha’s teachings about the five duties of the wife, namely 1) be well-organized, 2) be kind to surrounding people, 3) avoid adultery, 4) manage family finance well, and 5) never get lazy.

In terms of “ideal wife,” the key informants, who are wives in their real lives, thought that the ideal wife must recognize her duties, take care of herself and family, give advice to her husband, avoid causing problems and burden in terms of housework and other matters, support her husband, help to create a good family, not cling to her husband, make her husband love, understand, and devote himself to her, act as a good mother, look after her children together with the husband, fulfill her role as a wife, make the husband’s family and colleagues accept and respect her, take good care of herself, have the ability to work both inside and outside the home, look after all of the family members well, love herself, and always live her life in a composed and calm manner. The key informants have a beautiful image about how the ideal wife properly takes care of her family, husband, and children without acting as a slave to the husband and family. The ideal wife should be able to talk to her husband about what is right and wrong, not agree to do everything just to avoid conflicts with the husband, and not endure the husband that puts himself at the center of the universe. She should speak up and make her husband realize that the mistreatment of wives is not allowed in today’s society. The ideal wife must have sufficient knowledge so that she can continue living her life without collapsing if she is abandoned by the husband.

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant thought that his wife possesses the characteristics of the ideal wife. She is good-looking, lives a simple life, and does not show off expensive things like other women do on social media but she works so hard that she has no time for her husband. The single male key informants thought that the ideal wife must be a good

housewife, who looks after her husband well like Aruna. The single female key informants thought that the ideal wife should not easily give in to her husband but should make him give in to her instead. Currently, women are more submissive than men. This shows that the single female key informants focus on the use of power and equality between women and men.

The key informants in both groups combine the meanings of “wife” and “ideal wife” derived from their interpretation and actual experience and then define the most suitable wife for the Thai society as the wife, who is strong, calm, and is able to deal with people, work, and life because the world is getting more cruel every day. She must be more capable than the husband. As Thailand is a Buddhist society, people that will become husband and wife must have the same precepts in mind. The most suitable wife for Thai society is one that must have social equality with the husband in terms of career and presence in social events. She must receive love and respect from her husband, have various knowledge and skills, be able to solve immediate problems, possess positive thinking, adapt herself to a changing environment, look after her family well, and completely fulfill her role as a wife (like Aruna). In the meantime, she needs to take good care of herself as well (negotiated reading). The role of the wife in the current Thai society is not different from the past. The wife still needs to do all the housework and look after her husband and children. The role and duty of the wife is heavier than the husband’s, as she has to work both inside and outside the home. She is like a 24/7 worker, who has endless work to do every day. She must endure, understand, and forgive what her husband does, whether wrong or right, which is not quite fair for a woman. The current social structure is like this. When wives, as part of the social structure, are faced with unfaithful husbands, the society creates such concepts of endurance and forgiveness to heal their feelings. They have to use their intellectual intelligence to understand the social structure and survive their own lives (because they are forced to) like Aruna does in the drama. The most suitable wife for the Thai society must have versatile skills to do housework and office work and effectively manage her time in order to earn money, which is a significant economic factor in the family. For this reason, she may not be able to fully perform her role as a housewife. Her husband must treat her with love and faithfulness so that she can work outside the home without worries. Therefore, the

term “wife” is not only about the role of the wife but also includes the love and support from her husband (negotiated reading). However, some of the key informants thought that, unlike Aruna, the most suitable wife for the Thai society must be a working woman, who is as capable as her husband. She should have the abilities and power to lead the family, make decisions, express her opinions, break free from the control of the husband, and rely on herself without having to follow the husband’s orders all the time. Some of the key informants thought that in the current Thai society, women do not need to get married if they cannot find a good enough man. Nowadays, women can live alone because they can earn money to support themselves (oppositional reading).

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant thought that the most suitable wife for the Thai society must have time for her husband and children. The single male key informants thought that the most suitable wife for the Thai society must be like Aruna. She should agree to do everything, including changing herself, in order to be with her husband. However, she should not easily give in to him, or else she will be inferior in his eyes. She needs to make him give in to her sometimes (negotiated reading). The single female key informants thought that the most suitable wife for the Thai society is the wife that is modern, is able to keep up with digital technology, and pays attention to dharma and temples.

