



Applying Critical Discourse Analysis as a conceptual framework for investigating gender stereotypes in political media discourse

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to demonstrate how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be used as a conceptual framework for investigating gender stereotypes in political media discourse. Language and gender studies in media discourse work with a diverse theoretical standpoint underpinning each particular work, and are generally bound by a concern for the reproduction of ideology in language use, which is also one of the aims of CDA. However, CDA has previously been criticized for selecting and using only a small number of texts, leading to concerns of representativeness of the texts selected, and thus susceptibility to the researcher's bias in text selection for an intended analysis. In this paper, we used news reports with reference to the former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra of Thailand as the case study to examine how gender stereotypes related to female politicians are linguistically generated in media text. We demonstrate how an abstract concept such as stereotyping can be investigated through systematic linguistic analysis and how such criticisms, especially that of representativeness of the texts selected, or cherry-picking data, can be addressed when conducting a CDA research project. We propose that the potential bias in data selection can be minimized or even eliminated by systematically obtaining a data set large enough to be a representative sample. Doing so can help increase the ability to describe texts, and more thoroughly convince the reader of the resulting claims regarding how gender stereotypes in politics are reproduced and generated through language used in media.

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Introduction

This paper aims to demonstrate how Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be applied as a conceptual framework for investigating gender stereotypes in politics in media discourse. CDA has previously been criticized for selecting and using only a small number of texts, leading to concerns

of representativeness of the texts selected, and thus susceptibility to the researcher's bias in selecting texts for analysis. Thus, in this paper, we outline how such criticisms, especially the criticism of representativeness of the texts selected, or cherry-picking data, can be addressed when conducting a CDA research project. We demonstrate how an abstract concept like stereotyping can be investigated through systematic linguistic analysis. We propose that a rigid and well-structured CDA can minimize or even eliminate potential bias in data selection. Doing so can help to increase the ability to describe texts and better convince the reader of the validity of claims regarding how gender

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stereotypes in politics are reproduced and generated through language used in media.

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in Politics in Media

CDA is “a type of discourse analysis research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts” (van Dijk, 2004, p. 352). It seeks to show how ideological presuppositions are hidden underneath the surface structures of language choices in text (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Scholars working under the umbrella of CDA schools may work with diverse theories and various foci, but they are bound by a concern for the investigation of the reproduction of ideology in language (Fairclough, 1992). CDA looks into, for example, institutional, political, gender, and media discourses (Wodak, 2001) and how certain social groups may be ill-represented or misrepresented in various types of discourse.

The importance of language used in media in generating the taken-for-granted claims about women and the media's reinforcement on hegemonic ideologies of gender are also highlights for Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (DA & CDA). The studies of gender stereotypes in politics and media related to stereotypes of female politicians in media lie in the fact that there is a polarity in language that is used to describe female and male politicians (Anderson, Diabah, & Mensa, 2011). Some studies have investigated, for instance, naming and referential features used to refer to female politicians and to describe them in comparison with their male counterparts (e.g. Barnes & Larrivé, 2011; O'Grady, 2011). One study worth mentioning (Gidengil & Everitt, 2003) found that reported speeches of both female and male politicians were mediated by masculine norms of political reporting.

Though the use of CDA concepts is deemed appropriate for such studies, it is crucial to further discuss some criticisms of this approach.

Criticism of CDA

Several criticisms have been leveled at the methodology adopted by CDA research. The most notable ones come from Widdowson in a series of articles (Widdowson, 1995a, 1995b), in which he argues that many of the concepts and analytical models of CDA are vague. Apart from Widdowson, other CDA critics agree that: 1) texts are arbitrarily selected; 2) texts are limited in length, which leads to concerns over representativeness of the texts selected; and 3) there are limitations and difficulties in drawing any conclusion (Schegloff, 1997; Sharrock & Anderson, 1981; Stubbs, 1997; Verschuere, 2001; Wetherell, 1998).

Though CDA, just like any other approach, has received harsh criticism, conducting it with some thorough procedures can help increase the ability to describe texts and to bring out the ideologies concealed

in texts so that they can be more easily challenged (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The criticisms mentioned above are issues that can be overcome.

