



THE REPRESENTATION OF THAI PRO-DEMOCRACY ACTIVISTS IN THE NEW
GENERATION IN ONLINE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS: A CRITICAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS



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WALAIRUT SAWASDEE

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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This research focuses on the representation of the new generation of pro-democracy activists in Thailand in online English-language political news. The study applies Critical Discourse Analysis as a theoretical approach to examine the selection of semantic discourse strategies (i.e., lexicons, granularity, and local coherence) and formal discourse strategies (i.e., superstructures and syntactic structures) to construct the representation of the Thai pro-democracy activists and decode the ideological implications hidden in the news articles reporting on their political activism. The 30 English-language news articles reporting on identical situations published from October 2020 to March 2022 were downloaded from the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites and analyzed with the Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013). The results of the study suggest that discourse strategies, including lexicons, granularity, local coherence, and superstructures, are ideologically selected to construct a negative other-presentation of Thai pro-democracy activists on the Bangkok Post website. In comparison to the Reuters website, the selection of these strategies is ideological-based when constructing a positive self-presentation of the same group of activists. However, the usage of syntactic structures is applied based on the appropriation of news writing style to represent social actors and their actions. The research advances the understanding of the way language is employed to create discourse and control the perception of audiences, with a particular emphasis on the ideological implications concealed in the selection of discourse strategies by news providers.

Keyword : Critical Discourse Analysis, Ideological Square, Ideology, Online English-language news, New generation of Thai pro-democracy activists

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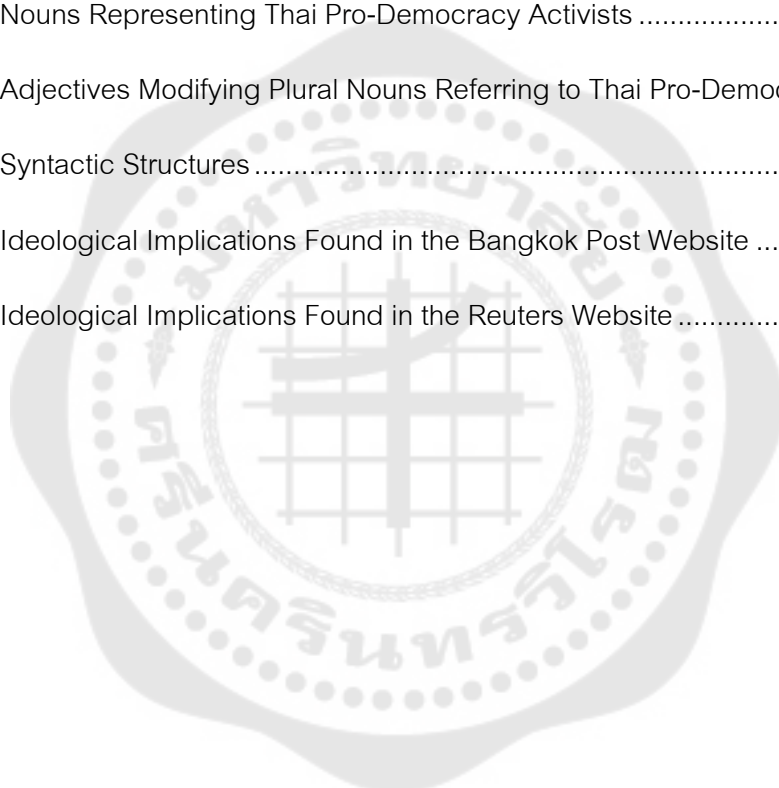
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The introduction chapter elucidates the objectives and significance of the study. At the outset, the chapter states a summary of the selected political incident and addresses the research problem in terms of the English language used in online newspapers. Then the following subdivision reveals the objectives of the study and the way to accomplish each objective. Subsequently, the significance of the study section declares the necessity and the benefits of conducting this investigation. Next, the scope of the study regarding the representative discourse and conceptual framework is explained. Finally, definitions of key terms in the study are offered.

Background

It is undeniable that media, especially newspapers, play a significant role in politics. The role of newspapers is widely accepted as a powerful device providing up-to-date incidents and verifiable information about politics. Newspapers indeed have functioned as a primary medium to communicate with the public when any political events such as elections, demonstrations, or conflicts have occurred; moreover, they are considered a source of information enlightening political knowledge to newsreaders (Gil de Zúñiga & Chen, 2019; Jacobi et al., 2015). The newspaper also has the potential to promptly deliver an important message which can raise social awareness on political issues leading to the influence on public opinions and behavior to respond to or participate in political activities (Khalid & Ahmed, 2014).

Nowadays, the domination of newspapers in politics has been boosted by the advantages of the internet and modern technologies. Due to the significant growth of the internet user population, various news agencies advanced marketing strategies to turn newsprints into online news articles; consequently, the number of digital pieces of literature, including political documents, has multiplied (Gil De Zúñiga & Chen, 2019). The Internet is also beneficial for the expansion of news website visitors leading to the dramatic gaining of online political news readers, especially young adult audiences (Smith, 2009). The internet, moreover, has enlarged accessibility to obtain political

information published on news websites for both domestic and foreign online audiences resulting in the urge for public opinions and expression from across the world (Gil De Zúñiga & Chen, 2019; Jacobi et al., 2015; Smith, 2019).

A digital version of newspapers undeniably takes part in the public's awareness and understanding of ongoing political issues occurring around the world in this contemporary era. As a result, the reports on political-related content in online newspapers are supposed to be objective not to convince the public to have a particular opinion or reaction in a certain way on a political vexation. However, it is difficult for news providers to be fact-oriented because messages in newspapers transmitted through specific discourses, especially written language, usually reveal implicit intentions referring to institutional ideologies (Fowler, 1991; Kameswari et al., 2020). Any controversial political events selected to report in newspapers have been interpreted through a particular perspective of a news organization, and then the news authors, who are skillful and experienced, consciously utilize appropriate written languages and linguistic features to reinforce and manipulate a message that fits the political stance or ideology of its company before delivering the specific political and social orientations to the target audiences (Fowler, 1991; Ghassemi & Hemmatgosha, 2019). Since political topics are, in addition, generally attained among educated and elite news readers, the written language for political news is subtly shaped by the dominant ideology established among higher social institutes and shared in society; in the same way, the written language for political news is carefully applied to serve the dominant ideology and then gradually imposes such ideologies on public audiences (Ahmed, 2018; Tejada, 2021). The online newspaper, accordingly, is not only a digital source to report a political event at a particular time in this contemporary age but also a medium to address and transfer a certain political ideology to the public; in fact, the hidden ideological slants are intentionally constructed through an appropriate written language selected by news authors (Ghassemi & Hemmatgosha, 2019).

Recently in 2020, a new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand has occurred and become a controversial political turmoil shared and discussed among

different public spheres. This activism has captured not only domestic but also international online media attention because it has been considered one of the most impactful pro-democracy movements in Thai contemporary history (Smith et al., 2020). In contrast to previous political movements, the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism has no centralized leaders, yet the movement has been unauthorizedly exercised and participated by educated young Thais and voluntarily supported by other Thais who share different socioeconomic backgrounds and professional careers (Teeratanabodee, 2021). In addition, these pro-democracy activists in the new generation not only gain momentum from online engagement but also exercise offline rallies to voice prominent demands on the resignation of former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha and his military-backed cabinet, the revision of the constitution, and the reformation of monarchy power (Phoborisut, 2020; Smith et al., 2020). Even though this political instability is a domestic affair in Thailand, the collective endeavor led by the Thai rising generations to oppose military dictatorship and to redraft one of the strictest government rules in the world, the lèse-majesté law, has become a controversial issue and captured an eye of international netizens and news media (Hewison, 2020; Phoborisut, 2020).

Thanks to the versatility of modern technology and the internet, domestic political unrests happening in Thailand these days receive greater attention from online international mass media. However, it is noticeable that the new generation of pro-democracy activism has been variously reported through diverse written language uses and linguistic features. Based on observation, different keywords, including *student activists*, *anti-government protesters*, and even *pro-democracy demonstrators*, were employed to refer to these activists when reporting on their activism; moreover, the narration of incidents was represented differently, especially when there were confrontations between the police and the activists, as most of the space in some news articles was given to describe the injuries of police and activists while other articles focused on the explanation of the motive and the cause of the violent encounter (see Appendix A-B).

Peculiarly, each news provider represents the same social actors, the pro-democracy activists in this case, who are involved in any action in political events through sundry varieties of discourse strategies such as words sharing different semantic properties or different pieces of information. Flower (1991) explained this nuance that the news authors not only employ proper language to report events but also subtly impose their ideological standpoints on what is being reported; as a result, these discourse features are precisely selected to reflect the news author's political point of view. Thus, different preferences in discourse strategies may be deliberately utilized to serve heterogeneous political orientations of the newsmakers even though these devices are employed to report the same social actor in the same political events. However, if discourse strategies are deliberately apt to construct the intended message to serve the political outlook of the news providers, the social actors and their actions may be misrepresented and misreported to accomplish this purpose; subsequently, the different representations of social actors in political incidents may create an ideological bias leading to confusion and misunderstandings among news public audiences.

The new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand has become dominant in various online news coverage and gained a wide range of opinions from internet news readers; as a result, this controversial movement was academically discussed in terms of politics and social science. This controversial activism was discussed in terms of international laws and standards, in which individuals have the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, even when deriving and sharing facts and information on the internet (Melendez, 2020). In addition, the use of social media to gain momentum from online communities and help mobilize offline campaigns was studied, as analog ideas have been transferred to digital activism these days (Sinpeng, 2021; Thomas et al., 2020). Furthermore, the aim of the activism for the change of constitutional monarchy was discussed in terms of the possibility of being archivable, as these pro-democracy activists are opposing conservative elites in Thailand. (Hewison, 2020).

Even though the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand has been discussed in the fields of politics and social science, a limited number of studies have shed light on linguistic-wise research, especially on the way these Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation are represented through certain discourse strategies and the way the underlying political ideologies of news institutes are embedded in online English-language newspapers reported on the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand.

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. What are certain discourse strategies (i.e., semantic and formal discourse strategies) employed to construct the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists in online English-language newspapers?
2. What are the underlying ideologies of news providers embedded in the online English-language newspapers that reported on the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand?

Objectives of the Study

The current study aims to examine the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in online English written language news articles. The individual objectives of the study are as follows:

1. to analyze discourse strategies (i.e., semantic and formal discourse strategies) adopted to portray the images of the Thai pro-democracy protesters in online English-language news articles published on news websites.
2. to decode ideological implications that occurred in online news articles written about the Thai pro-democracy movement in online English-language news articles published on news websites.

Significance of the Study

The present investigation essentially wishes to enlighten critical reading among the public in terms of acknowledging facts and guarding against misrepresentation due to partiality and bias when receiving information from online news media. Due to the importance of language as a method of communication in either traditional or digital newspapers, language is not only utilized as a tool for transferring facts and information but also as a medium for constructing biased ideologies of news providers (Fowler, 1991) When language in newspapers is influenced by ideological orientation, it will be able to affect the representation of the actual incidents, and it is even more powerful in terms of influencing newsreaders' comprehension when it is used by high-language proficient journalists (Ghassemi & Hemmatgosha, 2019). Hence, the objectives of the current study (i.e., to examine how news authors employ a great variety of discourse strategies to compose sophisticated political news pieces and to understand how they enact a certain political ideology through the use of proper language to manipulate the news readers' understanding) will be advantageous in regard with uplifting critical reading among the public to prevent fallacy on political unrest due to the ideological inclination of news institutes expressed through the language in political news.

The current study, secondly, expects to witness power abuse or ideological domination through online news discourse when political unrest is transpiring. Since the new generation of pro-democracy activism has been active since 2020, these activists have been confronting the military authoritarian and risking their lives to accomplish their goals; in fact, this political activism remains dominating in various mass media, including online newspapers these days. Hence, the public discourse, particularly online news discourse, will be evident to explain how these social actors have been treated by the social community, why they have become pro-democracy activists, why they still protest the government, and why the public should not take this political movement for granted.

Even though the pro-democracy movement in the new generation has excessively allured the participation of Thai citizens and triggered public opinion on whether these activists are striving for a modern bureaucratic state, or they are willing to

reform traditional social institutes (i.e., the military government and monarchy), a lot of Thai people are evading discussing it publicly due to the reverence to sensitive matters in the context of Thailand. Thus, studying the representation of Thai pro-democracy in the new generation in online English-language newspapers will firstly be an alternative perspective allowing the public to academically scrutinize this controversial political incident under traditional and social conditions. Since the mass media, especially online newspapers, remain a prominent role in reporting political incidents, it holds the function of grasping the understanding of public opinion; therefore, it is worth investigating to acknowledge how online news providers who are diverse in social and political orientations deem these pro-democracy activists and their political activities and how newsmakers expect their target audiences to have a certain attitude towards this debatable political demonstration under the valuable social circumstance.

The present study, lastly, increases the amount of research literature regarding political discourse. Political issues or social conflicts are widely studied in the field of philosophy and social science in the context of Thailand. However, language and discourse are social interactions as they are used as communicative tools to communicate ideas and narrate situations, which can reflect the reality of a particular society (Hassen, 2015); as a result, power abuse and ideological domination relating to political turmoil will be able to be discovered with language in the public sphere (i.e., online newspapers). Therefore, this investigation will foster the public understanding of social and political issues through linguistic evidence and enlarge the number of academic research on English language studies which is foreseen as a guideline for further investigation concerning language, discourse, social and political struggles happening in Thailand.

Scope of the Study

The current investigation employs an interdisciplinary approach called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a theoretical framework to study the discursive relationship between language and ideology which is complicated but explanatory, to understand how ideologies are enacted and reproduced with language used in different social and

cultural contexts. Moreover, Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013) is utilized as an analytical framework; indeed, the language used to represent Thai pro-democracy activists is analyzed under two types of discourse strategies (i.e., semantic, and formal discourse strategies) while ideological implications hidden in online English-language news articles on Thai pro-democracy activists are decoded under two ideological structures (i.e., positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation).

Since the selected political unit “the pro-democracy movement in Thailand” is viewed as an international political incident in this digital world, online English-language news articles related to this political turmoil are selected for data analysis. The representative English-language news articles are selected under criteria set by Wodak and Meyer (2009); also, the selected samples have to report the same event and publish on the same date. Therefore, there are 30 online English-language news articles related to the Thai pro-democracy demonstration published on the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites from October 2020 to March 2022, an ongoing intense period of the demonstration. Moreover, all elements of a news article (i.e., headlines, lead, body, and tail) are analyzed in this study.

Definitions of Terms

The definitions of important terms in the study are given as follows:

1. Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation refer to a group of Thai people who have gained momentum from online to offline engagement to stand up against the military-back regime and seek a modern democracy where the monarchy is under the renewed constitution in this digital era (Phoborisut, 2020, Smith et al., 2020).
2. Online English-language newspapers refer to digital versions of newspapers particularly written in English and published on news websites to which both domestic and overseas internet news readers can get access. The current investigation selects online English-language news articles reported on the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism published from October

2020 to March 2022 on the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites as representative texts for the analysis.

3. Political news discourse refers to the actual language used by news authors in political news media (van Dijk, 2009). In this study, the English-written language use of news authors on the report of Thai pro-democracy demonstrations on the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites from October 2020 to March 2022 is highlighted.
4. Discourse strategies refer to linguistic devices utilized to formulate comprehension among language users in particular communication events (van Dijk, 2011). The present study is interested in English-written discourse strategies (i.e., semantic and formal discourse strategies) adopted to construct the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists in online English-language news articles.
5. Ideology is a belief system shared among a particular social group (van Dijk, 2009; Woolard, 2020). The present investigation focuses on the sociopolitical ideology of online news agencies: Bangkok Post and Reuters that share different institutional purposes.

However, the details of each significant term and other relevant concepts will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of previous literature surrounding the representation of political protesters in English-language newspapers. The chapter initially draws a summary of the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. Then the second section demonstrates the nature of language in political news; consequently, the third subdivision provides the key concept of ideology along with an explanation of the relationship between ideology and discourse. After that, the next part gives an overview of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); subsequently, the following section describes the analytical framework of Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013). The last section presents relevant research studies regarding ideologies underneath the language used in English-language news articles about political issues.

The New Generation of Thai Pro-Democracy Activism

To make a common understanding of the selected political incident, the first section provides the background of the Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation. In 2014, a coup forced Thailand to be controlled by the military government led by former general Prayuth Chan-Ocha. Hewison (2020) and Phuborisut (2020) claimed that the military-based regime allied with the monarchy to position Thailand as a democratic country with the king as the head of state and titular head of the armed forces; as a result, the alliance of military government and monarchy has been the most prominent social institute in Thailand. Rather than strengthening the bureaucratic polity, the military junta with the alliance of the monarchy underperformed to manage the country and solved the public crisis. Thai PBS (2021) reported that the military government has not yet developed an economic plan to help small businesses and has mismanaged the national budget, leading to massive overseas loans; moreover, this military-backed regime was not able to improve the education system, causing the public-school curriculum in Thailand to rank at the bottom of ASEAN lists. In the same way, the role of the monarchy in Thailand has been questioned among the public, especially in the online international sphere, since the royal family has received

enormous taxpayer funding, leading this family to be the wealthiest people in Thailand while the king, Maha Vajiralongkorn, spent his luxurious life away in Germany (Hewison, 2020; Phuborisut, 2020).

Thanks to the transition to the online era, Thai people are more exposed to a wide range of information from different kinds of digital sources; subsequently, topics related to politics and monarchy have no longer been limited to academic and professional discussion (Thomas et al., 2020). In turn, Thai netizens, particularly the younger ones, publicly discuss politics and monarchy on their personal social media platforms leading to the establishment of the online political community; for instance, Thai internet users express constructive opinions on the military government's performance; also, they spread frustration over the royal family's privileges and do not hesitate to question the role of the monarchy in this contemporary era (Sinpeng, 2021). However, the action of online criticizing the government and monarchy has been deemed as a criminal cyber and computer crime; as a result, the government charged various Thai netizens with online sedition and treason and sent them to the attitude adjustment program with the hope to change Thai people's perspectives on the military-backed regime (Hewison, 2020). In the same way, internet users who criticize monarchy were charged with Article 112 of the Criminal Code, the strictest government rule in the world (Unno, 2022). The government declared that their action aimed to prevent public polarization and protect the highest social institute in Thailand to keep the country at peace and suggested the internet should not give opinions on the role of the monarchy because criticism of the monarchy is lawfully and traditionally prohibited; as a result, Thais should pay highest respect for the royalty (Melendez, 2020). This government's response, in turn, makes various Thai people unsatisfied since they feel threatened by the federal in terms of freedom of expression (Melendez, 2020; Unno, 2022).