It can be summarized that, in the opinions of the key informants, the wife that is most suitable for the current Thai society must have the following characteristics: 1) surrendering to the patriarchal social structure that allows men to be unfaithful and have more power than women; 2) accepting the role of looking after the husband and family but negotiating that the husband must respect and honor her and help her take care of the family and housework; 3) recognizing that the husband and wife have equal power in the family and need to support each other; and 4) being aware that in the current Thai society women can stay single without marriage.

There are authoritarian and feminist values and ideologies concealed in the audience’s definitions of “wife” and viewpoints regarding the most suitable wife for the current Thai society. The audience in each group perceives the equality between men and women differently as follows. The key informants in the first group, who are

wives in their real lives, thought that women are still disadvantaged in many areas. For example, a man who has sexual relationships with many different women is called a womanizer, while a woman who has many sexual partners is called a slut, which is a very harsh word. In terms of the role in the family, many families still believe that women are the “elephant’s hind legs,” who have the duty to raise children, do housework, and prepare food, despite of the fact that men and women should help each other. There is also a misunderstanding that men’s flirtatious behavior is common, whereas women are always blamed when flirting with men. Moreover, the Thai society does not fully accept that women can be leaders. High-level executives are mostly men. Gender equality is not found in the Thai society. It may seem that women have more freedom and abilities to do anything, but, in fact, they are still dominated by men in almost every area. The Thai society still sees men as the “elephant’s front legs,” although the world has changed. In many families, women may act like the leaders but they actually have far less decision power than men. Men still use their power and physical strength to rule and control women. Men and women are not equal at birth. Women are still submissive to men. Men and women may have equal legal rights but they are unequal in practice.

Some of the key informants thought that even though there is more gender equality, compared to the past, in reality men and women are not truly equal; there is still a gender disparity in taking care of children. Sometimes women have to quit their jobs to raise their children and take care of all the housework alone. Men tend to cheat more than women. Men and women may be equal at work but women still have to do household chores at home. In Thailand, people are taught that men do not need to do housework, unlike in foreign countries, which place more importance on gender equality.

On the other hand, some of the key informants thought that men and women are already equal. Women must be capable in order to survive. Many women commit adultery but their husbands do not file lawsuits. At present, some women have more abilities than men. Gender equality is widely perceived. In the past, men were the “elephant’s front legs” or family leaders, who earned the living for the family. Currently, women can be the elephant’s front legs too because they can earn money to support the family like men do. There are more and more talented and capable women



today. In the Thai society, women are equal to men in many areas. For example, after the marriage registration, husbands are allowed use wives' surnames and wives are allowed to continue using their own surname and select the title they want. The phrase "the elephant's front and hind legs" is rarely seen (only about 20%) because men and women are now equal. In terms of family life, the key informants help and support their spouses like friends, without having to be leaders or followers. In today's Thai society, women can do everything that men can do. The key informants were satisfied with the equality between men and women.

In the second group with no direct experience of being a wife, the married male key informant thought that gender equality was just an ideal concept, which does not exist in reality. Although it is said that men and women are equal, there is still a gender disparity in terms of job opportunities, physical strength, and the perception of women's abilities. This problem will remain for a long time.

The single male key informants thought that Thai society is wide open—all people are equal regardless of gender and each of them is given opportunities based on suitability.

The single female key informants thought that there is still inequality in the Thai society. Men are still superior to women. Women are afraid of being scolded and attacked by men. Men and women living together should go soft on each other, but in reality women mostly give in to men. Men seem to have more power than men. Women should not easily give in or change themselves for men. Some of the key informants thought that men and women are more equal, although there are still some gender disparities.

Equality between men and women in marriage depends on their behavior. Their roles in the family will be equal or not depending on how they value, respect, support, and treat each other.

In short, "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018" have female protagonists that present the role of women in the family, which is considered the basic institution in society.

1) The female protagonists present the role of women as a good wife and good mother in the family in order to reflect marriage life and gender problems in the context of Thai and Taiwanese societies.

2) The dramas reflect the power relations in the family and the authoritarian and feminist values and ideologies that are transferred to the audience through the media.

3) The dramas reflect the political, economic, social, and cultural context in Thai and Taiwanese societies, especially the husband-wife relationships in the family.