Addressing Criticism

To address the criticism of prioritizing context over text, a study should start from a textual analysis; then the findings can be interpreted and discussed against any relevant sociopolitical context. This can be done, for example, by discussing text production and consumption, and how they affect the pattern of ideologies found in the textual analysis. To address the point of representativeness of the texts selected, or cherry-picking of data that arises from the ‘randomness’ of data selection (Widdowson, 1998) or a lack of rigor in collecting data, the study should aim for credibility and dependability by being as truthful and transparent as possible in giving sufficient details about the data source. The data must be obtained systematically, and there should be enough data to provide a representative sample. Moreover, to make the analysis “transparent so that any reader can trace and understand the detailed in-depth textual analysis” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 11), much effort should be put into the description of the methodology to clearly explain how the data has been collected, selected and downsized. Moreover, the analysis should be made “systematic and comprehensive” (Widdowson, 2004, p. 110). To be aware of the confirmability and transferability of the study, as suggested by Paltridge (2006), an ‘audit trail’ should be provided in the appendixes so that readers can trace and understand each of the steps of the analysis. Finally, by carefully addressing potential criticisms, the issue of making much interpretation out of little evidence can be resolved.

Methodology

Operationalizing CDA as a Conceptual Framework for Investigating Gender Stereotypes in Media Discourse

This research examines how gender stereotypes related to female politicians are linguistically generated in media text. We used Yingluck Shinawatra as a case study to see: 1) how her representations, as Thailand's first female prime minister, are linguistically constructed in the English-language press in Thailand; and 2) how gender stereotypes in Thai politics are distributed worldwide through media discourse. We have used CDA as a conceptual framework, and Transitivity Analysis from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as an analytical framework. However, this paper is not primarily aimed at presenting the results of the research project, but to demonstrate a method of addressing the main criticism of CDA: a lack of rigor in collecting data, or arbitrarily selected texts, which leads to concerns over the credibility or trustworthiness of the research.

We address the criticism of representativeness of the texts selected, and avoid cherry-picking data that arises from the ‘randomness’ of data selection (Widdowson, 1998) by following the criteria set by Wodak and Meyer (2009, p. 98):

- Specific political units (region, nation state, international union).
- Specific periods of time relating to important discursive events, which are connected with the issue in question.
- Specific social and especial political actors.
- Specific discourse.
- Specific fields of political action.
- Specific semiotic media and genre.

Procedure of Data Collection

Since our study aimed to examine how gender stereotypes in Thai politics are distributed worldwide through media discourse, the ‘specific political units’ were narrowed down to the point that the data needed to be from media sources that are produced in Thailand, but also reach both local and international (or worldwide) audiences. Hence, only English-language texts were used as the data. The ‘specific period of time relating to important discursive events’, connected with the issues in question, is during the 2011 election which is when Thailand elected its first female prime minister. Hence, we were able to study the ‘specific social and political actor’ for the investigation—Mrs. Yingluck Shinawatra.

Following the criteria mentioned above, we selected the Bangkok Post and The Nation because they are considered the two leading English-language daily newspapers in Thailand in terms of circulation ([National Centre for Research on Europe, 2011](#)). The query terms ‘Yingluck Shinawatra’, ‘Yingluck’, and other related terms such as ‘Thailand’s election’ were used to access relevant reports from the NEWSCenter database provided by InfoQuest Limited, a leading service provider of online news and information dating back more than a decade. The news articles were then copied and pasted into files in Microsoft Word format. The timeframe selected for the data collection was May–August 2011 (from two months before to one month after the election). The main reason that we chose this timeframe to be the ‘specific periods of time relating to important discursive events’ for monitoring and collecting data is because before May, Yingluck was a largely unknown figure in the Thai and international media. Having been involved purely in her family businesses up until the moment she became a party list candidate, she was a fresh face in Thai politics and was rarely covered by any news media regarding her brother’s political career. However, starting in May 2011 (and peaking in July) she emerged as a powerful political figure and grabbed much attention among worldwide media as the leader of the front-running party, the nominated candidate as Thai prime minister, and then as the newly elected, first female prime minister of Thailand, respectively. This particular period of time, hence, is considered enough to render a dynamic picture of how her representations are discursively constructed in the texts.

As seen from the table below, 885 news items from the Bangkok Post and 792 items from The Nation provided the data for the analysis. The number of news items, divided into the timeline of events, is shown in [Table 1](#) below.