After years of being intimidated by the dictatorship, the general election in 2019 was viewed as the solution to cease this military harassment. However, the election failed to end military-seized power since former general Prayuth Chan-Ocha has been reinstalled as the prime minister of Thailand due to the military-written constitution;

therefore, the military-backed government and monarchy are back in the most powerful political roles (Melendez, 2020). Shortly after the election, the constitutional court dissolved the Future Forward Party, which shared the third-highest seat in the parliament, and then the government was accused of abducting one of the most prominent political activists, Wanchalearm Satsaksit, leading to frustration and unimpressive sentiment among the new generation of Thai people (Melendez, 2020; Unno, 2022); subsequently, online critics started protesting the military-backed regime in a major public area, with the hope of receiving an explanation from the authorities.

The demonstration has been joined by thousands of people and become one of the most interesting political movements in Thailand due to the three important protesters' demands. Firstly, the resignation of former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha and his cabinet is a key demand for the demonstration since Thai pro-democracy protesters are unsatisfied with the failure of public administration, political performance, and economic management under the military government of Prayuth (Sopranzetti, 2020). In addition, the second demand for the strict limitation of the monarchy's power has attracted Thais to participate in the demonstration because criticism of the king has been lawfully prohibited and culturally taboo although the role of monarchical members and their assets has been questionable among Thai people (Hewison, 2020). Moreover, the last demand is to redraft a new constitution to end the intimidation of Thai people since Thai people have been jailed due to the government for unreasonable explanations and treated unfairly in terms of public expression (Hewison, 2020; Sopranzetti, 2020).

During the confrontation with the governmental authority, the pro-democracy activists have begun to share posts with pictures and captions and add English-language hashtags (e.g., #WhatshappeninginThailand, #PrayforThailand, and #RespectThaiDemocracy) on their social media accounts to necessitate attention from the web community on their demand for democratic reform and witness the intimidation of the military-back government to Thai people (Melendez, 2020; Sinpeng, 2021; Thomas et al., 2020). The success of these online political activities not only gains millions of domestic political engagements (i.e., offline and online participation) but also

receives support from overseas pro-democracy activists (e.g., Hongkong and Myanmar) (Thomas et al., 2020). Gaining excessive momentum from foreign pro-democracy activists leads to the attraction of the online international mass media, particularly online newspapers to this political turmoil since the movement is controversial in the online public sphere; subsequently, the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand has dominated both domestic and foreign online newspapers leading to the urge for online public opinion across the globe.

Thanks to the intention to grab internet viewers, the news providers use colorful language and vivid discourse to report this controversial activism, and they somehow cannot balance a fair representation of the whole story. It is believed that the different ways to represent a news story through different use of discourse strategies often serve a certain viewpoint to the audiences, which tends to misrepresent the actual incidents, and this misrepresentation of the events leads to different understandings among news audiences (Fowler, 1991). In this case, if this activism is intentionally or unintentionally misrepresented through the different languages used by news providers, the misrepresentation of these pro-democracy activists and their political campaign in the new generation may cause misunderstandings among the public regarding the purpose of their activism to strengthen the democratic system of Thailand, making it difficult for Thailand to find a proper solution to behave toward this political polarization.

Language in Political News

The previous section has mentioned that the report of the controversial demonstration of Thai pro-democracy activists is varied in terms of language use; therefore, it is necessary to understand the prominent characteristics of the language in political news. Political news articles are short pieces of written discourse containing sensible and complicated sociopolitical information; therefore, the language of political news should be straightforward and concise to ensure easier comprehension among newsreaders (Ahmed, 2018; Nserka, 2012). For instance, the proper vocabulary should be explicit to express thoughts and profound concepts about political incidents (Ahmed, 2018). Moreover, a sentence structure in news articles should be simple and not

overpack several ideas in one statement; subsequently, a detailed description of the incidents should be logically explained through relevant keywords and arranged in clear order. (Nserka, 2012).

Political news is expected to be nonpartisan since it is the media's responsibility to report fair information to the public. However, Fowler (1991) argues that the use of the English language to formulate political news articles is obviously different and hardly precise since the selection of appropriate language is anticipated to serve other purposes rather than reporting actual issues. Language in political news, indeed, is consciously selected as a powerful tool to gain more profit for the news organization (Fowler, 1991). News agencies are types of media business; thus, one of the most important organizational purposes is to achieve a higher number of wholesales. To attain more profit, the newsmakers evolve their styles of writing to make their articles distinctive and make use of fancy language when writing political-related news to attract more news audiences (Fowler, 1991, Nserka, 2012). The unique technique of writing and the use of fancy language to provide exaggerated meanings satisfied newsreaders because that language is vivid and magnifies comprehension among news receivers, yet it may distort the reality of the events leading to misunderstanding among the public (Ghassemi & Hemmatgosha, 2019). Moreover, the selection of felicitous language in political news is ideologically shaped (Fowler, 1991; van Dijk, 2009). It is assumed that when news authors report any political agitation, they deliberately transfer their political ideology through the construction of suitable language to deliver intended messages to the target audience (Fowler, 1991). If the news institutes have shared diverse ideological orientations, they may compose news articles about the same incidents differently via specific language use. Both profitable and ideological factors influence the way news authors employ a particular language to formulate news articles, and the different language used in political news also leads to the different construction of intended messages that diverse comprehensions among news audiences.

Ideology

Since the language of political news is ideologically based, it is necessary to foreground the general concept of ideology and expound on the connection between ideology and discourse. In this current investigation, ideology refers to a system of beliefs that are shared among a particular social group (van Dijk, 2009). Unlike knowledge that is accepted and unquestionable by all members of the entire community, ideology is understood as fundamental and axiomatic among a certain group of social actors; hence, ideologies are not the personal beliefs of individual people (van Dijk, 2006). Moreover, ideologies are not negative or false even if they are opposite to the common ground of the society and shared by a limited number of social groups (van Dijk, 2006, 2011)

Since ideology shapes the way individuals understand the world, such ideology defines the social identity of a group, directing and managing its behaviors, goals, norms, and values of a certain group (van Dijk, 2006). Ideology can be either professional ideologies or sociopolitical (or sociocultural) ideologies. The professional ideology of journalists, for instance, represents the identity of the group as a professional occupation whose professional activities are to gather and report the news and whose overall goals are to provide information to the public while the norms of professional journalists should be fair and objective (van Dijk, 2011). Moreover, sociopolitical ideologies constitute the identity of a special social collectivity (e.g., a group of feminists) whose social activities are to build a social movement with the aim of equal opportunity regardless of gender and the norms of respect and altruism (Grunig et al., 2000). In a particular society, individuals who are employed to perform a particular social occupation can have both professional ideologies and sociopolitical ideologies if they consider themselves a member of a particular social group (van Dijk, 2011). This means a journalist can be a feminist at the same time; indeed, when people have shared the same ideological orientations, they not only attempt to legitimate their fundamental beliefs but also bolster resistance against any opposed ideology; for instance, a group

of feminists believes in gender equality, and they endeavor to fight against patriarchy (i.e., male dominance) in this modern society.

Ideology is connected to the use of language in communicative situations in society. Various scholars (Cavanaugh, 2020; van Dijk, 2009; van Leeuwen, 1995; Wodak, 1991; Wodak & Meyer, 2009; Woolard, 2020) assert that ideology is manifested, reproduced, and obtained through social practice, especially in language and discourse. Since discourse producers are members of some social group, they formulate either text or talk through their ideological perspectives disclosing how they understand that issue (van Leeuwen, 1995; Wodak, 1991). In other words, discourse reflects the knowledge and ideological opinions of the discourse authors toward a certain topic (van Dijk, 2006); therefore, discourse will be polarized when a social competition or political conflict occurs because the discourse producers understand the same matter differently (van Dijk, 2013).

Moreover, some ideologies will be dominant when they are enacted in a particular genre of discourse by a more powerful discourse creator. Indeed, if discourse producers are a member of any social group that holds a more powerful status in terms of discourse accessibility (e.g., politicians, journalists, or professors), they can enact a certain ideology in the discourse to control the minds of discourse receivers who are normally ranked in the lower hierarchy of the society (e.g., normal citizens) (van Dijk, 1993). Since ideology is not usually recognizable at first glance, sometimes normal discourse audiences are unconsciously manipulated by the language of discourse producers who share a dominant ideology (van Dijk, 2006).

Accordingly, the different representations of Thai pro-democracy activists through the specific language used in online English-language news articles may be the result of the sociopolitical ideology of the news agencies. Since newsmakers are powerful in creating news discourse, it is thus vital to systematically and critically analyze the language used in online newspapers written about the pro-democracy movement in Thailand to reveal whether other ideologies or political biases are

influencing the way news authors compose the news stories to manipulate the interpretation of the newsreaders.

Critical Discourse Analysis

To study the discursive relationship between political news discourse and the ideological inclination of the news organization, an interdisciplinary approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforward CDA) is introduced in this section. CDA is a special research practice for studying the relationship between discourse and social phenomena. Despite the diversity of tenets, CDA commonly views language and other genres of discourse as a form of social practice, so language and discourse are historical and cultural in a particular social community (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997); moreover, the connection between discourse and society is interpretative and explanatory even though they are discursive and implicit (van Dijk, 2006).

Most CDA studies are interested in the way discourse is employed in the reproduction of social dominance in a particular communicative situation; thus, CDA normally deals with topics related to power abuse, inequality, ideology, discrimination, etc. (van Dijk, 2000). Accordingly, van Dijk (2013) suggested that CDA should be emphasized as a social movement of scholars, rather than a method of discourse analysis because CDA studies aim to combine a great variety of discourse analytical methods and relevant theories in philosophy and social science to study the way power abuses, dominance, ideology, inequality, and other forms of social issues are reproduced and resisted by social actors through different genres of discourses.

Furthermore, CDA is distinctive from other traditional discourse analytical approaches since it studies various levels and dimensions of discourses since CDA is not only interested in the analysis of verbal language ranging from fundamental linguistics (e.g., phonology, lexicon, syntax, and semantics), structures, styles, speech acts, pragmatics, and conversation but also has focused on the use of non-verbal languages (e.g., intonation, gestures, etc.) and semiotic dimensions (e.g., sound, pictures, color, etc.) of communicative events (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

For all intents and purposes, van Dijk (2000) asserted that CDA attempts to bridge the gap between the micro-level of analysis (i.e., discourse in different situational contexts) and macro-level of analysis (i.e., power, ideology, inequality between social groups); as a result, CDA work allows an application of a large area of theories and methods that are suitable for addressing social issues and analyzing types of discourse materials. The researcher, hence, adopts the notion of Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013) as an analytical framework to fulfill the individual objectives of the current investigation.

Ideological Square

According to the Ideological Square, van Dijk proposes possible ideological structures and relevant discourse strategies for constructing ideological discourse.

Ideological Structures

Under the notion of the Ideological Square, it is believed that writers construct text and talk through their understandings of a particular issue; consequently, their perspective related to any knowledge located in discourses may imply their ideological inclinations. Flayih and Taifoor (2018) affirmed that ideology is embedded in discourse, but they are not directly interpreted due to the complexity of discourses. However, the ideological implication has its structures based on group beliefs and interests. Van Dijk (2000, 2011) suggested that writers speak as a member of a particular social group; therefore, if they posit themselves in some social groups, they tend to construct a positive image of the in-group. Indeed, any propositions, goals, and actions that are believed and performed by a member of the group will be positively highlighted while any negative attributes will be mitigated. On the other hand, if the writers do not include themselves in the groups, they tend to negatively present those groups. Indeed, the writers attempt to mitigate any positive proposition, goal, and actions of the out-group while the negative ones will be accentuated. Thus, the positive-self presentation (i.e., emphasizing our good things and deemphasizing our bad things) will be employed as strategies to portray social actors whom the writer posits themselves in the same social group; on the other hand, the negative-other presentation

(i.e., emphasizing their bad things and deemphasizing their good things) will be utilized as strategies to depict social actors whom the writers do not include themselves in the same group. The decision to use either the positive-self presentation or the negative-other presentation depends on the ideological perspective towards a particular issue of the discourse makers. The four possible patterns of ideologies found in discourse are proposed as Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2001, 2013).

Table 1 Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013)

Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
Emphasize our good things	Emphasize their bad things
De-emphasize our bad things	De-emphasize their good things

Strategies of Discourse

According to van Dijk (2000; 2006), four possible structures of ideology are legitimated, perceived, and reproduced through discourses; indeed, these ideological patterns have been systematically organized through the selection of discourse strategies. They are formulated via different strategies of discourse influencing all levels of linguistics. The current investigation focuses on the English written language used in online political news; hence, semantic and formal discourse strategies are introduced.

1. Semantic Discourse Strategies

Semantic discourse strategies refer to linguistic devices employed to construct semantic attributions of ideological discourse. The current investigation has been interested in the application of semantic discourse strategies namely lexicon, granularity, and local coherence to formulate ideological news discourse related to the demonstration of Thai pro-democracy activists; in fact, each device is concluded and adapted from van Dijk (2000, 2006, 2011, 2013)

1.1 Lexicon

Lexicon refers to the preference for lexical choices. The lexicon selection is ideologically based when the writers consciously choose appropriate words to name social actors or describe their actions. In news articles written about refugees, for instance, news writers may employ the words: 'those people', 'asylum seekers', or 'economic migrants' to name the social actors who normally associate with the action in terms of 'fraud' and 'exploit' activities (van Dijk, 2013). Lexical items with neutral to positive semantic attributes are normally utilized to describe in-group social actors while words with negative semantic properties are preferably used to depict the image of out-group social actors. The current study analyzes the frequent use of content words to construct the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation.

1.2 Granularity

Granularity covers the details and level of description. The analysis of granularity in ideological discourse focuses on the selection in terms of exclusion or inclusion of a certain piece of information to describe social actors and their actions. Granularity also covers the level of information provided; in fact, the analysis focuses on how much the writers have given either general or specific details for propositions, statements, and evidence to describe social actors and their actions. Indeed, detailed information is given when the writers positively describe in-group social actors while the general details, sometimes absent information, are offered when the writers mitigate any negative attributions of the in-group social members.

1.3 Local Coherence

Local coherence refers to the semantic consequences of the proposition in ideological discourse. The propositions given in discourse are referentially coherent to one another in terms of causes and consequences. Indeed, some social actors consider some propositions as either causes or consequences of a particular event while the other groups may not. During the report on race riots, for example, news writers explain this incident emerged because of the criminal behavior of the black youth activists while the other news presses believe that this racial protest was a consequence of the discriminating policy of the authority (van Dijk, 2000). To ideologically construct

referential coherence, negative propositions are providers as causes or consequences of an action performed by social actors from an outgroup while positive propositions are present as causes or consequences of the ingroup's events.

2. Formal Discourse Strategies

Formal discourse strategies refer to linguistic tools utilized to formulate structures of ideological discourse. The present study pays attention to the use of superstructures and syntactic structures of sentences to depict the ideological representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation; indeed, the definitions of these devices are condensed from van Dijk (2000, 2006, 2011, 2013).

2.1 Superstructures

Superstructures refer to the overall structures of discourse. Due to the interest in news discourse, the superstructure covers all elements of news articles (i.e., title, lead, body, and conclusion), and these elements have their hierarchy; in fact, the first element of a news article (i.e., headline (or lead)) is the most prominent element since it holds the salient function to the foreground and background information on the social actors and their actions. The topics or information present first in the headlines or leads of news discourse are significant in terms of controlling the overall attributions of the social actors and their actions, and they obviously reflect the ideological implication of writers towards a particular social group.

2.2 Syntactic Structures

Syntactic structures refer to the syntactic structures of the sentences. The analysis of syntactic structures of ideological discourse can be focused on active voice, passive voice, and even nominalization. Regarding the voice structures, active voice is used as sentence structure when the writers aim to emphasize the agent who performs the positive action while passive voice is employed as a sentient structure when the writer attempts to hide the doer of the negative action. For instance, the active voice sentences can be written as 'police killed protesters' to emphasize the police as the agent of the predicate while the passive voice sentence can be shown as 'protesters were killed by police' when the police receive the less implicit role of the action (van Dijk, 2013). Similarly, nominalization is likely to be employed when the writers attempt

to hide doers and recipients of the verb action rather than the use of full independent clauses that explicitly show the subjects and the objects of the verb actions. For example, the verb 'discriminate' sometimes is nominalized as 'discrimination' to inexplicitly show who discriminates against whom (van Dijk, 2013).

Conducting CDA Research

It is essential to remember that ideologies are complicated when they are embedded in discourse and there is no concrete process to do critical discourse analysis. To discover the underlying ideology hidden in discourse, van Dijk (1993) has suggested that the researchers need to understand the sociocultural knowledge that is shared by the whole community where the political conflict or social incident occurred. Then identify which social actors are involved in the selected incident; this means the researchers need to know the socio-political activities and goals of the social groups of the participating social actors. Also, the researchers expect to understand the sociopolitical norms and cultural values in terms of what is permitted or prohibited by that social group. After that van Dijk (2011) suggests the researchers primarily begin to look for either positive or negative semantic attribution that has been assigned to construct the representation of the social actors and their actions. The researcher later examines the formal structure of discourse; subsequently, the research will be able to witness how four possible patterns of ideologies are deliberately constructed through proper discourse strategies. Since Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013) provides both fundamental ideological structures and possible discourse strategies which are sufficient to analyze the microstructure of society (i.e., discourse) and macrostructure of society (i.e., ideological domination), this notion is suitable as an analytical framework for conducting the current CDA study.

Relevant Studies regarding News Discourse on Political Protest

Political news discourses have been observed and studied in various academic fields, especially among critical discourse analysts for decades. Due to the advancement of the internet and technology, news tends to be presented in a digital

version and provides downloadable archives of news articles; as a result, the addition of numbers in research studies regarding online political news discourse is noticeable in this contemporary era. Most of these studies, in fact, attempt to understand the discursive relationship between news discourse and social problems (e.g., inequality, power abuses, or social conflicts). Since the current investigation aims to examine English-written discourse strategies employed to delineate the images of pro-democracy protesters in Thailand and uncover political ideologies hidden in the news articles provided by different online news outlets, this section reviews relevant studies on CDA regarding the ideology underlying in online English-language news discourse written about political dissents conducted from both overseas and Thailand.