Both dramas communicate the values and ideologies about women and family to the audience using the pro-social approach. Considering the values of polygamous marriage and parents' shared responsibility for childcare, the dramas create a myth that married men can have an affair with other woman, which is in line with a patriarchal social system and patriarchal ideologies. The dramas present that it is common for men to have an affair, although the society still does not accept polygamy. Those who are mistresses will be gossiped about and criticized because they break someone's family. They are not socially accepted and have to stay hidden in society. Married men who have an affair need to choose whether to break up with the mistress or their wife. If they choose the mistress, they must divorce their wife. When the husband in these two dramas challenges the value of polygamous marriage, he receives bad results. His career life and relationships with the mistress are ruined. He and the mistress are condemned as committing adultery against the wife. The situation is resolved in accordance with social norms. The wife has a better life as a result of her goodness. Both dramas provide an option for the wife and revolutionizes the traditional meaning of "wife," revolving around the terms "couple," "being dominated by men," "victim," and "the elephant's hind legs." The role of the wife is transformed from devoting herself to the family and enduring everything for the family's happiness into designing her own life as she wants, for example how she makes wontons with her own hands. The wife chooses to be a single mother but still maintains a sense of family. Aruna once said that "It is outdated to quarrel and insult each other in front of the child after divorce. We can be friends and good parents. A good divorce is better than a bad marriage. Divorce does not mean our lives are over. We have a failed marriage but we need to continue living." The wife is given an option, which is a new younger man. If she lived in the past, she would be negatively viewed as a "cougar." At present, due to changing social contexts, it is normal for an

older woman to have a younger boyfriend or spouse. In order to emphasize that the wife is finally free from the husband's bondage, Aruna asks Thada to formally sign a divorce certificate at the district office. The divorce scene is long and emotional. The characters' expression and the close-up shot of the divorce certificate make the audience feel sad. After the divorce certificate was signed, there is another emotional scene emphasizing the end of their husband-wife relationship, both de facto and de jure. This is in line with the intention of the drama producer, director, and screenwriter to support the family institution and to provide an option for all of the characters, especially women, to live their own lives.

"Actually, the direction of this drama is determined by the drama producer (ONE Channel), director (Sant Srikaewlaw), and screen writer (Wattana Weerayawattana). All of them want to support the family institution and provide options for all of the characters, including the mistress, single mother, and unfaithful husband. It is an alternative drama about marriage life, which aims to provide alternative solutions. Everyone in this project thinks the same way. Director Sant is a family lover. He wants to communicate his subtext to the male audience. Pon (Nipon Phewnen) emphasizes that this drama must give hope and options to women, who have to rely on themselves" (Wattana Weerayawattana, 2018)

The audience also **thought** that it is normal for married men to have an affair. Some of them **thought** that it is acceptable as long as it does not happen to them. If they encounter the same problem as Aruna, they may similarly solve the problem or even use a more violent solution. This indicates that the audience accepts the values and ideologies that the drama constructs as social realities. However, the audience does not surrender itself to those values and ideologies. They learn about the struggles and solutions until some of them **thought** that they can solve the problem faster and more effectively than the character does. This is considered an opening of a new space for women to determine their own solution while living in a patriarchal society.

## 6.3 Recommendations

### 6.3.1 Recommendations from This Study

#### Policy

1) The recommendations for government agencies, especially the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and other related women's and family institutions, include the following. 1) Formulating women's development policies at the national level. "The Fierce Wife" and "Mia (Wife) 2018" are successful TV dramas in Taiwan and Thailand, which reflect the marriage and gender problems in Taiwanese and Thai middle-class families in the digital age. The study of the new paradigm narrative and the construction of the meanings of these two dramas help to explain the main characters' image and background (the husband, wife, and mistress), the construction of the meanings of "wife," and the content, components, and political, economic, social, and cultural contexts of Taiwan and Thailand, especially the relationships between husband and wife in the family, which are transferred from the original Taiwanese drama to the Thai version. It also helps to clarify how the power relations in the family as well as authoritarian and feminist values and ideologies are communicated to the audience through pro-social, anti-social, and mixed approaches and how the audience perceives and interprets what the media intend to communicate by preferred reading, negotiated reading, and oppositional reading. The results of this study delineate the media's direction and intention and the audience's perception and interpretation of marriage and gender issues, which will be useful for the government in analyzing and determining appropriate policy according to the Strategy for Women's Development 2017-2021, which states that women are human resources that play an important role in the country's economic, social, and political development. Although women's development in Thailand has advanced at a fast pace, the development and empowerment of women must be continually carried out because there are still so many problems and obstacles associated with the traditional values, beliefs, and culture of Thai people. Therefore, the development of women in the next phase needs to take into account the obstacles and barriers to women's development in Thailand. Particularly, the government needs to focus on adjusting