Table 1
Timeline of the 2011 election

| Date: Situation | Number of news items | |
|---|----------------------|--------------|
| | The Nation | Bangkok Post |
| Phase 1: May: Yingluck started to emerge as a newsworthy character, as the hopeful no. 1 party list candidate for the Pheu Thai Party | 8 | 17 |
| Phase 2: May 16: Yingluck was officially nominated as a party list candidate for Pheu Thai | 238 | 331 |
| Phase 3: July 3: The general election day, and the Pheu Thai Party won an overwhelming victory. Yingluck was poised to become Thailand’s first female prime minister. | 152 | 171 |
| Phase 4: July 19: Yingluck was officially endorsed by the Election Commission to be the PM | 120 | 119 |
| Phase 5: August 8: The King endorsed Yingluck as PM | 274 | 247 |
| Total | 792 | 885 |

Sentence Extraction and Data Downsizing

Since transitivity analysis was performed, which is analysis at the clause level, the first step of the analysis was to prepare the data by discarding irrelevant information, through identifying and focusing on only the sentences that Ms. Yingluck and references to her appeared in. Note that at this data preparation stage, ‘sentence’ typically refers to stretches of written text that begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop ([Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000](#); [Thompson, 2004](#)). Sentences, then, are broken down into clauses in a later step (see [Text 1](#)).

The underlined headline and five underlined sentences in [Text 1](#) are, as proposed earlier in the data preparation stage, those sentences which refer to Ms. Yingluck. At this stage, other information—or to be precise, other sentences which do not refer to Ms. Yingluck—were discarded. After that, the clause complex boundaries which coincide with sentence boundaries were derived. It is noteworthy that, in the unit of analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics is concerned with clauses and clause complexes rather than sentences. A clause is defined as “(potentially) any stretch of language centred on a verbal group” ([Thompson, 2004](#), p. 17). Halliday and other SFL practitioners (see for example, [Bloor & Bloor, 2004](#); [Butt et al., 2000](#); [Egins, 2004](#); [Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004](#); [Thompson, 2004](#)) all agree upon the notion that *clause* is the basic unit in expressing meaning whereas a *sentence* can consist of one or more clauses linked together which adequately account for a ‘clause complex’. In addition, in spoken language, the term ‘sentence’ is problematic to be identified and people tend to speak in a message, not a sentence ([Butt et al., 2000](#)). Hence, in the systemic functional approach, a clause can be defined as the largest grammatical unit, and a clause complex is two or more clauses logically connected.

In this step, there were 7,220 sentences that needed to be broken up into single clauses or clause simplexes which are the unit of analysis of SFL. Thus, we dealt with another issue here, namely of having a massive amount of data, too much to handle within the timeframe of the research, and

Text 1

Example of data preparation and sentence extraction.

Yingluck applies for P.Thai party list

Yingluck Shinawatra has applied for inclusion on Pheu Thai's party list for the general election, party spokesman Prompong Nopparit said on Tuesday.

Ms. Yingluck, former prime minister Thaksin's youngest sister, went to the Pheu Thai head office this morning to fill out the application. "The majority of Pheu Thai members support Ms Yingluck, but it's up to her in the end," Mr Prompong said.

Pheu Thai deputy leader Plodprasop Suraswadi said the executive committee of the party will not finalise the order of candidates on the party list until after May 15. Mr Plodprasop also rebuked opposition Pheu Thai party list MP Chaovarin Lathasaksiri, who earlier told the press that Ms. Yingluck would be put in the No. 1 slot. Mr. Chaovarin also said Ms. Yingluck stands a good chance of being Thailand's first female prime minister. Mr. Plodprasop said Mr. Chaovarin had no right to say this because the party executive committee had not yet considered the matter.

More than 200 people had applied to be put on the party list, which would comprise 125 names, and the executive committee would not consider fixing the list order until after May 15. Moreover, there were at least five candidates for the top slot. The party list, on being completed, would be announced by party leader Yongyuth Wichaidit, Mr. Plodprasop said.

When asked to name the five candidates, Mr. Plodprasop said it would be inappropriate for him to do so. Meanwhile, the Chart Pattana Puea Pandin Party on Tuesday announced former national football striker Piyapong Pue-on would be on the party's list of candidates.

Sqn. Ldr. Piyapong said he had submitted a letter of resignation to the air force as he wanted to enter the political arena. The football legend said that his intention was to work with Chart Pattana Puea Pandin in the area of sports development as a former athlete, not as a politician. Chart Pattana Puea Pandin spokesman Alongkot Maneeakas announced today that Phairote Suwanchawee, 62, a key figure in the party, had died of lymphoma cancer.

Mr. Alongkot said he was treated at Bangkok Hospital and was visited by politicians.

Reports said Phairote died on Saturday but his wife did not allow the news to be announced as his son is getting married. The "Three Ps" faction of the party is headed by veteran politicians Phinij Jarusombat, Preecha Laohapongchana and the late Phairote.