For example, in Nigeria, Osisanwo and Iyoha (2020) investigated pro-Biafra protesters' representation in Nigerian domestic newspapers. This study attempted to examine the use of discourse strategies and grammatical choices in local newspapers written about the 2015-2016 pro-Biafra protesters, who protested governmental authority for being marginalized in Nigeria and demanded an independent nation of Biafra. The pro-Biafra protest gained momentum from Nigerians who lived in foreign cities to participate; as a result, this movement dominated both local and international mass media. The researchers speculated that the way these pro-Biafra protesters were reported through the different language used may be influenced by the different viewpoints and ideological stances of the newsmakers. To prove this supposition, the researchers collected news samples from four dominant newspapers in Nigeria (i.e., The Punch, The Sun, The Vanguard, and The Nation); indeed, the selected news articles were analyzed under the theoretical framework of Social Actor Representation (van Leeuwen, 2008) and transitivity system (Halliday, 1994). This study indicated interesting findings that the representation of pro-Biafra protesters was polarized in news discourse in the context of Nigeria; in fact, they were represented as freedom fighters and law-abiding citizens but as economic saboteurs. The researchers asserted that the news authors employed nouns referring to the pro-Biafra dissenters as *freedom fighters* and defined these social actors with the adjectives *harmless*, *non-violent*, and *unarmed* to

construct a sense of obeying the Nigerian law. However, the occurrence of pro-Biafra protesters was the result of the economic downturn as they were doers in verbal elements *cripple* and *shut down* commercial activities in Nigeria. The researchers summarized that the news writers of local Nigerian newspapers attempted to sound neutral when reporting the domestic political unrest through the application of various linguistic features with positive semantic properties meanwhile the ideology of solidarity remained influential in controlling the way news authors portrayed these pro-Biafra protesters as doers who caused unrest in Nigeria regarding the national economy. This study, however, addressed some limitations due to the focus on local news discourse rather than international news discourse even if the pro-Biafra protest attracted international media attention. In addition, the comparison of the application of linguistic devices among different news providers was neglected although the data were systematically collected from specific Nigerian newspapers.

Similarly, In Indonesia, Al Fajri (2018) conducted CDA research to examine the representation of a blasphemy protest in Jakarta in online news discourse. The blasphemy dissent occurring in 2016 became a controversial topic covering both local and international newspapers since this protest had polarized Indonesian public opinions after they expressed frustration over the Chinese-Christian government representatives on the insult of the Quran, Islam's holy book. The researcher focused on how these protesters were represented in the newspapers provided by news outlets that shared diverse political and cultural orientations. The representative samples regarding online local news discourse were drawn from the Jakarta Post and Antara News, major English newspapers while English Western news discourse was collected from Nexis UK, the free online news database. The researcher employed both transitivity (Halliday, 1994) and the social actor representation model (van Leeuwen, 1995) to analyze representative samples. The finding revealed that the blasphemy protesters were represented as religious fundamentalists in international newspapers. The protesters were named *Islamists* who had *hard-core* beliefs and were involved in *terrorist* activities; in contrast, the protesters were referred to as *Muslims* or *Islamic groups*. Moreover,

these blasphemy protesters were agents of violent actions; indeed, active verbs *threw*, *broke through*, *clash*, and *set fire* was utilized to describe the action of protesters in the international press while these verbs with negative semantic meaning had rarely been presented in the local newspaper. The researcher concluded that the international newspapers had less political motivation in the construction of news related to the Jakarta blasphemy protest, however, the representation of these protesters was stereotyped and discriminated against under the western media perspectives. Conversely, the local news providers avoided negatively representing the blasphemy protest because they were influenced by domestic Muslim-targeted readership and government sponsorship along with the need to promote diversity in terms of Indonesia as a friendly Islamic country in international eyes. However, the result of this study was insufficient to generalize the way the western media portray Muslim social actors because of the paltry and unidentified unit of representative data.

Likewise, in China, Lan and Meng (2016) studied embedded ideologies in international online newspapers reporting on the case of the Occupy Central protest in 2014 in Hong Kong. The OC protesters became a debatable discussion among the international public because of the motive to oppose the Chinese government for the independent dominion of Hong Kong with a self-authority system. Rather than being projected differently, the researchers assumed that ideological standpoints may be a hidden factor controlling the way news writers report this incident. To test this assumption, the researchers downloaded news articles from three online international news websites (i.e., China Daily, The New York Times (NYT), and The Washington Post (WP)) and the selected data were analyzed under the transitivity system (Halliday, 1994). The result revealed the contrasting ideological perspective between the Chinese international news outlets and American international news providers. Regarding the utilization of lexical choices to name the social agent, China Daily tended to name the OC protesters as *organizers* and *supporters* since they believed that this demonstration was planned by some social-political group while NYT and WP preferred to name the OC protesters as *students* because they believed that the OC demonstration was

sprung up by well-educated Hong Kong citizens. In addition, the OC protesters were the agents in the mental process who *want* and *realize* the chaotic situation in China Daily; conversely, they were doers in the material process who *stand for democracy* and *call off the negotiation with the Chinese government* in NYT and WP. The researchers concluded that NYT and WP embedded democratic ideology when constructing news articles about the OC protests while China Daily inexplicitly transferred the dominant ideology by representing these OC protesters as stubborn citizens who need to be in control of the Chinese government. This study was effective due to the identified sources of data collected from two different perspectives regarding English domestic news discourse and English foreign news discourse; however, this study remained a minor limitation since the researchers did not pay attention to linguistic features other than the use of nominal and verbal lexical choices.

In the context of Thailand, Viboonchart and Gampner (2014) employed CDA as a research practice to investigate underlying ideologies hidden in English-language news articles reported on the Red-shirt demonstrations occurring from March to May 2010. Most of the protesters were Thais from the lower middle class who wore a shirt in red, a color referring to the country in the Thai national flag and protested the government demanding democracy. The Red-shirt protest attracted not only local news broadcasts but also international media to report this unrest, and the researchers believed that the different social and cultural backgrounds of the news institutes would affect the way news authors interpret this demonstration and the decision on selecting certain discourse devices to compose the news articles written about the Red-shirt protesters. To prove their claim, the researchers analyzed the frequency used and semantic meanings of direct quotations and lexical choices occurred in English-written news articles written about the political dissent of Red-shirt protesters; in fact, the representative articles were collected from two news outlets: Bangkok Post, the oldest Thai English news provider and New York Times, the American English international news outlet expecting to witness the different styles of language and political ideologies. The findings revealed that the New York Times employed most direct quotations to

support the Red-shirt protesters depicting a positive image of the Red-shirt demonstration while some direct quotations were negative towards the governmental authority. On the contrary, many direct quotations implying positive meanings were used to allege the government in Bangkok Post while some direct quotations with negative semantic properties were apprising Red-shirt protesters. In addition, the use of lexical choices (e.g., *people*) with neutral to positive semantic properties tended to name a doer of violent actions in the New York Times while the occurrence of negative vocabularies (e.g., *protesters* or *looters*) was employed to highlight the actors who caused harm that happened during the Red-shirt demonstrations in Bangkok Post. The study concluded that the use of direct quotations and lexical choices adopted to support the demand for democracy of Red-shirt protesters were affected by the democratic ideologies of Americans, who were the large proportion of the target audiences of the New York Times; as a result, the news authors of New York Times neglected the negative side of the protesters through both direct quotations and lexical choices with positive semantic properties. On the other hand, the representation of the Red-shirt demonstration in Bangkok Post was quite fact-oriented but supportive of the governmental performance. Due to the use of direct quotations and lexical choices with negative meanings, Bangkok Post seemed disagreeable with the actions of the Red-Shirt protesters but preferred to provide space to portray the demand to bring peace back to the country of the Thai government. However, the study only focused on the use of direct quotations and lexical choices while other linguistic features were ignored.

Although the number of CDA studies on social actors in the political demonstration presented in news discourse is limited, Viboonchart and Gampper's (2014) study serves as a guideline to conduct a further inquiry in the context of Thailand. The present investigation, hence, continues to fill this literature gap by providing up to date CDA research on the news discourse of the ongoing political demonstrations, and the pro-democracy movement in the new generation, happening in Thailand with a broadened focus on different English linguistic devices and sources of online news discourse.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The methodology chapter provides information including the present study's conceptual framework, data collection, procedure, and data analysis. Regarding the conceptual framework, this section summarizes a general idea of the research approach (i.e., Critical Discourse Analysis) and analytical framework (i.e., van Dijk's Ideological Square) employed to conduct this investigation. Afterward, the data collection part reveals the criteria used to select sources of the samples and explains the process of gathering the representative texts. The procedure section, lastly, provides a cursory description of the research and data analysis process.

Conceptual Framework

The present study aims to examine the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation in online English-language news articles. The investigation indeed expects to analyze discourse strategies employed to sketch the images of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists and decode ideological slants embedded in online English-language news articles reporting on the Thai pro-democracy movement. To accomplish the aims of the study, the qualitative research method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is employed as a research approach to conduct the current investigation. Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforward CDA) is a multidisciplinary research principle that is well-known for studying how social phenomena (e.g., power abuse, inequality, racism, hegemony, or ideology) and political issues are enacted, reproduced, or resisted through language and discourse (van Dijk, 2000). Indeed, CDA attempts to understand language and discourse as properties of interaction that are shaped by cultural and social structures (Fairclough & Wodak, 2011). Moreover, most of the CDA work tends to focus on how certain strategies of discourse are availed in the production of dominance and power in a communicative situation of a particular society (Fairclough & Wodak, 2011; van Dijk, 2013). Thus, CDA is suitable for a research approach of the current investigation to study sociopolitical

ideologies embedded in online English-language news discourse written about the pro-democracy movement in the new generation of Thailand.

Since CDA has no unitary theory, the CDA work allows the application of analytical theory to make a better understanding of social and political issues throughout the different genres of discourse (van Dijk, 1993). To study the discursive relationship between language and ideology, the present study deploys Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013) as an analytical framework. As mentioned in Chapter 2, van Dijk (2000; 2006; 2011, 2013) proposed four possible ideological patterns (i.e., (1) emphasize our good things, (2) de-emphasize our bad things, (3) emphasize their bad things, and (4) de-emphasize their good things). In fact, (1) emphasizing our good things and (2) de-emphasizing our bad things can be grouped as a positive self-presentation strategy while (3) emphasizing their bad things, and (4) de-emphasizing their good things can be united as a negative other-presentation strategy. Moreover, van Dijk (2000) suggested the four possible ideological patterns can be produced by discourse covering various levels of discourse (e.g., sound, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and speech acts). However, the current investigation focuses on two levels of English-written discourse strategies (i.e., semantic and formal discourse strategies). Indeed, semantic discourse strategies consist of the selection of lexical choices, granularity, and local coherence, and formal discourse strategies deal with superstructures and syntactic structures (i.e., voices of sentences and types of clauses). Therefore, Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000: 2006: 2011: 2013) is appropriate for an analytical framework to examine ideological discourse strategies and ideological implications embedded in online English-language news articles reporting on the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism.

Data Selection

The new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism is interested in an international political discussion in the online space. Thus, the news articles reporting this phenomenon in English, which is an international language, and published on

websites, where internet users from across the world are free to access, are selected as representative discourses of the current investigation.

Selection of News Sources

In the context of Thailand, several news agencies (e.g., Bangkok Post, The Thaiger, National News Bureau of Thailand, Nation Thailand, Thai PBS World, Thai Enquirer, Prachatai English, Khaosod English, etc.) are providing online English-language news articles on their websites. However, Bangkok Post is selected as a source of data due to the most excessive circulation in the country in terms of digital English-language news providers, according to its *Audience & Insight* (2019). Generally, Bangkok Post is known as a mainstream Thai-English language newspaper owned by Post Publishing, one of the biggest media businesses in Thailand, providing both printed and digital versions of newspapers. According to *Bangkok Post Public Company Limited* (2019), the organization has reported the news under media ethics and professionalism to serve the institutional motto “The newspaper you can trust”, and they expect to be the best in the news and information business in Thailand which can be able to acknowledge by the world; moreover, Bangkok Post has gained more credibility thanks to serving insightful content and constructive critique to newsreaders; furthermore, the press has attained its trustworthiness due to the participation of speakers: domestic ministers, heads of international government, and chairman of foreign organizations, where its majority of audiences are middle-aged male Thais and foreigners, working as business owners and senior managers. Therefore, in this study, Bangkok Post is a domestic news provider that presents the Thai pro-democracy movement to the eyes of online international newsreaders.

On a global scale, various online news websites (e.g., Voice of America, The Guardian, BBC News, CNN International, The New York Times, Associate Press, Agence France-Press, Reuters, etc.) are providing English-language news articles to international internet users. However, Reuters is selected as a source of data thanks to the higher number of web visitors among Thai and international online news audiences (Newman, 2021). Even though Reuters is owned by the British entrepreneur, Paul

Reuters, its journalists must professionally perform under *The Trust Principles* (2019): reporting accurate information, seeking balanced opinions, and avoiding using discriminatory language to reach the global scale of newsreaders. Reuters (2019) was acknowledged by GlobalWebIndex as one of the most reliable online media sources due to its accurate information, expert analysis, and constructive opinion. Reuters (2020), whose majority worldwide audience is male business professionals in their 30s, has also remained trustworthy, ranking number 1 by Ipsos Affluent Europe among online newspapers. Apparently, Reuters aims to stay in this pole position. In this study, Reuters, thus, is viewed as an international news provider that presents the Thai pro-democracy movement to online global news audiences.

Hence, two news websites (i.e., Bangkok Post and Reuters) are selected as a source of data in this current investigation. Due to the excessive news circulation, both digital news sources may reach a higher number of web visitors which is vigorous to urge diverse public opinions on this political uprising. Bangkok Post is a representative domestic news provider, reporting the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand to international online news audiences, while Reuters is a representative international news agency, providing free online English-language news articles written on this controversial activism to global political newsreaders.

Selection of News Samples

To avoid cherry-picking data, the present study employed the data selection criteria proposed by Wodak and Meyer (2009) to draw news articles from the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites for the analysis. To narrow down the type of samples on the selected source of the data, the present study pays attention only to online English-language political news articles related to the Thai pro-democracy movement that happening from October 2020 to March 2022, a period that this political movement has been being active; in addition, the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation is primarily focused. The details of the criteria set (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Data Selection Criteria (Wodak & Meyer, 2009)

Wodak and Meyer (2009)	Selection of news discourse
Political actions	Pro-democracy activism in Thailand
Periods	October 2020 – March 2022
Social and political actors	Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation
Discourse	Political news discourse
Media and genre	Online English-language newspapers

To exclude data from the selected source following the provided criteria set (Wodak & Meyer, 2009), words such as *Thai pro-democracy activists*, *Thai pro-democracy demonstration*, or *youth protest in Thailand* are typed as key terms, and the date range is customized from October 2020 to March 2022 on search forums of both news websites; consequently, 64 news articles from Bangkok Post and 47 news articles from Reuters are shown up respectively. However, selected news articles from both representative websites must provide news articles related to the Thai pro-democracy movement corresponding to each other to discover the different representations of the same social actors in different news sources. Thus, only news articles written about the same events that are commonly happening during the political movement (i.e., the demonstration of protesters, the clash between protesters and police, and the arrest of protesters) and published the news articles on the same date on their website are selected as samples of this investigation. Only 15 (out of 64) news articles from the Bangkok Post and 15 (out of 47) news articles from Reuters have matched these extra conditions. In total, 30 news articles were downloaded from the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites for analysis (see Appendix A-B).

The selected samples for the current investigation, therefore, are online English-language news articles drawn from two different news outlets (i.e., Bangkok Post and Reuters). The representative English-language texts are written about the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism published between October 2020 and March

2022, a period in which the political movement has been active. 15 online English-language news articles from each digital news provider fit the criteria of data selection; indeed, the total amount of representative samples is 30 English-language news articles, and the total number of words is 13,351.

Table 3 Total Words

News Events	Bangkok Post (BKP)		Reuters (RT)	
	Codes	Words	Codes	Words
Demonstration	BKP1 – BKP5	2,472	RT1 – RT5	2,020
Encounter	BKP6 – BKP10	2,943	RT6 – RT10	2,016
Arrest	BKP11 – BKP15	2,193	RT11 – RT15	1,707
Total words		13,351		

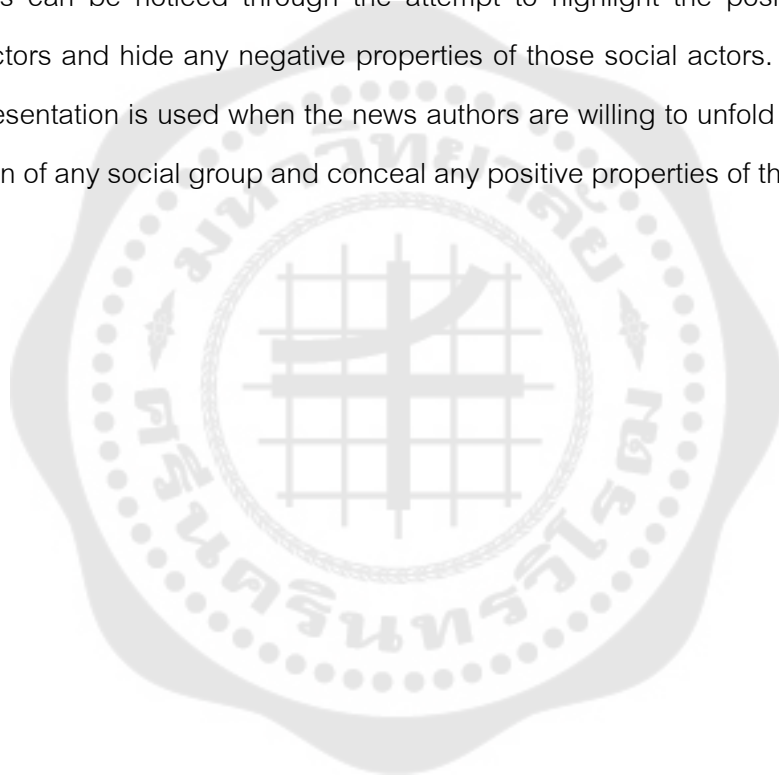
Data Analysis Process

The thirty news articles that suit the data selection criteria were downloaded from the Bangkok Post (BKP) and Reuters (RT) websites as text and sorted in Microsoft Word (see Appendix A-B). Then the selected discourses were examined under the Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013).