people's attitudes toward gender equality, creating more opportunities for women to participate in economic and political activities, and encouraging private organizations and community organizations to place emphasis on enhancing the quality of life for women and women's empowerment. In addition, the government should focus on helping women keep up with various changes by encouraging those involved in media production to communicate appropriate messages for changing people's viewpoints toward women. This is in line with the 20-Year National Strategy Framework (2017-2036) and the 12<sup>th</sup> National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021), which place importance on the development of people of all ages, public participation, access to basic rights, and the reduction of inequality between different groups of people (Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, 2017). The government should formulate new policies and adjust existing policies in accordance with the changes in Thai society and Thai people's attitudes, which will lead to more practical implementation and increased public understanding and participation.

2) Determining women's development policies at the international level. Thailand has tried to enhance the quality of women's development according to the Women's Development Plan. The United Nations also gives importance to women's development and has determined international measures to encourage all member countries to pay more attention to women's quality of life, women's empowerment, and gender equality. In addition, Section 27 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 states concerning basic human rights that all persons are equal before the law, and shall have rights and liberties and be protected equally under the law. As a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Thailand has a mission to establish measures for eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and to ensure that women will be receive benefits and opportunities from the government based on the principles of gender equality, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration for the Advancement of Women, and the Universal Declaration on Women and Participation in Peace Building. Thus, the government should promote women's development in an integrated and sustainable way and encourage equal participation of women in national developments. The results of this research provide basic information about the role of women in the family and the audience's attitude



towards gender equality, which is beneficial to the government in presenting and addressing these issues at the international level in the correct direction. 3) Establishing policies for enhancing the Thai family's strength. This drama presents the relationships between husband and wife in a modern middle-class family and how to solve family problems as a single mother. The audience perceives and interprets that the main character or the wife is a strong single mother, who has the courage to make decisions and live her own life without having to rely on her husband. The situation of the main character is consistent with the situational report of Thai family's strength 2018, which indicates that most families in Thai society are single-parent families (Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development, 2018). However, the average family strength value is still lower than the criteria in the aspects of showing love and care to family members and effective communication. The results of this study can be used as a basic guideline for solving family problems and determining an appropriate family communication approach in order to maintain and improve the role of parents in providing love and care to children. Family learning centers that were established by the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development should provide knowledge and information about the importance of the family institution and family-related laws in order to make people use the obtained knowledge to develop themselves and others and help those that are facing family problems in an appropriate way. 4) Proposing new laws on women's rights, the family institution, and gender equality. Existing laws should also be revised in accordance with the current context of Thai society. The results of this research provide basic information useful for drafting laws on women's rights, the family institution, and gender equality.

2) The recommendations for the Ministry of Education are that the results of this study provide basic information useful for integrating the importance of the family institution, gender equality, and morality into the educational curriculum.

#### Television drama and the mass communication industry

1) Drama producers together with television stations can apply the findings of this research to adjust and improve their presentation of the role of husband and wife in the family and gender values in various media. The content of television dramas regarding family and gender issues, which are similar to the dramas

in this study, should be appropriately produced to be in line with changing social contexts and suit the diverse needs of viewers in the digital age. In addition, as television dramas are increasingly bought and sold around the world, the results of this research will make Thai drama producers better understand the context of Chinese and Taiwanese societies. The research results can be extended to study the social context of other countries, which will be useful for developing and exporting Thai television dramas to overseas markets.

2) Content producers on various platforms can use the results of this research as a guideline for producing content related to family and gender issues and creating positive audience engagement.