Bangkok Post: May 10, 2011.

likely to be unmanageable by laborious and exhaustive manual linguistic analysis. This meant that the data needed to be downsized in order to carry on the analysis. The decision was made that if there were to be no comparison between The Nation and the Bangkok Post, then only one news source could be chosen. Thus, The Nation articles were set aside and the Bangkok Post became the only data source for the study. The Bangkok Post was chosen because it is the leading English-language newspaper in terms of readership, circulation, and advertising revenues, reflecting its diverse and loyal client base. Bangkok Post Online serves as the largest English-language news portal for Thailand. It is expanding its readership base within the ASEAN region and is known for being a highly reliable, quality media outlet ([The Post Publishing Public Company Limited, 2011](#)). The Bangkok Post has won many awards from various institutions, both local and international. For instance, in 2011, it won two awards for Best Online Video, a Silver Award for "Dummy's Guide to Thai Politics" and a Bronze Award for "Through the Looking Glass" from Digital Media Asia by The World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers ([Kilman, 2011](#)).

After the news reports from The Nation were excluded, 3,630 sentences from the Bangkok Post remained, which was still a massive amount for manual SFL analysis. Considering that as an issue, we revised the timeline of developments into three main phases (instead of five phases), as it would give a clearer picture of how the representations were dynamically constructed throughout the period of time. The timeline was divided into three phases based on the main events: the *campaign*, the *immediate post-election*, and *inauguration*. Phase 1, the campaign phase, began when Yingluck emerged as a newsworthy character, as the hopeful number-one party list candidate for Pheu Thai, and was officially nominated as a party list candidate for Pheu Thai. Phase 2, the immediate post-election phase, was from the General Election day, when the Pheu Thai Party won an overwhelming victory, and during the period when Ms. Yingluck was poised to become Thailand's first female prime minister. The last phase, the inauguration phase, was during the time when she was officially endorsed by the Electoral Commission to be the Prime Minister (PM) and was later endorsed by the King as PM.

Furthermore, after performing the clause division, the magnitude of data was still problematic. We attempted to use a random selection method to select clauses for analysis. However, after randomly selecting the clause complexes which referred to Ms. Yingluck, it was found that though some of the selected clauses were usable, they were not useful for the research objectives, as some news articles in the collection contained only one clause with the query terms 'Yingluck Shinawatra', or 'Yingluck', while the main content of the news article was less related to the 2011 election. As a consequence, we decided not to use random selection as a method to downsize the data. Instead, we chose to downsize the data by taking only the news items

in which Ms. Yingluck and references to her appeared in the headline. The justification for downsizing in this manner was because headlines form the “summary” of the news reports (van Dijk, 1988), and headlines function as the abstract of the main ideas of the story and as promoting one of the details of the story (Bell, 1991). Once this was done, there were 190 news items left for the analysis. The size of this corpus was considered appropriate because it yielded 2,560 clause simplexes.

The number of news items and numbers of clause complexes and clause simplexes are shown in Table 2 below, and the details of the clause division are explained later. As seen, we were able to use a reasonably large number of texts for analysis. Though not the entire data set, these texts were sufficient to satisfy the representativeness of texts for the analysis of linguistic choice using SFL.

After we had identified the clause complexes which referred to Ms. Yingluck, we performed clause division using Butt et al. (2000) and Thompson (2004) as guidelines. Those sentences gathered in the earlier stage (number of clause complexes as shown in Table 2) needed to be broken up into clause simplexes which referred to “single clause units or sentences of only one clause” (Egins, 2004, p. 256). Each clause was divided into its constituents or elements so that we could later identify the particular function which each part served in construing meaning. After performing clause simplex division, we then had 2,560 clause simplexes (as shown in Table 2) which were the data for linguistic and grammatical choice analysis, in the next step. As shown thus far, by setting a standard criterion for data collection, systematically gathering and using an amount of data large enough to be a representative sample, potential bias could to some extent be minimized in text selection, thus contributing to the trustworthiness and reliability of the analysis.