To fulfill research objectives, the analysis of discourse strategies initially focused on the application of semantic discourse strategies (i.e., lexicons, granularity, and local coherence) and formal discourse strategies (i.e., superstructures and syntactic structures) utilized to construct the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation. Regarding the analysis of semantic discourse strategies, the selection of lexical choices, granularity, and the construction of local coherence employed to depict the representation of Thai pro-democratic activists are focused. Indeed, "Online Cambridge Dictionary" is employed as a tool to find accurate meanings of lexical choices. Also, the analysis of formal discourse strategies educates on the superstructure of news discourse and the use of syntactic structures (i.e., voices of sentences and types of clauses). The results of the analysis then will be presented in

terms of the frequent use (percentage) of tokens that fit the semantic and formal strategies of discourse under the principle of Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013)

Secondly, the analysis to decode ideological implications embedded in the online English-language news articles written about the Thai pro-democracy movement in the new generation is based on two ideological representation strategies (i.e., positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation). Indeed, positive self-presentation strategies can be noticed through the attempt to highlight the positive attribution of social actors and hide any negative properties of those social actors. In turn, negative-other presentation is used when the news authors are willing to unfold the unimpressive attribution of any social group and conceal any positive properties of that social group.



Chapter 4

Findings

The findings chapter reveals the results of data analysis. The results are presented in two sections: discourse strategies and ideological implications, according to the Ideological Square (van Dijk, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2013). Indeed, the findings of discourse strategy analysis show the preferential selection of semantic discourse strategies (i.e., lexicons, granularity, and local coherence) and formal discourse strategies (i.e., superstructures and syntactic structures) when constructing the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation. Then the findings of ideological implication analysis reveal the ideological inclinations of Bangkok Post and Reuters, based on either positive self-presentation or negative other-presentation employed when reporting on this controversial activism.

Discourse Strategies

The analysis of discourse strategies was conducted to see how news writers from the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites employ both semantic and formal discourse strategies to construct the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the new generation. The results of each analysis are shown as follows.

1. Semantic Discourse Strategies

The scrutiny of semantic discourse strategies was given to the preferences for English-written discourse strategies: lexicon, granularity, and local coherence, adopted to construct the semantic representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. The findings of each semantic strategy analysis are presented as follows.

1.1 Lexicon

The analysis of the lexicons examined the selection of content words to represent the social actors and their actions in the news discourse. The findings of lexicon analysis reveal that both Bangkok Post and Reuters share similarities regarding the sections of nominals (i.e., nouns and adjectives) when representing the new

generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. The nominal variations found in the representative discourse are represented in italics and the number of each variant counted is put in the brackets.

Lexicons Representing Social Actors

The findings of lexicon analysis reveal that the two selected news agencies are similar in the case of the selection of plural nouns to represent the new generation of pro-democracy activists in Thailand. The total tokens of each lexicon are calculated in percentages and shown below.

Table 4 Nouns Representing Thai Pro-Democracy Activists

Nominal Variants (Nouns)	Bangkok Post (BKP)		Reuters (RT)	
	Tokens	Percentage	Tokens	Percentage
protester	64	49.6%	69	56.1%
people	28	21.71%	23	18.7%
activists	21	16.28%	16	13%
students	11	8.53%	7	5.7%
supporters	5	3.88%	4	3.25%
Thais*	0	0%	4	3.25%
Total words	129	100%	123	100%

According to Table 4, The most frequently used plural noun indeed is *protesters*, followed by *people*, *activists*, and *students*, while the least repeated item is *supporters* in both the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites. By the definition described in the 4th edition of the Online Cambridge Dictionary, the most repeated plural noun to represent these social actors is *protesters* indicating that social actors are expressing disagreement with something; also, the use of the plural noun *people* indicates that they are a group of individuals. The plural noun *activists* is employed to define these social actors as ones who believe in political and social changes and participate in political

campaigns to make the change happen. Moreover, the use of plural noun *students* communicates that these social actors must be at a young age pursuing academic degrees in schools and universities. Therefore, the semantic representations of social actors are constructed with the use of these plural nouns to explicitly represent that these social actors are young students who are protesting and campaigning for political changes.

Moreover, the findings of lexicon analysis reveal that the selected news sources apply to modify plural nouns representing the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. The total tokens of each adjective are calculated in percentages and illustrated below.

Table 5 Adjectives Modifying Plural Nouns Referring to Thai Pro-Democracy Activists

Nominal Variants (Adjectives)	Bangkok Post (BKP)		Reuters (RT)	
	Tokens	Percentage	Tokens	Percentage
anti-government	11	52.38%	8	53.33%
pro-democracy	10	47.62%	7	46.67%
Total words	21	100%	15	100%

According to Table 5, the frequent application of the hyphenated adjective *anti-government* is slightly higher than the other adjective *pro-democracy* among Bangkok Post and Reuters agencies. It is noticeable that the selected news agencies prefer the use of the lexicon *anti* to show the opposite and against the *government*; in the same way, the use of lexicon *pro* communicates the support and approval of *democracy*. Therefore, the definitions of the plural nouns and hyphenated adjectives used in the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites construct a semantic representation of these social actors as *student protesters* who are *anti-government* as these young people disagree with the governmental administration ruled by Prayuth Chan-Ocha; also, these social actors are represented as *student activists* who are *pro-democracy* because these

young people believe in a change of a better political system so that they are campaigning with the hope for the revision of constitutional monarchy.

Despite sharing similarities in the preference for nominal lexicons referring to the new generation of pro-democracy activists, the findings of lexicon analysis are perceivable that a plural noun *Thais* is utilized to refer to different groups of social actors. As witnessed on the Bangkok Post website, the lexicon *Thais* (1) refers to a group of Thai conservative people who praise the highest respect for the monarchy institute:

“A former protest leader of the now-defunct People's Democratic Reform Committee was among the yellow-clad people who waited for the royal motorcade of His Majesty the King. He said he joined other *Thais* to show loyalty to the monarchy but denied mobilizing yellow-clad supporters to counter the anti-government protesters.” (BKP1)

Reuters, in other ways, employs the plural noun *Thais* (4) to allude to a group of Thai new generation whose demand for the revision of the constitution drafted by the military-backed regime and the limitation of monarchy power:

- “*Thais* mass to defy protest ban.” (RT1)
- “Thousands of *Thais* march for royal reforms.” (RT5)
- “Thousands of *Thais* took to the streets of the capital on Sunday demanding reforms of the monarchy, defying a court ruling that such demands are a veiled attempt to overthrow the institution.” (RT5)
- “Narin, who denied the charge, was released on bail pending an appeal, according to the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, which represents many *Thais* charged with lèse-majesté offenses.” (RT15) 2)

Indeed, it can be noticed that Bangkok Post and Reuters construct a semantic representation of the new generation of pro-democracy activists in Thailand communicating that these student protesters are protesting the military-monarchy government to strengthen the democratic system. However, these student protesters are

not included in a group of traditional Thai people on the Bangkok Post website because they oppose the monarchy, the highly respected social institute of Thailand.

Lexicon Representing Actions of Social Actors

The results of lexicon analysis reveal the selected news sources employ content words sharing reverse semantic comprehension to represent the aim of the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. Bangkok Post defines the attempt to accomplish the protest demands for the resignation of former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha, the revision of the constitution, and the limitation of monarchy power, as *resisting* the establishment of military and monarchy. Bangkok Post semantically communicates that the action of the pro-democracy activists and the aim of the political movement are showing *opposed to and against* the alliance of military and monarchy by using the content words *overthrow* (3), *insult* (2), *contempt* (1), *against* (1), *threaten* (1), *hostile* (1), and *bring down* (1):

- “Constitutional Court rules activists aimed to *overthrow the monarchy*.” (BKP14)
- “The Constitutional Court ruled on Wednesday that three activists aimed to *overthrow the state and the monarchy* in their speeches.” (BKP14)
- “The court said protest demands attempted to *overthrow the democratic institution with the King as head of state*.” (BKP14)
- “According to the ruling, 31-year-old web administrator Narin Kulpongsathron's act outside the court in Phra Nakhon district, Bangkok, *insulted and showed contempt towards the high institution*.” (BKP15)
- “That charge accused Narin of frequently posting Photoshopped pictures on his "GuKult" Facebook account, as well as posting messages that *were intended to insult the monarchy and the government*.” (BKP15)
- “Court ordered them and other parties to end all moves *against* the highest institution.” (BKP14)
- “Court orders all moves to end all acts *threatening* the highest institution.” (BKP14)

- “Spokesman said that protesters' actions *were considered hostile to a democratic institution with the King as head of state.*” (BKP14)
- “The court ruled the demands made by protest leaders, together with subsequent actions by them and other protesters, were aimed at *bringing down the constitutional monarchy.*” (BKP5)

Reuters, on the other hand, describes the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand as becoming a controversial discussion as the purposes of the movement are *taboos*. According to the 4th edition of the Online Cambridge Dictionary, taboo refers to “the subject or practice that is prohibited due to social reasons.” The use of the phrase *break taboos* (7) in the Reuters website indicates that the media outlet realizes that the activists' actions, especially to publicly criticize the king and the aim for the limitation of monarchy power are *taboos* because they are *breaking* and incompatible with the traditional Thai socio-political stance:

- “*Breaking a longstanding taboo*, protesters have also challenged the monarchy - saying it has helped entrench decades of military influence.” (RT1)
- “Youth-led protests in Thailand last year *broke traditional taboos* by openly calling for reform of the powerful monarchy and the denial of bail for the four protest leaders prosecuted for royal insults has enraged activists.” (RT2)
- “Protesters had *broken traditional taboos* by criticising the king, risking prosecution under a strict *lèse-majesté* law that makes insulting or defaming the king, queen, heir, and regent punishable by up to 15 years in prison.” (RT4)
- “The protests have *broken longstanding taboos* in Thailand, whose *lèse-majesté* law sets jail terms of up to 15 years for anyone convicted of defaming the monarchy.” (RT5)
- “The student movement that emerged last year *smashed long-held taboos* by openly criticising King Maha Vajiralongkorn, who they say has amassed too much personal power since taking the throne after the death of his father in 2016.” (RT7)
- “The protesters have also *broken traditional taboos* by demanding reform of the monarchy, risking prosecution under a *lèse-majesté* law that makes

insulting or defaming the king, queen, heir, and regent punishable by up to 15 years in prison.” (RT9)

- “Months of youth-led protest against the military-backed government of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha last year also *broke traditional taboos* by calling for reform of the powerful monarchy.” (RT13)

Moreover, Reuters defines the action of *breaking taboos* using lexicons as a *challenge*. According to the 4th edition of the Online Cambridge Dictionary, *challenge* refers to “a situation that needs effort to be achieved successfully.” The use of the content word *the biggest or greatest challenge* (4) in the Reuters website reflects that the news agency views the demands and the political campaigns of the pro-democracy activism as a complicated mission to accomplish for the young generation, who express its political demands through harmless strategies to refute the coalition between military and monarchy, the most powerful political establishment in Thai history, with the hope for a better democratic system:

- “Protests have built since mid-July in *the biggest challenge* in years to the political establishment - seeking the removal of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha, a former junta leader, and to curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn.” (RT1)
- “Youth-led protests that began last year by calling for the removal of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha, 66, a former coup leader, have become *the biggest challenge* in decades to the monarchy which is constitutionally enshrined to be held in revered worship.” (RT5)
- “The protest movement, which has called for deep constitutional reform to a system demonstrators say has entrenched the power of the military, has emerged as *the biggest challenge* to Thailand’s establishment in years.” (RT6)
- “Youth- and student-led protests since July have become *the greatest challenge* to Thailand’s establishment in years and dozens of arrests and attempts to quell them have so far only brought more people into the streets.” (RT12)

1.2 Granularity

The analysis of granularity considered the provision of a particular piece of information to construct a semantic representation of relevant social actors and their actions in a selected political incident. The findings of granularity analysis indicate that Bangkok Post and Reuters are different in terms of the levels (i.e., general or detailed) and the selection (i.e., included or excluded) of information provided to represent relevant social actors and their actions in the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand.

Provision of Information Representing Social Actors

The results of granularity analysis reveal that the selected news sources are diverse when providing information to construct the semantic representation of Thai pro-democracy activities in the new generation; also, the two news websites represent former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha and King Maha Vajiralongkorn as relevant groups of social actors involved in the activists' demands.

Pro-Democracy Activists

The levels of information provided are different when constructing the semantic representation of the pro-democracy activists. Bangkok Post gives general information to portray the activists while Reuters provides information describing their profile in detail. When considering the information about the activists found in the discourse samples, the selected news sources reported that the new generation of pro-democracy activism gained momentum on online social media before translating into the real-life public sphere. However, it is noticeable that the ways these news outlets profile the activists are different. Bangkok Post reported that the police were taking legal action against the pro-democracy activists because of *the students' roles in the rally*. The lack of complete information on *the students' role in the rally* was not able to explain why these activists were prosecuted. In other words, the explanations of how these activists exercised the protest activities and what they were accountable for the pro-democracy activism were ignored. However, the use of the plural noun *students*, according to its literal meaning, was able to identify that these pro-democracy activists

were probably teenagers who were still pursuing academic degrees in schools or universities:

“The summons had been issued in connection with *the students’ roles* in the rally on Oct 15 at the Ratchaprasong intersection in Bangkok.” (BKP12)

Reuters, in other ways, describes the pro-democracy activists in detail. Besides the use of plural nouns *students* and *young people*, Reuters composed a paragraph to clarify significant *characteristics* of the youth activists:

“*One characteristic of the latest Thai protests* has been the extent to which they are led by *students* and other *young people*. Most protest leaders are *in their 20s*, but an even *younger generation* is following. From *giving the three-finger salute* of protest when the national anthem plays at school to *tying white ribbons* in their hair and on school bags as symbols of protest, *high school students* have rallied to the campaign. Many left schools to join Thursday’s protest - among them *18-year-old Tan*, who came along after finishing *school exams*. He declined to give his full name for *fear of reprisals*. “I make sure I’m prepared for exams before I go to protests. I have to give importance to both things,” he said. “We can’t let it go on like this, or it will never end.” (RT1)

Reuters indeed specified the age range of protest leaders and supporters. The news agency also explained how the student activists performed symbolic sights, ranging from showing a *three-finger salute* representing liberty, equality, and fraternity and *tying white ribbons* representing peacefulness, daily to protest the military-based regime. Reuters, moreover, quoted an interview of the student activist ensuring how the student was enthusiastic about studying for *exams* in parallel with political campaigning even though they are afraid of *reprisals*. The detailed information provided in the paragraph, therefore, validates that the political expression and protest strategies of the student activists are in adherence to pacifism.

Prayuth Chan-Ocha

Apart from representing the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists, the selected news providers mentioned Prayuth Chan-Ocha, the former Prime Minister of Thailand. The portrayal of Prayuth was needed because the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites reported that the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists demanded the resignation of Prayuth as Prime Minister of Thailand since they hoped for an end to harassment and intimidation under the administration of Prayuth's military dictatorship. However, it is noticeable that the selected news sources are diverse when selecting information to represent Prayuth Chan-Ocha. The findings of granularity analysis show that Bangkok Post tends to exclude information relevant to the unfair action of Prayuth during the general election while Reuters includes it instead. In fact, Bangkok Post delineated Prayuth as a junta leader who got chosen as Prime Minister of Thailand after he defeated other candidates in the 2019 election. The key word *junta* is selected to refer to Prayuth to avoid providing explicit information on the coup in 2014, in which he was the commander of the armed forces; moreover, the explanation of his electoral victory in 2019 is disregarded. As a result, the representation of Prayuth in the Bangkok Post indicates that Prayuth eventually became an elected leader of government after he ruled the country by military force for five years:

“The movement that started mid-2020 is demanding constitutional reforms and the resignation of *Gen Prayuth*, who ruled the country as *junta leader* for five years before *becoming premier after the 2019 elections*.” (BKP2)

Reuters, on the other hand, includes further information to represent Prayuth Chan-Ocha. In fact, Reuters not only provides information on how Prayuth seized power in the 2014 coup but also on how he usurped the country as Prime Minister years later. Reuters included information accusing Prayuth of foul-play in the general election in 2014 and 2019 so that he could keep his power as the head of the government and has exercised his authoritarianism over the country since. Even though Reuters informed that the accusation was denied, the inclusion of information related to the untransparent

votes helped support the activists' claim that Prayuth and his military-backed cabinets oppress the public and aim to transfer the military-political succession in Thailand. The following propositions show the inclusion of information representing how Prayuth Chan-Ocha unfairly influenced the result of the general election in 2019:

- "Protesters want to oust *Prayuth*, who first took power in a *2014 coup*, saying he *engineered election rules last year to keep his position* - an accusation he denies." (RT1)
- "*Prayuth, a former chief of the armed forces, overthrew an elected prime minister in 2014 and stayed in office after a 2019 election that his rivals said was badly flawed*. The government has said the elections were free and fair." (RT3)
- "Prime Minister *Prayuth* took power as *the head of a military junta in 2014 and remained in office after an election last year*. He rejects opposition accusations that *the election was unfair*." (RT6)
- "*Prayuth* has refused the protesters' demand to resign and rejected *their* accusation that *he engineered last year's election to keep the power he seized in a 2014 coup*." (RT12)

King Maha Vajiralongkorn

Besides the provision of information to represent the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists and former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha, the selected news sources provide information to represent the monarchy of Thailand. The description of the King of Thailand was necessary since Bangkok Post and Reuters reported that the pro-democracy activists had a straightforward determination on the limitation of monarchy power citing its monarchy intervention in politics. The findings of granularity analysis reveal the two news agencies are different in terms of the selection of information to represent King Maha Vajiralongkorn. In fact, Bangkok Post prefers the exclusion of information related to the questionable conduct of King Maha Vajiralongkorn; in turn, Reuters prefers the inclusion of such information instead. To consider the information provided on the Bangkok Post website, the news agency

portrays King Maha Vajiralongkorn as the head of Thailand which this democratic country is governed under the constitutional monarchy. Bangkok Post explains the monarchy is officially above politics and is independently free from making decisions on legislation craft and government administration; in other words, Bangkok Post suggests the public should not be in doubt about the role of the king and royal family. The following propositions show that Bangkok Post represents King Maha Vajiralongkorn through the key phrase *the King as head of state* whose position ranges at the highest hierarchy of the Thai constitutional monarchy which means whoever questions or challenges King Maha Vajiralongkorn is disposed to be perceived as implicated in royal defamation crime:

- “The court ordered them to cease all moves deemed threatening to the democratic system with *the King as head of state*.” (BKP5)
- “The court said Arnon Nampa, Panupong "Mike" Jadnok, and Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul attempted to overthrow the democratic institution with *the King as head of state* in demands made during a rally at Thammasat University Rangsit campus on Aug 10, 2020, and on other occasions afterward.” (BKP14)
- “No person shall exercise the rights or liberties to overthrow the democratic regime of government with *the King as Head of State*,” the unofficial translation of the section reads.” (BKP14)
- “In February, he filed a complaint seeking the dissolution of the Move Forward Party on grounds that members' actions were considered hostile to a democratic institution with *the King as head of state*.” (BKP14)

In contrast, the selection of information to represent King Maha Vajiralongkorn in Bangkok Post is different from that in Reuters. Reuters tends to include information revealing how the vigorous ascendancy of King Maha Vajiralongkorn has had a huge influence on politics. Considering the information provided on the Reuters website, the news outlet realizes that the activists' act of criticizing or having opinions on the royal family is *taboo* as the royal critics are not yet publicly and lawfully accepted in Thailand.