#### Civil society sector

1) Aside from the media and television industry, the results of this study help to communicate social issues, especially family relationships and gender equality, to the wider public, which will lead to a change of social paradigm about women, wives, and the family. Civil social organizations that place importance on the family and women issues, including Women Network Reshaping Thailand, Women's Network Organization of Thailand, and Women Lawyers Association of Thailand under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, have missions to monitor, oversee, and give advice to women in order to prevent discrimination against women in Thailand. They should participate in promoting the development of women's roles and their quality of life and organizing various activities to promote local women's rights to live with dignity and equality. They should be aware of current situations and people's perception of the family and women's issues in order to determine the direction of development activities in accordance with the social context. By doing this, it will make the Thai society develop in an appropriate and creative direction. Moreover, it will help to reduce gender inequality, family problems, and social conflicts. Everyone has a role and is important. People of all ages can live happily together in society and have a good quality of life.

2) The findings of this research will enable women and men, single and married people, drama viewers and non-viewers, parents and children, who are part of a family institution, to better understand each other and to learn to solve problems and

perform their roles in accordance with the current social context in order to reduce family problems and create a happy society.

### **6.3.2 Recommendations for Future Research**

1) The two television dramas that were analyzed in this research present the role of women as wives in Thai and Taiwanese families, which have specific characteristics and socioeconomic contexts. Future research should investigate other television dramas that demonstrate the role of women as wives in different contexts and analyze their narrative components, the hidden values and ideologies, and the construction of the meanings of “wife” that may differ from the results of this research.

2) Future research should study the audience’s perception and interpretation of women in different roles, such as single women and single mothers, and then compare the obtained results with the results of this research and the role of women in real life in order to find the similarities and differences in the construction of meanings and explore the causes of the differences.

3) Future research should investigate the role of men as husbands and the role of children in the family in various dimensions in order to explore social values and ideologies that are concealed.

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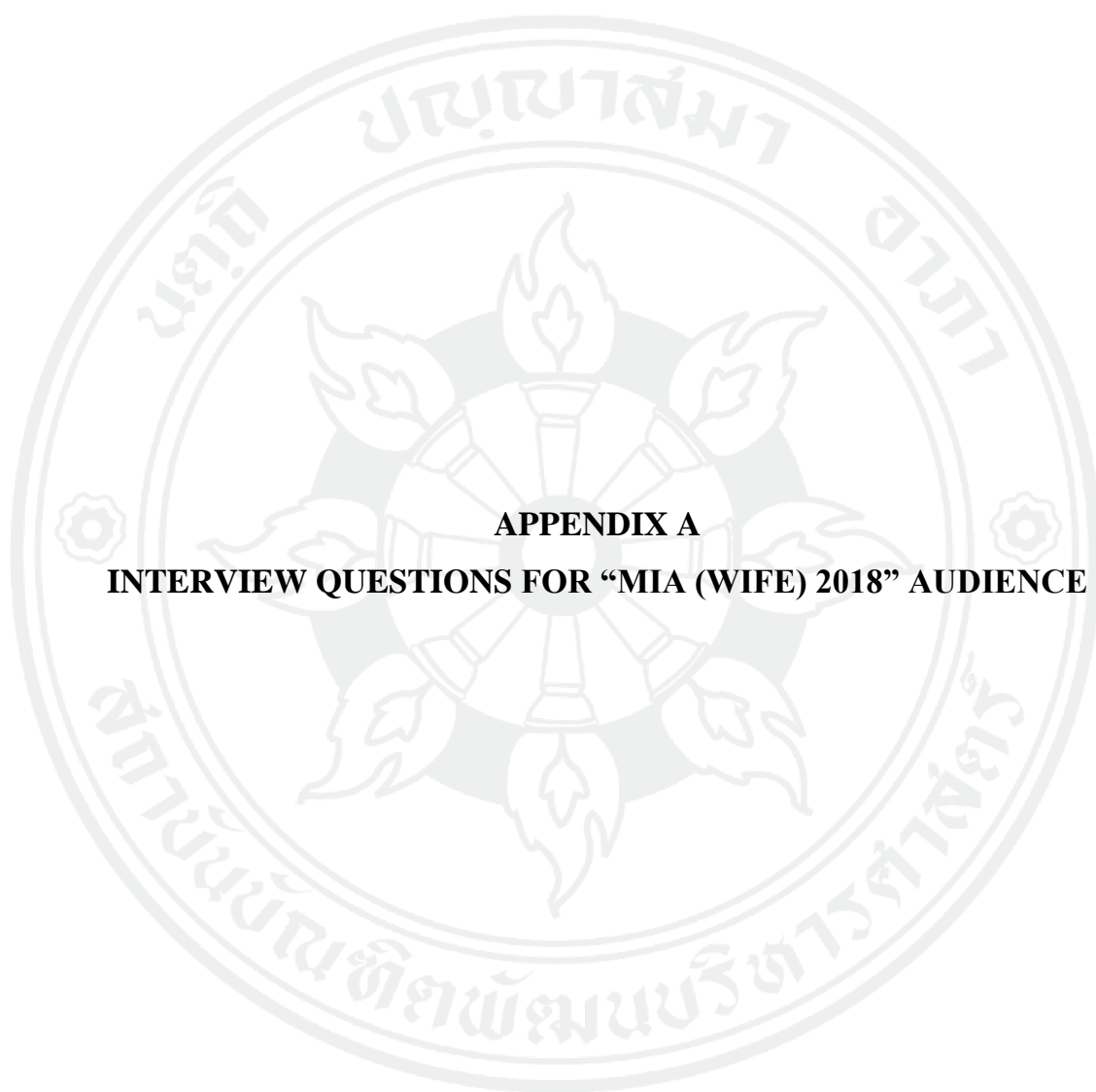
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**APPENDIX A**  
**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR “MIA (WIFE) 2018” AUDIENCE**