Results and Discussion

We employed transitivity analysis, which looks at the clause as a representational resource dealing with the exploration of the choices of process types and the associated participant roles ascribed to Yingluck Shinawatra in each phase (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). As shown in Table 3 below, the majority of processes chosen to represent Yingluck Shinawatra included material, relational, and verbal processes, as they appeared to be the top three highest percentages in every phase, followed by mental processes, although relational process is about half of the material processes. It can be noticed that only small numbers of behavioral and existential processes were used

Table 2

Numbers of news items, clause complexes and clause simplexes in each phase

| Phase | News items | Clause complexes | Clause simplexes |
|---------------|------------|------------------|------------------|
| Campaign | 87 | 726 | 1,250 |
| Post-election | 34 | 278 | 490 |
| Inauguration | 69 | 469 | 820 |
| Total | 190 | 1,473 | 2,560 |

Table 3

Distribution of participant roles assigned to Yingluck Shinawatra during each phase

| Process/participant role | Campaign phase number of clauses (%) | Post-election phase number of clauses (%) | Inauguration phase number of clauses (%) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Material | | | |
| - Actor | 383 (30.64) | 159 (32.45) | 303 (36.95) |
| - Goal | 115 (9.2) | 45 (9.18) | 75 (9.15) |
| Circumstance | 41 (3.28) | 13 (2.66) | 24 (2.93) |
| - Client | 26 (2.08) | 10 (2.04) | 5 (0.61) |
| - Scope | 14 (1.12) | 3 (0.61) | 18 (2.2) |
| - Circumstance | 2 (0.16) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |
| Relational | | | |
| - Token | 115 (9.2) | 33 (6.73) | 37 (4.51) |
| - Value | 11 (0.88) | 4 (0.82) | 2 (0.24) |
| - Attribute | 9 (0.72) | 8 (1.63) | 7 (0.85) |
| - Carrier | 174 (13.92) | 30 (6.12) | 79 (9.63) |
| Verbal | | | |
| - Sayer | 235 (18.8) | 162 (33.06) | 200 (24.4) |
| - Target | 25 (2) | 5 (1.02) | 15 (1.83) |
| - Receiver | 5 (0.40) | 0 (0) | 4 (0.49) |
| - Verbiage | 8 (0.64) | 0 (0) | 2 (0.24) |
| Mental | | | |
| - Senser | 62 (4.96) | 14 (2.86) | 37 (4.51) |
| - Phenomenon | 18 (1.44) | 4 (0.82) | 10 (1.22) |
| Behavioral | | | |
| - Behavior | 3 (0.24) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |
| - Behavior | 2 (0.16) | 0 (0) | 2 (0.24) |
| Existential | | | |
| - Existent | 2 (0.16) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |
| Total | 1,250 (100) | 490 (100) | 820 (100) |

to present her to the readers; thus, they are not particularly significant in terms of constructing her representations in this corpus of text.

As seen, among the various roles, readers would get to know her mainly through the roles as Actor (one who acts), Sayer (one who speaks), Carrier (one who is assigned qualities and classifications), Goal (one who is being acted upon), and Token (one who is identified as someone or something). By identifying the process types used to present her, we found that her representations were paradoxical. However, because of space limitations, we will primarily present the patterns of her representations that emerged during the campaign phase. The patterns of her representation in the press are elaborated below.

1. Yingluck Shinawatra as an ambitious politician

Through the role of Actor in these processes such as “is working hard”, “work side-by side with all Pheu Thai members towards forming a government”, “to push for policies”, “willing to go and seek advice”, “ready to meet people to find a way out” or “to help put an end to the problems of social division and violence”, and her role as Sayer in some verbal processes such as “called for all sides in society to reunite”, “pledged to restore the economy, improve the people’s livelihood, seek justice in the judicial process and follow the rules when taking the position”, she is discursively constructed as a plausible candidate, a novice politician who is open-minded, ambitious, and willing to work with others towards reconciliation.

2. Yingluck Shinawatra as a nominee, passive, dependent politician

When considering her other roles in material processes, her representations as a passive and dependent politician emerged from her semantic roles in clauses as Goal, Recipient, and Client of other entities' actions. Through her role as Goal, the press sometimes vaguely and implicitly mentioned how Yingluck was chosen for the position, for example, in "Yingluck Shinawatra, the youngest sister of fugitive former prime minister Thaksin, was on Monday chosen to fill the No. 1 spot on the Pheu Thai party list in the July 3 general election".

The linguistics device such as nominalization, whereby a noun stands for a process, for example, "a resolution placing", "the resolution to place" is employed when mentioning how she got to the post as the candidate for the premier's post. The actor(s) who performed the action of choosing her for the post is, thus, left out of these passive clauses. However, when reporting on how she got into the position and became the party member, the press explicitly states that she was handpicked by her older brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin, for the post, as in the example, "Thaksin picked Ms. Yingluck because he did not see anyone else more reliable", or "Thaksin Shinawatra might choose Yingluck, the No. 1 list candidate, for the prime minister's post". Repeatedly, she is represented through the Material processes constructing her as not being her own woman, but merely a passive figure relying on others' assistance or even being controlled by other members (mostly men) of the party.