However, the outlet continues to include present participle phrases informing that the monarchy has patronized the military to increase its domination:

- “Breaking a longstanding *taboo*, protesters have also challenged *the monarchy - saying it has helped entrench decades of military influence.*” (RT1)
- “Protesters also seek to redraw the constitution written by his former junta and curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn, *saying the monarchy has enabled decades of military domination.*” (RT12)

Reuters reported that the public began criticizing the royal and *the portrait burning* of the king in reaction to protest the highly revered institution. Reuters indeed claimed that the monarchy's influence on politics was noticed when King Maha Vajiralongkorn inherited the succession of the throne after the death of King Bhumibol the Great, his father, in 2016, following the enlargement of his domination when the coalition with the armed forces in 2019:

- “The student movement that emerged last year smashed long-held *taboos by openly criticizing King Maha Vajiralongkorn, who they say has amassed too much personal power since taking the throne after the death of his father in 2016.*” (RT7)
- “The portrait burning took place the same day, hours before protesters marched on a Bangkok military base to call for *the king to give up direct control over army units transferred to him in 2019 by the government of Prayuth, a former military chief.*” (RT13)

Reuters then provided further information to demonstrate that the power of King Maha Vajiralongkorn has a dramatic impact on bureaucratic management. The media initially claimed that King Maha Vajiralongkorn wrested more power from the self-confirmation of the public palace fortune as his personal control:

- “Another major protest is planned at the Crown Property Bureau on Wednesday. Protesters say they seek to reclaim *the palace fortune, which the king has taken under his personal control.*” (RT12)

Reuters continued reporting that the public was frustrated with the governmental administration, especially with *a vaccine policy*. The media claimed it was inequitable for the public to access the COVID-19 vaccine due to the intervention from *a company owned by King Maha Vajiralongkorn*:

- “The rally, which defied a ban on public gatherings due to the pandemic, comes as Prayuth's government faces public criticism over its handling of coronavirus outbreaks, a slow economic recovery, and *a vaccine policy that involves a company owned by King Maha Vajiralongkorn.*” (RT4)

Reuters, moreover, attempted to report that King Maha Vajiralongkorn imposed his power to get involved in the administrative process even though he rarely visited his home country. The news outlet informed that the king was remotely *conducting state business from Germany* where he was permanently based with his household despite his important role as the head of the state in Thailand:

“Protesters also marched to the German embassy in October last year to urge Germany to investigate whether *King Maha Vajiralongkorn, who spends much of his time in the country, was conducting state business from there.*” (RT5)

The inclusion of a particular piece of information to represent King Maha Vajiralongkorn in the Reuters website communicates the implication that the interference in politics and government management due to the enforcement of monarchy power may lead to the national destruction of the democratic system:

"The king's increased powers in recent years are pulling Thailand away from democracy and back to absolute monarchy." (RT5)

Provision of Information Representing the Actions of Social Actors

The selected news source shares similar interests in the reports on the confrontation between the pro-democracy activists and the riot police; however, the findings of granularity analysis indicate that the provision of information to describe unpleasant actions performed by the pro-democracy activists and the riot police is different in the selected news websites.

Unpleasant Actions Performed by Pro-Democracy Activists

The findings of the granularity analysis reveal that the selected news sources are different in terms of the selection of a certain piece of information when describing unpleasant actions—the possession of offensive weapons and the aggressive symbolic expression—of the pro-democracy activists. Regarding the selection of a certain piece of information relevant to the possession of offensive weapons, the findings suggest that Bangkok Post prefers the inclusion of information related to defeat instruments when representing the pro-democracy activists; in turn, Reuters prefers the exclusion of it instead. To examine the information provided in the sample texts, the representative news sources were keen on narrating incidents where there were confrontations between riot police and pro-democracy activists. Bangkok Post, however, tended to include *rumors* accusing the protest guards were carrying *ping-pong* bombs despite the fact that protest participants were disallowed to load *bombs, guns, and firecrackers*. Bangkok Post insisted on representing the potential to cause violence as the activists used to behave aggressively in response to the officer:

“The rally was preceded by *rumors that its guards would be armed with 40 ping-pong bombs*, a claim denied by Panusaya “Rung” Sithijirawattanakul, a core leader who insisted the demonstration would be peaceful. Organizers on Saturday handed out pamphlets on civil disobedience and participants were asked not to carry with them *any kind of weapons, especially bombs, guns, and firecrackers*. The precaution was taken in order to avoid a repeat of last Saturday when a number of *protesters were seen throwing stones and objects and splashing paint at a stationary line of police*. *Most of the violence* took place after the majority of demonstrators had dispersed peacefully.” (BKP3)

In other ways, Reuters reported the same incident on its website without mentioning the procession of offensive weapons of the activists. Reuters excluded the information about the *rumors* of the possession of offensive weapons and the possibility of causing violent incidents. The information on *protest guards* who were *armed with 40 ping-pong bombs* had been deleted from the news stories. Reuters barely insisted on the fact the offline demonstration was free from harshness through the provision of a direct quotation from the protest leader to confirm that *the protest would not turn violent* because the activists wanted *a peaceful protest*:

“Organizers gave assurances *the protest would not turn violent*. “*We want a peaceful protest*,” protest leader told reporters after speaking to the police.” (RT3)

Regarding the selection of a particular piece of information relevant to the aggressive symbolic expression, the findings suggest that Bangkok Post prefers the inclusion of information related to the belligerent expression through symbolic activities when representing the pro-democracy activists; on the contrary, Reuters is favorable to the exclusion of such information instead. To consider the information presented in the representative discourses, the selected news sources explained the reason why the new generation of pro-democracy activism gained recognition as a high-impact movement is that the youth activists brought symbolic activities as strategies to protest the establishment of military and monarchy. However, it was noticeable that Bangkok Post was keen on the inclusion of information on arson caused by activists burning the symbolic signs—*effigies* and *mock body bags*—venting out their anger and frustration over the governmental and judiciary system:

- “The protesters called for the end of the *lèse-majesté* law and the release of all activists detained by police. *They also burned nine effigies representing the nine judges sitting in the court*.” (BKP5)
- “The marchers got as far as Nang Leong intersection, where *they displayed mock body bags and burned effigies of the prime minister*. Pol Maj Gen Piya

Tawichai, the deputy commander of the Metropolitan Police Bureau, said a number of effigies of the prime minister had been seized at the monument *to prevent the protesters from setting them on fire* outside Government House.” (BKP8)

In opposition to Bangkok Post, Reuters reported that pro-democracy activists preferred the use of symbolic signs—*placards* and *mock body bags*— in reaction to protest the military-monarchy regime; however, the information related to the aggressive expression in terms of setting these symbolic signs on fire or burning properties was excluded:

- “Sunday's protest came in response to the Constitutional Court's ruling last week that a call for reforms to the monarchy by three protest leaders in August last year was unconstitutional and designed to topple the institution. Protesters marched against rows of riot police behind shields, *waving placards that read No absolute monarchy and Reform is not abolition.*” (RT5)
- “Many protesters on Sunday *carried mock body bags to represent coronavirus deaths.*” (RT8)

Unpleasant Actions Performed by Anti-Riot Police

In addition, the findings of the granularity analysis reveal that the selected news sources are different in terms of the selection of a certain piece of information and the level of information provided when describing undesired behaviors— the injury in victims and the enforcement of violent measure against the protesters in the past—caused by the riot police. Regarding the selection of a certain piece of information, the findings suggest that Bangkok Post is favorable to a certain piece of information to report on the smaller number of injured people; in contrast, Reuters selects to report the higher number of injured people. The representative news outlets reported on the confrontation between the pro-democracy activists and riot officers. Their news stories informed that the use of disproportionate force to escalate a crackdown on a public demonstration caused physical injuries to protest participants and other people around the area. However, it was obvious that the number of injured

activists caused by the riot police reported on the Bangkok Post website was less than the number reported on the Reuters page:

- “*One protester was injured by rubber bullets during the march from Pathumwan and was sent to Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital,*” (BKP5)
- “*Three protesters were wounded on Sunday, a police spokesman said, adding that the incidents were being investigated,*” (RT5)

Bangkok Post continued reporting the smaller number of injured victims compared to the Reuters one selected to report a smaller number and Reuters despite citing the same primary source— *Erawan Medical Center*:

- “*The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration’s Erawan Center reported last night that at least 18 demonstrators were injured and were being treated at Vajira Hospital.*” (BKP6)
- “*Bangkok’s Erawan Medical Centre said at least 55 people were hurt. It said at least 32 were suffering from teargas and six people had gunshot wounds.*” (RT6)

Regarding the level of information provided, the findings, moreover, suggest that Bangkok Post provides general information related to the use of violent policies against the activists; however, Reuters provided detailed information to narrate the same matter. Considering the information reported on the Bangkok Post website, the media avoided mentioning the use of violent harassment to disperse the activists who gathered at the public place—*Ratchaprasong Intersection*. Bangkok Post only cited the interview response of Prayuth saying that “*Thai people should help one another and learn from protests in the past*” which could be interpreted that Thai authorities must have done something unimpressive during the public protest in the previous time:

“*Activists will gather at Ratchaprasong Intersection for a second day to demand the immediate release of leaders and warn the refusal of bail is a sign authority are*

adopting a confrontational stance, one of the key protest leaders said on Wednesday. Gen Prayut said Thai people should help one another and *learn from protests in the past* when asked about today's planned gathering." (BKP2)

In contrast to Bangkok Post, Reuters not only mentioned the *Ratchaprasong Intersection* but also provided detailed information to explain how this business landmark was an important place for the protest in the past. Reuters described that the violent crackdown occurred because riot police enforced strict measures to end public rallies in Thai historical politics. The media cited interview quotations from the activist who participated in major political events years ago and was treated with brutal tactics by the riot officers. This detailed description was provided to ensure that the Thai authority deployed dangerous and incompatible with the protest rights standard:

"But *the Ratchaprasong Intersection* also has a *historic resonance for protesters*. In 2010, it was *the scene of bloodshed as security forces* cracked down on Red Shirts who battled pro-establishment Yellow Shirts during a decade of turmoil. "I'm not afraid. *I've been chased by guns*," said beef noodle seller Thawat Kijkunason, 57, a veteran of *the bloody crackdown* a decade ago and another in 1992." (RT2)

1.3 Local Coherence

The analysis of local coherence examined the semantic construction of propositions to represent a certain point of view of the selected news providers towards a particular incident in terms of causes and consequences under the same social circumstances. The results of local coherence analysis show that Bangkok Post and Reuters communicate their different perspectives through the coherent sequence of propositions on the causes and consequences of the public demonstration, the announcement of the emergency decree, and the application of *lèse-majesté* law during the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism.

Public Demonstration

The use of local coherence as a semantic discourse strategy is witnessed when Bangkok Post and Reuters show points of view towards the public demonstration. The findings indicate that Bangkok Post favors local coherence as a discourse strategy to describe the unimpressive consequences of the pro-democracy demonstration in public; in contrast, Reuters prefers this semantic discourse device to classify the root cause of the new generation of pro-democracy activism. To consider the information reported in the representative discourse, the selected news sources explained that the new generation of pro-democracy activism initially started its political campaign, moaning over the coalition of military and monarchy on limiting freedom of expression, from an online social media community and developed into onsite rallies at famous locations in the country. However, the appearance of a public gathering to protest the military-monarchy government was reported with a focus on its unpleasant consequences consisting of coercion on authorities and inconvenience to the public on the Bangkok Post website. Bangkok Post explained that the government's public relations plan to fortify relationships with other countries, prioritized policies to recover the economic and tourism sectors, and rights of individuals in the community were disrupted as a *consequence* of the public demonstrations:

- "Anti-government protesters have besieged Government House and threatened to camp out there until Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha bows to one of their demands and quits. *Their sit-in has scuppered the government's plan to receive Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at Government House Thursday -- he will probably be welcomed at the Defence Ministry or Ban Phitsanulok instead. Mr. Wang is visiting the kingdom to bolster cooperation between the two countries and will meet the PM Thursday.*" (BKP1)
- "*The protesters put pressure on parliament.*" (BKP6)
- "*More frequent protests will pile pressure on Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha's government, which is facing a no-confidence vote next week and battling a slump in the trade- and tourism-reliant economy.*" (BKP2)

- “Pressure is mounting on parliament to accept the controversial charter amendment bill sponsored by civil group Internet Law Reform Dialogue.” (BKP6)
- “Police urged the public to avoid the routes occupied by the protesters, whom he urged to comply with the law and not *violate other people's rights.*” (BKP1)

On the other hand, Reuters expresses its point of view on the public demonstrations focusing on the explanation of the movement's causes. The media described that the power of the alliance of military and monarch leading to federal harassment was a *cause* of the public demonstration. Reuters reported that the online social movement morphed into eligible offline assemblies thanks to its public support. In the news stories, Reuters cited interviews from the protest participants saying they felt oppressed by the electoral system, which was controlled by the Prayuth government, and the traditional royal institute, which prevented Thai people from having the right to peaceful expression. The interview quotes saying that *I have no freedom and I want to be free* could be interpreted as the activists could not tolerate the *excessive and unnecessary power* from the higher social institutes. To put it in another way, the authority suppression was a *cause* of the public demonstration where activists declared strong-willed demands for the abolishment of the military-monarchy establishment:

“From shops, offices, and schools they spilled onto Bangkok Street in their tens of thousands, *voicing shock and anger and above all defiance.* Protests have built since mid-July in the biggest challenge in years to the political establishment - seeking the removal of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha, a former junta leader, and to curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn. *“It's obvious that the state wants to exercise excessive and unnecessary power on people,”* said 22-year-old student Pattanun Arunpreechawat, who joined Thursday's protest after studies. Protesters want to oust Prayuth, who first took power in a 2014 coup, saying he engineered election rules last year to keep his position - an accusation he denies. Breaking a longstanding taboo, protesters have also challenged the monarchy - saying it has helped entrench decades of military influence. *“I'm not afraid. I have no freedom,”* said 26-year-old illustrator Thanatpohn Dejkunchorn, who left work

early to attend the protest with friends. *"I want freedom to exist in this country. I want it to be free from this vicious cycle."* "This is a fight to insist that this country must be ruled by a system in which everyone is equal." (RT1)

Reuters, in addition, continued clarifying the reasons why the student activists were protesting against the Prayuth government when reporting on public demonstrations. The news outlets described that the activists not only were oppressed by the federal harassment but also suffered from governmental underperformance in surmounting the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequent economic recession. In other words, the government's failure at management *caused* Thai people to protest in public:

- "The rally, which defied a ban on public gatherings due to the pandemic, comes as *Prayuth's government faces public criticism over its handling of coronavirus outbreaks, a slow economic recovery, and a vaccine policy that involves a company owned by King Maha Vajiralongkorn.*" (RT4)
- "Street protests against the prime minister have been held in recent weeks by several groups, including Prayuth's former political allies, as *frustrations grow over the mounting coronavirus infections and the damage the pandemic has done to the economy.*" (RT8)
- "Other political groups, including some of Prayuth's former allies, are now joining the protests as *the country struggles to cope with its worst wave of COVID-19, with many blaming the government's handling of the crisis.*" (RT10)

The Announcement of the Emergency Decree

In addition, the local coherence technique is employed to reflect different standpoints on the announcement of the emergency decree. The results of local coherence analysis show that Bangkok Post believes that the announcement of an emergency decree is the consequent reaction of the government to prevent the severe spreading of the coronavirus while Reuters is convinced by the fact that the emergency decree is launched as *a consequence* of the appearance of public demonstration.

Considering the information provided on the Bangkok Post website, the news outlet believed that the emergency decree was announced as a consequent response to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. Bangkok Post reported that the spreading of coronavirus in Bangkok and other tourist-attracted provinces was getting worse; *consequently*, the government had to declare an emergency decree as a measure to restrict public gatherings in an attempt to alleviate COVID-19 infections.