### Part 1: Demographic Data

1. Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Age ☐ Less than 20 years ☐ 20-29 years ☐ 30-39 years  
☐ 40-49 years ☐ 50-59 years ☐ 60 years or more
3. Hometown ☐ Bangkok ☐ .....Province (please specify)
4. Status ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Others.....(please specify)
5. Occupation.....
6. Education.....

### Part 2: The Audience's Views about the Narrative of the Drama

7. Apart from watching the drama on TV, through which channels did you watch the drama "Mia (Wife) 2018"?
8. What kinds of your engagement did you have with the drama?
9. What factors were your motivation to engage with the drama?
10. Why did you like watching the drama "Mia (Wife) 2018"?
11. What is your opinion about the narrative of the drama?
12. What is your opinion about the contents of the drama?

### Part 3: Audience's Perceptions and Interpretations of the Meanings of 'Wife' Constructed through the Leading Character Named "Aruna"

13. In the drama "Mia (Wife) 2018", Aruna was a working age woman. She had burdens both inside and outside the family. Do you think that the age and occupation of the wife affected her family and how? (What about in your real life?)
14. What is your opinion about Aruna's style of dressing? (What is your style of dressing?)
15. What do you think about Aruna's traits (What do you think about your traits?)
16. What is the role of the "wife" in the family in the drama? (What are the similarities and differences compared with your life?)
17. How are the wife's relationships with her husband and daughter? (What is your relationship with your husband and children, or other family members, like in your real life?)



18. Do you think Aruna was good, bad, or good and bad in combination depending on the situation? (What are the similarities and differences between Aruna and you?)

19. Apart from the above mentioned, what else do you perceive about Aruna?

20. What does “Mia (Wife) 2018” mean?

#### **Part 4 The Connection between the Drama’s Contents and Social Reality**

21. What do you think about the married man finding a new lover in the drama and in the Thai society at present?

22. To what extent is the drama similar to your real life, or the lives of other persons who you know? If your real life is similar to Aruna’s, would you solve the problems in the same way as Aruna, or not, and how?

23. What benefits did you receive from watching the drama? What aspects of the drama do you think reflect the Thai society?

#### **Part 5 General Questions about Wife**

24. What does “wife” mean? How are a wife’s roles important for the family or Thai society?

25. What is your ideal “wife”?

26. What should a “wife” be in the current Thai society?

Note: Questions in the brackets were only asked to key informants with first-hand experience (De jure and de facto wives).

## BIOGRAPHY

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Bachelor of Accounting (2nd Class Honours)

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Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand (1994)

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The Secretariat of the House of Representatives

The National Assembly of Thailand (2004 - present)