Besides her role as Goal, her other attributed roles such as Carrier, Recipient, and Client of others' actions, even help in putting the emphasis on her representation as being a dependent politician that needed to rely on the party and the other party members' decisions and assistance. She was, for example, "instructed to speak" and "is flanked by minders at all times", or "was styled to appear as much like a professional politician as possible". She is presented as being weak, passive, and dependent, requiring assistance from other members of the party in order to run her campaign or even when answering journalists' questions.

3. Yingluck Shinawatra as a successful businesswoman, yet inexperienced and incompetent politician

As occupations and education attainment are often seen as good indicators of social class, thus, it is an interesting aspect that the demographic characteristics of both male and female politicians in Thailand are in fact similar. Besides career politicians, Thailand has had a large number of members of parliament (both male and female) who built up a background in the business sector before joining the political sphere (Joshi & Och, 2014). Yingluck is another politician who had a firm background in business before taking part in the 2011 election. Thus, her professional skills should appear to benefit her in her role as a politician and candidate for the position of prime minister. In the news reports, through her roles as Carrier and Token, in a large number of Relational processes, she is identified as, for instance, one who "was an executive of the country's

largest mobile phone operator Advanced Info Service", "has experience of running a business worth billions, or "is also a committee member and secretary of Thaicom Foundation". She is described as "the executive president of SC Asset", who "has a strong knowledge of economic affairs" and "stands a good chance of being Thailand's first female prime minister", and is identified as someone who "could be Thailand's Corazon Aquino". The combination of the attributes of her successful career together with her education attainments such as "She graduated from Chiang Mai University's political science and public administration faculty", and "she earned a master's in political science from Kentucky State University, in the United States, in 1990", foreground her as a successful businesswoman with an impeccable education. Her social and educational background are depicted as being appropriate for a political candidate.

However, her positive representation as a competent businesswoman is downplayed when looking at other qualities attributed to her through the role of Carrier. For example, she is discussed as, "The photogenic Yingluck has a business background but hardly any political experience", "The 43-year-old businesswoman has almost no experience of politics", and "She is a successful businesswoman with little political experience but instant name recognition", for whom "Most of her top jobs were in the family businesses established by Thaksin". Here, the press identifies her lack of experience in politics as her weakness and implies that her business experience does not strengthen her case.

By being emphasized as a political novice, together with her constructed representation mentioned above as in, for example, "she was styled to appear as much like a professional politician as possible", she is portrayed in the press as someone who is not in fact "a professional politician". Thus, though she is portrayed as a "successful businesswoman" as constructed through many process types, her representation as a competent businesswoman together with the descriptions of her business achievements are constructed and represented as not being comparable with her role as a party candidate. She is rather presented as an incompetent candidate who has been handpicked for the political institution as a politician who is running for the position of prime minister.

In sum, based on the number of news texts obtained as data, in our analysis we are able to identify the patterns of stereotypes ingrained in the news reports. With the representative data, we found that through the linguistic choices used to represent Yingluck Shinawatra in the news, she, similar to other Asian female politicians, is stereotyped as passive, dependent, and a dynastic leader who has inherited power from her male kin.

Summary and Conclusion

Language and gender studies in media use diverse theoretical underpinnings in their works, but all promise to concern themselves with investigating the reproduction of ideology in the language used. Critical Discourse Analysis can be used as a conceptual and analytical framework to investigate and make sense of the ways in which the media conveys meaning and how it generates ideologies through

linguistic choices, so that they can be more easily challenged. CDA as a conceptual framework for discourse analysis, however, has been criticized, especially for selecting and using only a small number of texts, in some cases even just one or two, which has led to concerns regarding the representativeness of the texts selected, and limitations and difficulties in making any conclusion. In this paper, we have shown we can avoid those criticisms by being as truthful and transparent as possible in giving sufficient details about the sources of data, showing how the data are systematically obtained, and using an amount of data large enough to be a representative sample. We have proposed that a rigid and well-structured CDA can further minimize or even eliminate potential bias in data interpretation, when it tries to argue the ideology in language use to reveal long-standing social phenomena. By doing so, one would be able to better convince the reader of their claims regarding how gender stereotypes in politics are reproduced and generated through language used in media.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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