“Bangkok has been designated a maximum and strict control zone, with a ban on gatherings of more than 50 people due to the COVID-19 crisis, with new cases and deaths surging throughout the country. The lockdown in 10 provinces, including the capital, has been extended to Aug 2, while another three provinces will come under the same restrictions on Tuesday.” (BKP8)

This declaration could be interpreted as any public assembly that was exercised after the announcement of the emergency decree would be illegal; moreover, people who participated in public demonstrations during the COVID-19 pandemic would face legal consequences:

“Pro-democracy protest leaders announced last night that they would camp out in front of Government House until Gen Prayut resigns. The event took place just after Gen Prayut declared a “serious emergency” in the capital. After more than 10 hours of marching which was occasionally blocked by police, the anti-government protesters set up camp on Phitsanulok Road outside Government House Wednesday evening as police gave up trying to stop them. Police declared they would not allow the protesters to enter the nearby Royal Plaza and, as the Bangkok Post was going to press last night, they were still ordering protesters through loudspeakers to head home by 10 pm in order to comply with the public assembly law,” (BKP1)

Bangkok Post also explained that any public gathering for political objectives was prohibited due to the announcement of the emergency decree; consequently, protest

participants would be charged with breaking the emergency decree as they breached the safety-health restriction controlling the infection of coronavirus:

- “Chief of the Samran Rat police station used loudspeakers to ask demonstrators to stop the gathering as it was in violation of the emergency decree and the disease control law.” (BKP7)
- “The anti-government protesters were defying a ban on public gatherings by assembling at the monument on Ratchadamnoen Avenue where thousands attended a rally exactly one year ago. The rally came in spite of the government's ban on assemblies of more than five people in Greater Bangkok in what it said was a bid to prevent the further spread of the virus.” (BKP8)
- “Police are gathering evidence to take legal action against protest leaders and participants who turned up at city rallies on Thursday in violation of the emergency decree. The deputy Royal Thai police spokesman said the protesters also violated a health safety announcement issued by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.” (BKP4)
- “Bad Student leaders, aged 15 and 17, were accused of violating an emergency order in October. Police have summoned two teenage leaders of the “Bad Student” group to answer charges of violating an emergency decree by taking part in an anti-government rally on Oct 15.” (BKP12)

In contrast, Reuters was positive by the fact that the announcement of an emergency decree was a *consequent* reaction of the Prayuth government to get rid of the new generation of pro-democracy activism. Reuters explained that the military-backed regime did not agree to the activists' demands nor did it forbid public demonstrations at the beginning of the popular political campaigns. Shortly after the controversial incident in which the pro-democracy activists encountered royal members during the royal motorcade, the government declared that the public demonstrations were illegal. The government claimed that the protest would put the nation at risk and public gatherings were inappropriate at that moment because of the COVID-19 pandemic; *consequently*,

the government enforced the emergency decree and started dispelling the public demonstration:

“Thailand’s government had announced emergency measures to ban gatherings of five or more people to try to end three months of protests. The government had largely allowed demonstrations to happen while making no sign of meeting protesters’ demands. But that changed after an incident in which protesters jeered Queen Suthida’s motorcade as she and the king were paying a rare visit from Europe, where they spent most of their time. The government cited that as well as the risks to national security and the economy from protests and the danger of spreading coronavirus as reasons for imposing emergency measures. The government then launched a crackdown, sweeping away a camp set up outside Prayuth’s office and arresting three protest leaders - among around 40 arrests in the past week.” (RT1)

Reuter, in addition, believed that *a crackdown* on that day, October 15th, 2020, was a *consequence* of Prayuth's resorting response to attack the people who held opposite political orientations. The media explained that the authority enforced *the emergency decree* as an excuse to charge more pro-democracy activists despite the fact that the law was the disease control measure combating the spreading of coronavirus:

- *“Student leaders were all detained during a crackdown ordered on Oct. 15 to try to end months of protests against the government and calling for reforms of the monarchy. The three have been among the most vocal in calling for curbs on the power of King Maha Vajiralongkorn’s monarchy during protests that began in mid-July. They have been charged with multiple offenses from sedition to breaking emergency laws meant to stop the spread of the coronavirus.”* (RT11).
- *“The students said they had been summoned for violating an emergency decree by joining a protest on Oct. 15, when tens of thousands of people defied a ban by Prayuth aimed at halting protests demanding his removal and reforms of the monarchy.”* (RT12)

Reuters continued showing viewpoints on the authoritarian exploitation of the emergency decree. The media claimed that the Prayuth authority consequently launched a crackdown on subsequent public demonstrations and arrested more rally participants, citing the violation of the emergency decree, with the intention of debilitating the new generation of pro-democracy activism:

- “Youth-led demonstrations last year attracted hundreds of thousands of people across the country, but *they stalled after security forces began cracking down on rallies.*” (RT4)
- “The momentum of those protests *stalled* after authorities began cracking down on rallies.” (RT8)
- “Thailand's youth-led anti-government protest movement appears to have regained momentum and its support has broadened after demonstrations last year attracted hundreds of thousands of people before *a crackdown by the authorities.*” (RT10)
- “Youth- and student-led protests since July have become the greatest challenge to Thailand's establishment in years and *dozens of arrests and attempts to quell them* have so far only brought more people into the streets. (RT12)

The Application of the Lèse-Majesté Law

Furthermore, local coherence is used as a semantic discourse strategy to express opinions on the application of the lèse-majesté law. The findings of local coherence analysis indicate that Bangkok Post views the enforcement of the lèse-majesté law as *a consequence* of the activists' actions, but Reuters breaks the silence that the law may be a *cause* of difficulties in the development of pro-democracy activism. The two selected news sources reported that the pro-democracy activists demanded the restriction of monarchy power aiming at the reformation of Article 112, as recognized as the lèse-majesté law. The law was expected to protect the members of royal families from any kind of harassment and defamation. However, the pro-

democracy activists claimed that royal criticism should be clear of 112 charges since voicing opinions was a freedom of expression. When considering the information reported on the Bangkok Post website, the media reported that the pro-democracy activists who commented on the role of monarchy would be charged with a breach of *lèse-majesté* law. Bangkok Post explained that the existing laws would be enforced as a *consequence* of the disrespectful behavior of the activists toward the royal members, and the arrests were not related to the government policy to quell the opposite political movement:

“The Criminal Court on Tuesday denied bail to *activists accused of breaking Thailand’s lèse-majesté law*. The detained leaders are among activists who have spearheaded a movement that’s *broken long-held taboos about publicly discussing and questioning the monarchy*. While political analysts expect the authorities to charge more activists in the coming days under the *lèse-majesté* law to weaken the protest movement, Gen Prayut has said *the government is merely enforcing existing laws*.” (BKP2)

Bangkok Post, in addition, repeated its point of view through propositions to ensure that the pro-democracy activists were arrested under the *lèse-majesté* charges as a *consequence* of their *political expressions* (e.g., submitting the statement, listing demands, gathering in public, or posting stickers on a portrait of the king) calling for the reform of monarchy to topple the democratic system with the king as the head of the state.

- “*Protesters submit statements opposing absolute monarchy* to the German embassy. It was the second rally outside the embassy, following a demonstration on Oct 26 last year that led to *the indictment of 13 student leaders on lèse-majesté and other charges*. The court ruled the demands made by student activists, together with subsequent actions by them and other protesters, *were aimed at bringing down the constitutional monarchy*.” (BKP5)

- “*The gathering* that began around 3 p.m. at Democracy Monument was staged to *demand the abolition of the royal defamation law* and the release from detention of four key members of the movement. The four were denied bail during a pre-trial hearing on Feb 9 after prosecutors formally indicted them *on charges of lèse-majesté* and other lesser charges. The court cited as reasons *the severe punishment of the charges and the tendency of the accused to repeat the offenses.*” (BKP7)
- “*The activists listed 10 demands in their manifesto delivered at protest events, including a call for reform of the monarchy and the abolition of Section 112, known as the lèse-majesté law.* The judges ruled that these demands were in violation of the constitution and *three activists aimed to overthrow the state and the monarchy in their speeches.*” (BKP14)
- “The Criminal Court sentenced a web administrator to two years in prison yesterday for *breach of the lèse-majesté law after he posted stickers on a portrait of His Majesty the King.* That charge accused a web administrator of frequently posting Photoshopped pictures on his Facebook account, as well as *posting messages that were intended to insult the monarchy and the government.*” (BKP15)

In contrast to Bangkok Post, Reuters explained that pro-democracy activists demanded the reform of Article 112 with an intention to limit monarchy power because people, whose socio-political stances were incompatible with the alliance of military and monarchy, were intimidated by the lèse-majesté law carrying harsh punishment:

“The demonstration was in reaction to this week’s arrests of four leading protest figures under *charges of insulting the monarchy* in mass anti-government demonstrations last year. *The “lèse-majesté” law, contained in Article 112 of Thailand’s criminal code, carries penalties of up to 15 years in prison.* Student activists say *the law has been abused for decades to crush political opposition to a military-royalist establishment.*” (RT7)

Reuters then attempted to communicate that the *lèse-majesté* law may *cause* obstacles to the development of pro-democracy activism as the youth activists encountered difficulties in participating in public demonstrations and showing perspectives toward the military and monarchy without facing severe punishment:

“Prayuth threatened to use *all laws* to prosecute protesters who break them, *raising concerns among activists that this could also mean harsh royal insult laws under which there have been no prosecutions for more than two years.*” (RT12)

Reuters indeed continued providing evidence of the acceleration in a number of prosecutions due to the *lèse-majesté* charges to simplify that the pro-democracy activists had been abused after publicly proclaiming demand on the limitation of monarchy power and exemplify that the royal insult law may be a *cause* of difficulties among the pro-democracy activists in spreading the pro-democracy activism despite exercising online political campaign:

- “Months of youth-led protest against the military-backed government of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha last year also broke traditional taboos by calling for reform of the powerful monarchy. *At least 61 people have subsequently been charged with lèse-majesté law*, based on data compiled by the legal aid group Thai Lawyers for Human Rights.” (RT13)
- “The protests have broken longstanding taboos in Thailand, whose *lèse-majesté law* sets jail terms of up to 15 years for anyone convicted of defaming the monarchy. Since the protests began last year, *at least 157 people have been charged under the law*, according to records compiled by the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights group.” (RT5)
- “Opposition parties have been concerned by *a surge in the number of arrests and lèse-majesté charges* against government critics among a youth-led protest movement that had *openly called for reforms to the monarchy*. *At least 173 people were charged with royal insult* over the past 16 months, according to the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights group. The last conviction was in January last year when a 66-year-old woman was jailed for 43 years for

violating the law 29 times in *sharing and posting content on social media.*"

(RT15)

The semantic representations of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists therefore are constructed on the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites with the different applications of discourse strategies including lexicons, granularity, and local coherence.

2. Formal Discourse Strategies

The analysis of formal discourse strategies was given to the preferences for superstructures and syntactic structures, employed to construct the formal representations of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. The findings of each formal strategy analysis are shown as follows.

2.1 Superstructures

The analysis of the superstructures examined the preferences for topics and contents presented in the most salient elements (i.e., headlines and leads) of news discourses in which they influence the perceptions of the news audiences towards the social actors who are involved in such topics and contents. The findings of superstructure analysis reveal that the selected news sources are different in terms of representing social actors and their actions in the headlines and leads of the news stories relevant to the public demonstration, the encounter between the police and protesters, and the arrest during the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. The overall findings suggest that topics and information related to authorities and the police are positively represented in the headlines and leads of news articles published on the Bangkok Post websites. Reuters, on the other hand, prioritizes topics and information explaining that pro-democracy activists are treated unfairly by the government in headlines and leads of the news articles.

Headlines and Leads of News Articles Reporting on the Public Demonstration

The findings of superstructure analysis suggest that two out of five onsite rally events, outside the government house and the Democracy Monument in Bangkok, were titled differently in the representative discourses. The news report on the public demonstration outside the government house, first, noticed the difference in the headlines and leads of the news stories. Bangkok Post indeed devoted these important sections to represent the authorities as Prayuth Chan-Ocha was targeted by the pro-democracy activists and the government and public administration were devastated by the public assemblies outside the government house:

“We're staying until PM quits.”

“Anti-government protesters have besieged Government House and threatened to camp out there until Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha bows to one of their demands and quits. Their sit-in has scuppered the government's plan to receive Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at Government House Thursday.” (BKP1)

However, the headlines and the leads of news reports on the public demonstration outside the government house on the Reuters website were allocated to the description of the pro-democracy activists' actions as these youth protesters were seeking civic values, even though they were prohibited from having the right to protest in public, while the content related to the government administration was ignored:

“I want freedom: Thais mass to defy protest ban”

“Thailand's government had announced emergency measures to ban gatherings of five or more people to try to end three months of protests. The response was one of the biggest demonstrations so far, in the heart of the capital.” (RT1)

The other public rally at the Democracy Monument in Bangkok was also reported on the selected news websites. It was noticeable that the headlines and leads of the news reports published on the Bangkok Post website were given to the description of the police's action showing the police were doing their duties to file a report on the arrest of

the protest participants instead of clarifying the protest demands or providing narration on the incidents that occurred during a public demonstration:

“Rallygoers likely to face legal action.”

“Police are gathering evidence to take legal action against protest leaders and participants who turned up at city rallies on Thursday in violation of the emergency decree.” (BKP4)

Without mentioning the police making a report to arrest protest participants, Reuters reported the same protest event at the Democracy Monument and reserved the headlines and leads of the news stories to describe the actions of pro-democracy activists. These prominent elements of the news articles informed that these student activists occupied the road to protest the military-back government demanding the resignation of former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha and the revision of constitutional monarchy to limit the power of the king:

“Thai protesters return to streets demanding constitutional changes.”

“Hundreds of Thai pro-democracy protesters took to the streets on Thursday, calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha and constitutional changes that would curb the influence of the country's powerful monarchy.” (RT4)

Headlines and Leads of News Articles Reporting on the Encounter between Officers and Activists

The results of superstructure analysis, in addition, reveal that two out of five violent clashes, outside the parliament and at the Din Daeng district were represented conversely in headlines and leads of the news articles. The reports on the confrontation between the police and pro-democracy activists outside the parliament were first acknowledged by the difference in its news titles. The headlines and leads of the news articles on the Bangkok Post website emphasized the government parties were working as a member of parliament; however, they were pressured by the havoc caused

by the pro-democracy activists in response to the demand for the revision of the constitution:

“Chaos outside *parliament*”

“Violence erupts on *the eve of the charter vote*”

“*Pressure is mounting on parliament to accept the controversial charter amendment bill* sponsored by civil group Internet Law Reform Dialogue (iLaw) after clashes between pro-monarchy supporters and anti-government protesters erupted on Tuesday.” (BKP6)

In contrast to Bangkok Post, which focused on the government’s side, Reuters reported the same incident but redirected the focus to the violent encounter between the police and protesters outside parliament. Its headline indeed addressed the number of victims who suffered from the use of guns; moreover, its lead referred to this havoc as *the worst violence* that occurred since the beginning of the new generation of pro-democracy activism:

“*At least 55 hurt* in Thailand’s most violent protests since the new movement emerged.”

“*At least 55 people were hurt, some with gunshot wounds*, when demonstrators marching on the Thai parliament clashed with police and royalist counter-protesters, in the worst violence since a new youth-led protest movement emerged in July.” (RT6)

The other chaotic incident, which took place in Din Daeng district was represented differently in headlines and leads of the news articles. Bangkok Post informed that the police who maintained order clashed with the protesters during the demonstration:

“*Protesters clash with police in Din Daeng.*”

“*Some anti-government demonstrators clashed with police* in Bangkok’s Din Daeng area on Tuesday evening after a rally earlier in the day.” (BKP9)

In turn, Reuters reported the same incident in the Din Daeng area providing further information about the clash. Its headline was given to mention the confrontation between police and activists; in addition, its lead explained more about the measures deployed to disperse the onsite assemblies. Reuters described that the pro-democracy activists struggled to protest the government as the authority operated the dangerous strategies of *firing tear gas, water cannon, and rubber bullets* to end the public gathering on the street:

“Thai police clash with protesters as thousands hold anti-government rally.”

“Police in Thailand fired tear gas, water cannon, and rubber bullets to disperse protesters who took to the streets of Bangkok on Tuesday amid anger over the handling of the coronavirus pandemic by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha’s government.” (RT9)

Headlines and Leads of News Articles Reporting on the Arrests of the Activists

The findings of superstructure analysis, furthermore, show that two out of five incidents on the arrests of pro-democracy activists—core student leaders and singer activists— were represented differently in their headlines and leads of the news articles. When high-profile student activists were arrested, Bangkok Post indeed mentioned the arrest of protester leaders in the headlines and provided information that the police were physically struggling to take charge of the leaders:

“Three of four freed protest leaders rearrested.”

‘Mike Rayong’ taken to hospital after scuffle with police

Four detained protest leaders were granted temporary release on Friday but three of them were promptly rearrested and one of them ended up in hospital after struggling with police.” (BKP11)

The arrest of high-profile leaders was reported on the Reuters website; however, the information related struggle between police and high-profile activists during the arrest

was deleted from the headline and lead of the news articles. Reuters mentioned that the learners were treated brutally by the riot police as they were dragged unconsciously from the van:

“Three Thai protest leaders re-arrested, one carried from van.”

“Thai police carried one of the country’s most high-profile protest leaders apparently unconscious from a van on Friday, as he and two others were re-arrested just as they reached the limit for their detention.” (RT11)

The other report on the arrest of a famous singer activist noticed the difference in the headlines and lead of the selected discourses. The topic related to the Facebook post admitting to committing the crime was highlighted in the headlines and lead of the news story published on the Bangkok Post website to show that the arrest was a consequence of the activist’s action:

“Ammy confesses to burning portrait.”

“Singer Chai-Amorn Kaewwiboonpan, aka “Ammy the Bottom Blues,” arrested yesterday for setting fire to a portrait of His Majesty the King, as well as on charges relating to arson and computer crimes, is believed to have admitted committing the crime in a Facebook post attributed to him.” (BKP13)

In contrast, the same arrest was reported on the Reuters website without mentioning the admit of committing the crime on the Facebook page in the headline and lead. Reuters ignored this topic to imply that the arrest may be an exploitation of existing laws to weaken the new generation of pro-democracy activism:

“Thai activist accused of burning king’s portrait arrested.”

“An anti-government activist accused of burning a portrait of Thailand’s King Maha Vajiralongkorn was arrested on Wednesday police said, the latest among dozens of people charged in recent months for insulting the monarchy.” (RT13)

2.2 Syntactic Structures

The analysis of syntactic structures studied different structures of sentences and clauses employed in composing news stories related to the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. The findings of syntactic structure analysis indicate that the selected news sources prefer the application of activation, followed by passivization and nominalization as syntactic structures. However, the preferred usage of a certain syntactic structure to represent a certain group of social actors and their actions is insignificant. The total tokens are calculated and presented in Table 6; also, the details of each type of syntactic structure are explained below.

Table 6 Syntactic Structures

Syntactic Structures	Bangkok Post (BKP)		Reuters (RT)	
	Tokens	Percentage	Tokens	Percentage
Activation	155	78.68%	111	79.29%
Passivization	35	17.77%	24	17.14
Nominalization	7	3.55%	5	3.57%
Total	197	100%	140	100%

Activation

According to the information shown in Table 6, the selected news sources are preferable for the use of an active-voice structure to narrate news stories. Indeed, there were 155 active-voice sentences and clauses on the Bangkok Post website calculated in which the majority of these active structures represented *the activists* (78) as the doers of the predicates. Some were *the police and authorities* (62) and the others were *the royal family* (15). Similarly, there were 111 active structures counted on the Reuters website in which most sentences and clauses showed *the activists* (50) as the performers of the actions. Some were *the police and authorities* (44) and the others were *the royal family* (12).

However, it is noticeable that active voice sentences and clauses are favorable when reporting on the harsh interaction between police and pro-democracy activists during public rallies on the Bangkok Post website. The description of the harsh interaction tends to initiate with an active-voice sentence presenting *the police officer* as a doer of the harsh actions, “firing water cannons and teargas even rubber bullets” or “using force”, in which *the pro-democracy activists* are the receivers of such actions. The latter active-voice sentence shows that *the pro-democracy activists* are the performers of actions—“throwing objects”, “breaking through barricades”, and “attacking with offensive weapons”—which *the police and authorities* become receivers of such actions:

- “Police used a water cannon truck to fire salvos and force them back. *Protesters then threw smoke bombs and bags of paint towards rows of riot police on the other side.*” (BKP6)
- “Police remained to prevent demonstrators from entering the parliament premises. They would use rubber bullets to stop the protesters if the use of teargas solution failed to stop them. *Anti-government protesters, however, eventually broke through barricades and advanced towards parliament.*” (BKP6)
- “Police fired water cannons, rubber bullets, and tear gas at protesters demanding that Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha step down and the government be held accountable for its gross mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic. *The demonstrators clashed with police after some tried to dismantle barbed wire and metal barricades set up in a bid to prevent them from marching to Government House.*” (BKP8)
- “Riot police pushed protesters from the intersection using tear gas, rubber bullets, and water cannon trucks. *Protesters later tried to break through police barricades and attacked police with stones, bricks, sharp steel rods, big firecrackers, ping pong bombs, and improvised explosive devices.*” (BKP9)
- “Police fired water cannons, rubber bullets and tear gas at *demonstrators who approached the shipping containers.*” (BKP10)

A similar structure for reporting harsh interaction between riot police and pro-democracy also occurs on the Reuters website. The media uses active-voice sentences and clauses to highlight *the police officer* as a doer of the actions— “fired water cannons and teargas even rubber bullets” or “intervened with force”—in which the pro-democracy activists are the receivers of such actions. Then the active-voice proposition shows that *the pro-democracy activists* are the performers of actions “advanced on”, “attack with offensive weapons”, “damage”, and “hurt” which the police and authorities are receivers of such actions:

- “Police fired water cannons and teargas at *protesters who cut through razor-wire barricades and removed concrete barriers outside parliament. Protesters advanced on police with makeshift shields, including inflatable pool duck.*” (RT6)
- “Police intervened with force after some protesters tried to dismantle barbed wire and metal barricades set up by the authorities to block roads from Democracy Monument to Government House.” “Then *the protesters attacked police with “ping-pong bombs, slingshots, and firecrackers.*” (RT8)
- “Police in Thailand fired tear gas, water cannon, and rubber bullets to disperse protesters who took to the streets of Bangkok. *The action of protesters shows intent to damage government property and the public as well as to hurt police officers.*” (RT9)

Therefore, the use of active voice to report harsh interactions on the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites suggests that both authorities and pro-democracy activists are capable of aggressive expressions and violent behaviors.

Passivization

Apart from representing actions in the active voice, the second favorite syntactic structure is a passive voice, according to Table 6. The results of syntactic structures analysis reveal that the sentences and clauses reported in the selected news websites will be passivized due to the redirection of the focus to the

receivers of the actions relevant to physical injuries and prosecution and the lack of identification of the agents.

Passivization is employed when the selected news agencies change the pivot to the receivers of the harmful actions. Apart from the descriptions of the violent encounters between riot police and the youth activists, the two media outlets tend to report the number of victims who are wounded or injured during the clashes. It is noticeable that Bangkok Post uses passive voice structures when emphasizing the receivers—either *pro-democracy activists* or *police*—of the harmful actions—*injured* (6) and *shot* (1) as shown in the following propositions:

- “*One protester was injured* by rubber bullets during the march and was sent to hospital.” (BKP5)
- “*At least 18 demonstrators were injured* and were being treated at Vajira Hospital.” (RT6)
- “*Three people were injured* and have been struck by a smoke grenade.” (BKP7)
- “*A number of people were injured* when the demonstrators clashed with police after some tried to dismantle barbed wire and metal barricades.” (BKP8)
- “*Six policemen were injured* in the clash.” (BKP9)
- “*20 officers had been injured* after numerous loud noises were heard, believed to be from homemade explosive devices and firecrackers.” (BKP7)
- “*A riot policeman was shot* in his leg.” (BKP9)

Similarly, Reuters preferred the report on news stories in a passive voice when there were either *pro-democracy activists* or *police* were the receivers of the physical harm actions—*wounded* (1) and *injured* (4) —during the confrontations as presented in the below statements:

- “*Three protesters were wounded* on Sunday, a police spokesman said.” (RT5)
- “*Several dozen were injured* when police fired water cannon, tear gas, and rubber bullets to disperse a protest.” (RT4)

- “*At least 55 people were injured* when demonstrators marching on the Thai parliament clashed with police and royalist counter-protesters.” (RT6)
- “*At least 55 protest participants were injured* from tear gas and six from gunshot wounds.” (RT12)
- “*At least six police officers were injured* during the clashes, police said.” (RT9)

Furthermore, the use of passive voice is favorable in the selected news websites when redirecting the focus on the receivers of the actions related to the prosecution. The findings of syntactic structures analysis reveal that sentences and clauses composed on the Bangkok Post website will be passivized when representing *pro-democracy activists* who are *the receivers* of the actions—*charged* (6), *arrested* (5), and *detained* (2)—as they participate in a banned demonstration and breach safety-health measurements and royal insult law:

- “Anti-govt groups vow to intensify protests as *leaders were charged* with royal defamation.” (BKP2)
- “*The four activists are charged* under the lèse-majesté law even before the trial begins.” (BKP7)
- “*The activists were charged* again even if they had already pleaded not guilty to the same lèse-majesté charges.” (BKP11)
- “*High profile activist has been charged* with inciting unrest, violating national museums, and installing a new plaque to symbolize people’s power.” (BKP11)
- “*Protest participant was charged* with causing harm to Her Majesty the Queen’s liberty during her motorcade on Oct 14.” (BKP11)
- “*A webmaster was charged* with lèse-majesté law and computer crime act after posting a photoshopped picture of the king on his Facebook account.” (BKP15)
- “*Seven demonstrators have been arrested* and taken to the Chana Songkhram station.” (BKP7)
- “*Student leaders were arrested* on October 15 in connection with a major rally held the previous day.” (BKP11)

- “*The leaders have been arrested* again on Oct 21 and taken back to jail.” (BKP11)
- “All told, *more than 80 people have been arrested* in connection with the protests staged in recent weeks.” (BKP11)
- “*A famous singer activist was arrested* yesterday for setting fire to a portrait of His Majesty the King.” (BKP13)
- “*Protesters were being detained* at Bangkok Remand Prison after facing charges for joining pro-democracy rallies.” (BKP11)
- “*A student activist would be detained* in connection with a speech against the lèse-majesté law.” (BKP11)

Likewise, Reuters uses passive-voice structures to report on the prosecution of *pro-democracy activists* who are *the receivers* of the actions—*arrested* (4), *re-arrested* (1), *accused of* (2), *charged* (6), and *jailed* (1)—in violation of emergency decree and the lèse-majesté law:

- “*At least six protesters were arrested*, the police said after earlier warning that all public gatherings were illegal under COVID-19 emergency rules.” (RT9)
- “*More than 130 people have been arrested* in the latest round of anti-government protests since mid-July.” (RT10)
- “*Scores of protesters, including several protest leaders, were arrested* under emergency measures.” (RT11)
- “Thai police carried one of the country’s *most high-profile protest leaders* apparently unconscious from a van on Friday, as *he and two others were re-arrested* just as they reached the limit for their detention.” (RT11)
- “*Musician activist was arrested* in Ayutthaya province north of Bangkok and *is accused of* setting fire to the portrait on Sunday in front of a Bangkok prison.” (RT13)
- “*An anti-government activist was accused of* burning a portrait of Thailand’s King Maha Vajiralongkorn was arrested.” (RT13)
- “*Two Thai high school student leaders will be charged* for joining a banned protest.” (RT12)

- “*Musician activist is charged under a strict lèse-majesté law that carries a penalty of up to 15 years in prison if found guilty, as well as arson and trespassing on government property.*” (RT13)
- “*Since the protests began last year, at least 157 people have been charged under the lèse-majesté law.*” (RT5)
- “*Activist leaders have been charged with multiple offences from sedition to breaking emergency laws meant to stop the spread of the coronavirus.*” (RT11)
- “*At least 61 people have subsequently been charged with the lèse-majesté law.*” (RT13)
- “*At least 173 people were charged with royal insult over the past 16 months.*” (RT15)
- “*The last conviction was in January last year when a 66-year-old woman was jailed for 43 years for violating the lèse-majesté law 29 times in sharing and posting content on social media.*” (RT15)

Lastly, the selected news agencies prefer the use of the passive voice when the agents of the action are unidentified, especially when there is unclear evidence to verify the individual identity who is responsible for the maintenance of cleanliness, damage to public properties, and civil disturbance. Bangkok Post thus uses a passive voice structure to ignore the unidentified doer of the actions *putting the police box in flames, throwing firecrackers, and making loud noises*:

- “*A police box was seen going up in flames in Din Daeng. Another tourist police box was later burned near the Victory Monument.*” (BKP9)
- “*Another tourist police box was later burned near the Victory Monument.*” (BKP9)
- “*Big firecrackers were thrown there.*” (BKP9)
- “*Numerous loud noises were heard, believed to be from homemade explosive devices and firecrackers.*” (BKP7)

Similarly, the active voice structures are used to neglect the anonymous performers of the actions who *set police booths on fire*, *caused bangs*, and *threw a smoke canister* at the demonstration site on the Reuter website:

- “Two police booths *were also set on fire* as sporadic violence continued into the night.” (RT9)
- “A smoke canister *was seen* on the ground near the protest site.” (RT2)
- “Several small bangs *were heard* during a standoff near a city shrine after the demonstration had moved from Democracy Monument.” (RT7)

The selected news agencies, thus, tend to report violent incidents using passive-voice sentences and clauses when the receivers of the actions need to be in the focus and the doers of the actions are unknown. However, the preference for passivization to de-emphasize the agent of a particular action is insignificant.

Nominalization

Finally, nominalization is the least frequent technique used in representative discourses, according to Table 6. The findings of syntactic structure analysis indicate that the sentences and clauses tend to be nominalized when references have been already made to the action, especially the violent action between police and activists. On the Bangkok Post website, the narrative of the violent encounter begins with active-voice sentences and clauses showing either *the police* or *pro-democracy activists* are *the performers* of the violent actions. The following propositions contain a further explanation of the situation and the number of arrests and injuries that happened when *the activists clashed with the police*. However, it is noticeable that these propositions will be nominalized with nouns *clash* (5) to avoid the repeat of the narrative of such violent encounters as it has already been explained:

- “*Guards moved to the front line and clashed with police*, who later asked them to negotiate. *The clash* came after an earlier standoff at the City Pillar

Shrine, to which the demonstrators had walked after their afternoon gathering at Democracy Monument.” (BKP7)

- “Some anti-government demonstrators clashed with police in Bangkok’s Din Daeng area on Tuesday evening after a rally earlier in the day. *The clash* capped a day of protests in cars and on motorcycles by the so-called car mob on Tuesday.” (BKP9)

Reuters employed the same narrative pattern, in parallel to Bangkok Post, when reporting on the violent confrontation. Reuters described violent action in active sentence structures in which either *the police* or *pro-democracy activists* are the performers of the action—*clashed*. The sentences or clauses will be nominalized using the noun *clashes* (5) to refer to the action that has been already explained before:

- “Demonstrators marched on the Thai parliament and clashed with police and royalist counter-protesters. “We tried to avoid *clashes*,” the deputy head of police told a news conference. He said police had tried to push back protesters from parliament and to separate them and the yellow-shirted royalist counter-protesters.” (RT6)
- “Youth activists protesting against laws forbidding insult to Thailand’s powerful king briefly clashed with police on Saturday. Police deputy spokesman said more than 20 police officers were injured in *the clashes* and seven or eight people were detained for questioning.” (RT7)
- “Thai protesters clash with police near Government House. Some protesters attacked police and eight police officers and at least one reporter was injured during *the clashes*, police said.” (RT8)
- “Thai police clash with protesters as thousands hold anti-government rally. At least six police officers were injured during *the clashes*, with one officer shot in the leg and three others hit by shrapnel from a homemade bomb, police said. *The clashes* broke out after thousands of protesters drove in a convoy of cars and motorcycles through the capital.” (RT9)
- “Thai police clashed with protesters near the residence of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha on Sunday, with officers using water cannons and teargas

against demonstrators hurling projectiles towards them. Police defended their use of force during *the clashes*, saying it was sometimes necessary to maintain public order. They added that they had complied with international standards in using teargas, rubber bullets, and water cannon.” (RT10)

Therefore, nominalization is employed as a reference to avoid the redundant description of violent actions. In other words, the use of nominalization is not favorable for the presentation of a particular actor who is capable of such violence.

Ideological Implications

The ideological implications were analyzed to decode the underlying ideologies of the selected news institutions—Bangkok Post and Reuters. The ideological implications were identified by the application of the ideological representation strategies—positive self-presentation or negative-other presentation—according to ideological structures proposed in van Dijk’s Ideological Square. The scrutiny of ideological implications indeed was considered based on the findings of both semantic and formal discourse strategy analysis. The overall results of ideological implication analysis suggest that Reuters prefers positive self-presentation while Bangkok Post favors negative other-presentation when applying discourse strategies to construct the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. The details of ideological implications hidden in each selected news website are explained below.

Ideological Implications in the Bangkok Post Website

Bangkok Post, as a whole, represents these pro-democracy activists as young people whose political beliefs and behaviors are opposite to the existing laws and the alliance of the military and monarchy of Thailand. The media explains that these students aim for the resignation of former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha, despite the fact that his government is attempting to develop the country in terms of advancing international public relations and troubleshooting the economic crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the same way, their demand for the revision of constitutional monarchy,

with an intention to limit monarchy power, could lead to the exploitation of the democratic system in which the King serves as head of state. Bangkok Post, in addition, describes that students' political campaigns to publicize their political views are in violation of the legality and customs of Thailand. In fact, their offline campaigns to protest the military-backed regime are in violation of disease-controlled regulations, much as their online campaigns to criticize the government and monarchy are recognized as computer crime acts and prohibited due to social and political tradition.

Considering the way Bangkok Post understand and represent these student activists, the findings of ideological implication analysis suggest that Bangkok Post is favorable of the construction of a negative other-presentation to the new generation of pro-democracy activists in Thailand because the semantic and formal discourse features are employed to emphasize negative attributions and mitigate positive propositions of the student protesters during the political activism, according to Table 7.

Table 7 Ideological Implications Found in the Bangkok Post Website

Discourse Strategies	Ideological Implications	
	Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
1. Lexicon The use of content words to semantically represent actors and actions	<p>Content words sharing neutral to positive semantic properties</p> <p>Actors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plural nouns: <i>people, activists, students, and supporters</i> ● Hyphenated adjectives: <i>pro-democracy</i> 	<p>Content words sharing negative semantic properties</p> <p>Actors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plural nouns: <i>protesters. Thais*</i> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Phrases: <i>overthrow, insult, contempt, against, threaten, hostile, and bring down the government and monarchy</i>

Table 7 (continued)

Discourse Strategies	Ideological Implications	
	Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
<p>2. Granularity</p> <p>The semantic construction of the levels (i.e., general or detailed) and the selection (i.e., included or excluded) of information to represent social actors and their actions</p>	<p>De-emphasizing government and monarchy's bad things</p> <p>Exclusion of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● untransparent influence of Prayuth on the general election ● violent use of officers ● high numbers of injured protest participants ● the influence of King Maha Vajiralongkorn in political and bureaucratic sections 	<p>De-emphasizing activists' good things</p> <p>General information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● significant characteristics of the activists ● purposes of the activism <p>Emphasizing activists' bad things</p> <p>Inclusion of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possession of offensive weapons ● aggressive symbolic expressions
<p>3. Local Coherence</p> <p>The semantic construction of propositions to represent a certain point of view in terms of causes and consequences of situations that happened during the selected political incident</p>		<p>Emphasizing activists' bad things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public demonstrations caused <i>unpleasant consequences for the public</i>. ● Activists were arrested for <i>consequent actions in violation of the emergency decree and the lèse-majesté law</i>.

Table 7 (continued)

Discourse Strategies	Ideological Implications	
	Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
4. Superstructures The preferences for topics and contents presented in the most salient elements (i.e., headlines and leads) of the news articles	Emphasizing government and monarchy's good things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The governmental authorities were taking responsibility for developing Thailand. ● Riot police were held accountable for maintaining the laws to control the protest and COVID-19 situations. 	De-emphasizing activists' bad things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activists ruined government plans. ● Activists caused public chaos. ● Activists injured riot police who maintained orders during the protests.
5. Syntactic Structures The preferent structures of sentences and clauses employed to represent social actors and their actions	The selection of a certain syntactic structure is not ideologically based to represent a certain group of social actors and their actions.	

A negative other-presentation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists is semantically constructed with the application of lexicons sharing negative semantic properties. Even though the selections of plural nouns: *protesters*, *people*, *activists*, *students*, and *supporters* which were modified by hyphenated adjectives: *anti-prodemocracy* and *pro-democracy* share similarities to those selected on the Reuters website, the use of plural noun *Thais* to refer to Thai people who show the highest respect to the monarchy implies that these pro-democracy activists are different from other Thai people based on the understanding of Bangkok Post. In addition, the

selection of content words to define the activist's actions to express their demands with the verbs: *overthrow, insult, contempt, against, threaten, hostile, and bring down* communicates negative semantic attribution through the lens of Bangkok Post. Indeed, Bangkok Post represents the demands of the new generation of pro-democracy activism for the resignation of former PM Prayuth Chan-Ocha, the revision of the constitution, and the limitation of monarchy power military government and criticizes the royal family as *opposite to the democratic system and the constitutional monarchy where the king is the head of state.*

Moreover, the representation of these student activists is semantically constructed with the use of granularity and portrayed in a way that undermines the motive of the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. Bangkok Post does not provide further information to describe the profile of the activists and explain the background of the activism; in other words, the information regarding the purpose of the movement is excluded. The outlet does not explain the reasons behind the demands for the resignation of former PM Prayuth, the revision of the constitution, and the limitation of monarchy power; in that case, the explanations of how these student activists are intimidated by the Prayuth government and why the revision of the constitutional monarchy is needed are provided. In turn, Bangkok Post represents these student activists involved in violent use with detailed information describing unpleasant actions ranging from the possession of offensive weapons such as bombs, guns, and firecrackers during public rallies and the aggressive symbolic expressions that are burning effigies and mock body bags to show frustration and anger over the Prayuth government.

In the same way, Bangkok Post communicates its ideological point of view via the application of local coherence saying that the new generation of pro-democracy activism has caused unimpressive effects on the public and activists themselves. Bangkok Post explains that their public demonstrations have caused inconvenience in terms of the violation of other people's rights to occupy public areas and the obstacles to governmental management. Bangkok Post attempts to communicate that these pro-

democracy activists are not abused or threatened by authorities; however, they are prosecuted as consequences of their own actions to protest are in breach of the public regulations and existing laws. In that case, Bangkok Post explains that the pro-democracy activists have to take legal accountability for their own actions because their public campaigns to declare demands are hostile to the emergency decree in which public assemblies are prohibited due to the spreading of coronavirus, and their online campaigns to express political opinions and criticize the monarchy on personal social media are acknowledged as the violation of the computer crime laws and the lèse-majesté law.

Similarly, Bangkok Post reflects its institutional ideology through the selection of topics and content provided in superstructures of the news discourse. Obviously, the anti-riot police and the governmental authorities are more important social groups than the youth activists as the Bangkok Post prioritizes information related to these groups of authorities in the most noticeable space of the news articles when reporting on the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. The media preserves the headlines and leads, the most salient elements of the news articles, to represent news audiences on how the police officers are taking legal actions against these pro-democracy activists and how the governmental management is obstructed by the activism rather than narrating the incidents that happened during public demonstrations. Moreover, the headlines and leads of the selected news articles on the Bangkok Post website do not inform the audience of the facts that the youth activists are injured by the dangerous measurement of the government to end their political activism when there are encounters between police and activists. Similarly, in the reports on the arrests of protest participants, Bangkok Post does not prioritize how these activists are brutally treated by the riot officers in the headlines and leads of the news articles.

Bangkok Post, hence, is recognized as ideologically based when selecting discourse strategies to construct a negative other-presentation of the new generation of pro-democracy activists in news articles. In other words, the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists are represented as aggressive teenagers who show violent

involvement when campaigning to accomplish their political demands; also, the activists are represented as chaotic provokers who have caused inconveniences to the public and wrongdoers who break public regulations and existing laws to topple the traditional establishment of military and monarchy of Thailand.

Ideological Implications in the Reuters Website

Typically, Reuters represents these pro-democracy activists as young people whose freedom of expression was oppressed by the establishment of the military and monarchy of Thailand. Reuters explains that these young activists demand the resignation of former Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-Ocha, claiming his lack of transparency and incompetence in handling the national crisis and administering the country. Additionally, these activists call for a reform of the current constitution, especially the limitation of royal power, since they believe that the constitution is drafted by the military with the intention of advancing military and monarchy authority in politics and bureaucracy. Because of this belief, these young activists continue to campaign for their online activism, criticizing the government and royal family on social media platforms, even if doing so puts them in danger of being charged with computer crime and royal defamation. Similarly, these activists risk their lives for offline campaigns as they are intimidated by dangerous government measures to suppress public demonstrations.

Considering the way Reuters understand and represent these student activists, the findings of ideological implication analysis suggest that Reuters prefers the construction of a positive self-presentation to the new generation of pro-democracy activists in Thailand because the semantic and formal discourse features are utilized to highlight positive attributions and conceal negative propositions of the student protesters during the political activism, according to Table 8.

Table 8 Ideological Implications Found in the Reuters Website

Discourse Strategies	Ideological Implications	
	Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
1. Lexicon The use of content words to semantically represent actors and actions	Content words sharing neutral to positive semantic properties Actors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plural nouns: <i>people, activists, students, supporters, and Thais*</i> ● Hyphenated adjectives: <i>pro-democracy</i> 	Content words sharing negative semantic properties Actors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plural nouns: <i>protesters</i> ● Phrases: <i>breaking traditional/ long-held/ long-lasting taboos</i>
2. Granularity The semantic construction of the levels (i.e., general or detailed) and the selection (i.e., included or excluded) of information to represent social actors and their actions	Emphasizing activists' good things Detailed information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● significant characteristics of the activists ● harmless creative strategies to protest ● purposes of the activism De-emphasizing activists' bad things Exclusion of information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● possession of offensive weapons ● aggressive symbolic expressions 	Emphasizing government and monarchy's bad things Inclusion of information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● untransparent influence of Prayuth on the general election ● higher numbers of injured protest participants ● the ascendancy of King Maha Vajiralongkorn on politics and bureaucracy Detailed information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● violent police force ● dangerous measures to control rallies

Table 8 (continued)

Discourse Strategies	Ideological Implications	
	Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
<p>3. Local Coherence</p> <p>The semantic construction of propositions to represent a certain point of view in terms of causes and consequences of situations that happened during the selected political incident</p>		<p>Emphasizing the government's bad things;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The alliance of military and monarch leading to federal harassment and the sufferance from governmental underperformance in surmounting the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequent economic recession were <i>causes</i> of the public demonstrations. ● The Prayuth government announced the emergency decree as <i>a consequent reaction</i> to get rid of the new generation of pro-democracy activism. ● The government applied the lèse-majesté law to <i>cause obstacles</i> to the development of pro-democracy activism.

Table 8 (continued)

Discourse Strategies	Ideological Implications	
	Positive Self-Presentation (Ingroup Representation)	Negative Other-Presentation (Outgroup Representation)
4. Superstructures The preferences for topics and contents presented in the most salient elements (i.e., headlines and leads) of news discourses	Emphasizing activists' good things; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activists were seeking modern democracy and freedom of expression. 	Emphasize governments and police's bad things; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The government did not allow activists to protest in public. ● Riot police used dangerous measures to cause protest participants to be injured. ● Riot police injured activists during the arrests. ● The government exploited using existing laws to end the activism.
5. Syntactic Structures The preferent structures of sentences and clauses employed to represent social actors and their actions	The selection of a certain syntactic structure is not ideologically based to represent a certain group of social actors and their actions.	

A positive self-presentation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists is semantically constructed with the application of lexicons sharing neutral-to-positive semantic properties. Despite the fact that the selection of plural nouns: protesters, people, activists, students, and supporters which were modified by

hyphenated adjectives: anti-prodemocracy and pro-democracy to represent the activists share similarities to those selected on the Bangkok Post website, these student protesters are not classified from the rest of the Thai community as they are still referred as Thais based on perspectives of Reuters. Moreover, Reuters shows its understanding that the demands for the resignation of former PM Prayuth, the revision of the constitution, and the limitation of monarchy power are breaking traditional taboos in the context of Thailand where criticizing the government and monarchy in public is prohibited. However, Reuters shows its belief that the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand is achievable and can be successful, but the movement may need a lot of patience and effort as fighting for a better democratic system is the greatest challenge for the Thai student protesters.

Moreover, Reuters amplifies the purpose of the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand through the application of granularity. Reuters devotes the majority of the space to providing detailed descriptions of the profile of the activists saying they are students who express their political opinions using harmless symbolic signs such as showing a three-finger salute and tying white ribbon on their hair and school bags, to challenge the establishment of military and monarchy; also, Reuters includes information explaining the purpose of the activism in terms of strengthening the freedom of expression in democracy system as these young people are intimidated and frustrated by a lack of administrative efficiency and transparency but are disallowed to criticize the military-monarchy regime; on the other hand, Reuters mitigates activists' negative attributes by the exclusion of information related to violent actions in terms of the possession of offensive weapons and the aggressive symbolic expressions. Interestingly, Reuters stresses the negative properties of the military-monarchy alliance by the inclusion of information related to the unfair actions of PM Prayuth to outplay the general election, the higher number of injured victims during the rallies, and the vigorous ascendancy of King Maha Vajiralongkorn on political and bureaucratic influence to magnify the purpose the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand.

In the same way, Reuters reflects its certain perspectives with the application of local coherence being convinced by the fact that the government has exploited the existing laws: the emergency decree, and the lèse-majesté law, to silence the political oppositions and to weaken the momentum of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activism. Reuters believes that the young people are harassed by the excessive power of the military and monarchy and suffering from underperformance in surmounting the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequent economic recession causing them to protest. Reuters is also convinced that the government announced the emergency decree, the law meant to control COVID-19 infections, to ban public assemblies after the appearances of activists campaigning for political change in public areas; moreover, the media believe that the government enforces the lèse-majesté law with the attempt to slow the development of the pro-democracy activism citing the number of activists who are prosecuted by these existing laws.

Similarly, Reuters communicates its ideology with the selection of topics and content represented in the superstructures of news discourse. Reuters views the youth activists as a more important group of social actors relevant to the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand. Reuters keeps repeating the purpose of the activism to strengthen the democratic system and seek freedom in the headlines and leads of the news articles; in fact, Reuters formally organizes topics and content showing pro-democracy activists are mistreated by the riot police and the military government in the headlines and leads the news articles to control positive perceptions of the news audience towards the new generation of pro-democracy activism. Reuters apparently validates the activist's claim of being intimidated by the authorities by highlighting the government and police's negative attributes in the most noticeable elements of superstructures. Reuters indeed represents the topic and content by saying that the government disallows activists to protest in public and enforces the dangerous measures to cause protest participants injured.

Reuters, therefore, is perceived as positively ideologically based as discourse strategies are employed in composing news articles to construct a positive self-

presentation of the new generation of pro-democracy activists. In other words, the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists are represented as young people who are victimized by the powerful alliance of military and monarchy and as young people who are seeking freedom of expression and reinforcing the democratic institute using harmless effective political strategies.



Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

The final chapter provides the conclusion of the key findings. Then the interpretation of the results and research implications are discussed. The chapter also identifies limitations and ends with recommendations for further studies.

Conclusion

The present investigation aims to examine the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in online English written language news articles. The individual objectives of the study are to analyze discourse strategies (i.e., semantic strategies and formal strategies) adopted to construct the representation of the Thai pro-democracy activists and to decode ideological implications that are hidden in online news articles written about the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand published on the two news websites. One is Bangkok Post, a Thai English-language news agency, and the other is Reuters, a global-recognized news provider. The findings of the study indeed can fulfill the individual objectives and answer research questions.

Research Question 1: What are certain discourse strategies (i.e., semantic and formal discourse strategies) employed to construct the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists in online English-language newspapers?

The findings of discourse strategy analysis indicate that the selection of discourse strategies, consisting of lexicons, granularity, local coherence, and superstructures, are employed differently to construct the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists on the selected news websites.

Bangkok Post indeed uses various plural nouns (i.e., protesters, people, activists, supporters, and students) and hyphenated adjectives (i.e., anti-government and pro-democracy) to refer to the youth activist. The media defines the demands and actions to protest the Prayuth government and to criticize the royal family with the phrase hostile to the government and monarchy. The use of granularity also plays a crucial role when providing detailed information to describe the violent behaviors of student activists and including the description of unpleasant actions of activists in terms

of the possession of offensive weapons and aggressive symbolic expressions. In addition, the media reflects their ideological perspectives towards the new generation of pro-democracy activism with the coherence of proposition saying that the public demonstrations have caused coercion on authorities and inconvenience to the public; in the same way, the prosecution due to the emergency decree and the lèse-majesté law is a consequence of activist's actions during their political campaigns. Furthermore, the superstructures of the news discourse are preserved for the topics and content related to the authorities showing that the youth activists are a less important group of social actors in the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand on the Bangkok Post website.

In the same way, Reuters defines activists with similar plural nouns (i.e., protesters, people, activists, supporters, and students) modified by hyphenated adjectives (i.e., anti-government and pro-democracy). Reuters also defines the activists' demands and actions with the phrase breaking traditional taboos to oppose the powerful alliance of military and monarchy; however, Reuters implies that the purpose of the activism to have a better democratic system is achievable, but it is the greatest challenge for the upcoming generations. The media prefers the application of granularity to provide further information to construct the profile of the youth activists explaining how they show their political demand through harmless symbolic expressions and how they are intimidated by the dangerous policy. In addition, Reuters uses local coherence to show its belief that the underperformance of the government and the interference of the powerful king of Thailand in politics is the motive of the public protest; also, the announcement of the emergency decree and the application of the royal insult law is exploited to weaken the pro-democracy activism. Reuters furthermore provides the topic and contents showing how the student activists are treated unfairly by the government in the most noticeable of the news articles.

The selection of syntactic structures, however, is based on the appropriateness of news writing style; in other words, the preferred usages of syntactic

structures are not ideologically based on the construction of a formal representation of a particular social actor and its action on both the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites.

Research Question 2: What are the underlying ideologies of news providers embedded in the online English-language newspapers that reported on the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand?

The results of ideological implication analysis suggest that the selection of discourse strategies is ideologically based on constructing a negative other-presentation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists in online news articles published on the Bangkok Post website. Bangkok Post indeed ideologically represents the new generation of pro-democracy activists as wrongdoers who break traditional taboos and existing laws in Thailand with the application of certain discourse strategies.

On the contrary, these discourse strategies are ideologically selected to construct a positive self-presentation of the student activists on the Reuter website. Reuter ideologically represents these youth activists as victims of political intimidation who challenge the powerful establishment of the military for a better democratic system in Thailand through particular discourse features.

Interpretation of the Results

The results of the study therefore are explanatory and interpreted regarding the genres of discourse and aims of news organizations.

Genres of Discourse

According to the summary of the key findings, the selected news websites have shown no preferences for syntactic structures used with a certain group of social actors or actions. To explain the findings of syntactic structure analysis, the present study has an interest in online news articles as a source of ideological discourse; however, it is important to note that online news articles are informative retellings in which this genre of discourse shows a particular way of stylistic composing. Indeed, the news articles contain the narration and explanation of sensible and complicated content related to politics; as a result, political news articles need to be short at length and the

language used should be precise and straightforward to ensure easier comprehension among newsreaders (Ahmed, 2018; Nserka, 2012). In the same way, the suitable sentence structure in news articles should be simple and not overpack several ideas in one statement (Nserka, 2012).

In this study, the most frequent usage of syntactic structures to report incidents that occurred during the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand is activization. In addition, there is no preference for the use of the active voice to represent a particular social actor and actions among the Bangkok Post and Reuters websites. Hence, it could be concluded that the significant characteristics of a discourse genre, news articles, in this case, affect the way providers produce discourses. In other words, the preference for syntactic structures depends on the appropriation of discourse genre in terms of writing styles rather than the linguistic medium for ideological communication.

Aims of News Organizations

The organizational objectives may play a crucial role in controlling the way each selected news outlet represents the new generation of pro-democracy activism in Thailand.

Bangkok Post's Aims

The findings of ideological implication analysis on the Bangkok Post website suggest that the news outlet shows negative ideologies towards the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. To explain this nuance, it may be controlled by the company's vision and mission. As stated in Vision & Mission (2019), Bangkok Post aims to be a trusted media provider in the country; consequently, it represents itself as a decent member of the community, ethically operating its business in alignment with its governing principles. Therefore, its attempt to act following its mission may control how its news authors understand and represent the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists. The activists' demands and actions are invalid from the Bangkok Post's perspective because they do not behave under the media outlet's governing and organizational policies in their opposition to authority and their questioning of the highest institution. In other words, decent members of the Thai

community are supposed to respect existing laws, governmental authority, and the royal institution (Traijakvanich & Rojjanaprapayon, 2020). Thus, Bangkok Post is implicitly saying that the pro-democracy activists have the right under the democratic system to participate in political demonstrations; however, their actions should not show disrespect to the authorities and the king of Thailand.

Reuters's Aims

The results of ideological implication analysis on the Reuters website indicate that the news outlet communicates positive ideologies by the representation of pro-democracy activists in the new generation in Thailand. It can be said that the ideological inclinations hidden in the news articles published on the Reuters website are affected by institutional purposes. Reuters operates its global business according to The Trust Principles (2019) in which journalists are required to perform professionally regardless of politically and culturally diverse environments to maintain its position as the most trustworthy international news provider; as a result, those who work for Reuters have to be careful when reporting incidents in terms of informing accurate information and avoiding favoring specific interests. Noticeably, Reuters not only employs discourse strategies to provide an in-depth representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists but also validates the activists' actions as being aligned with the international definition of democracy, in which individuals in democratic communities have the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly (Annan, 2020). Instead of judging the political and cultural values of Thailand, Reuters attempts to represent the actions of the activists: to publicly criticize the government's performance, to express opinions toward the royal institution, to participate in political demonstrations, to be in agreement with the universal declaration on democracy in which international news readers, its target audiences, are feasible to understand that Thai activists are eligible to protest under the democratic system.

Research Implication

The present study contributes to the knowledge of language study through the application of Critical Discourse Analysis and van Dijk's Ideological Square as a

theoretical and analytical framework to study the discursive relationship between language and ideology in news discourse. The present study also shows that the CDA research is acknowledged as a social movement of linguistic scholars to witness social issues in a particular community (van Dijk, 2013); in this case, the findings of the study reflect the power abuse in politics existing among the new generation of pro-democracy activists and the alliance between the military and monarchy of Thailand.

The present study also contributes to the knowledge of the literature as the findings of the study are compatible with the previous studies overseas and in Thailand. The findings of the present investigation support the studies in the past that either international or western news organizers tend to reflect their better understanding of the universal concept of democracy; as a result, the selection of discourse strategies to compose news reports on political movements or conflicts is ideologically based showing that the news agencies construct a positive representation of stands the social actors who are seeking for freedom of expression under the democracy system and sketch a negative image of government or riot police who are obstruct the political campaign of the democratic social actors (see further in Al Fajri, 2018; Lan & Meng, 2016; Osisanwo & Iyoha, 2020; Viboonchart & Gampper, 2014).

The present study, lastly, contributes to a society in which the results indicate that language evidently used in news articles with are potential to produce and communicate the ideology of the media organization; as a result, news audiences have to be more critical when reading in terms of acknowledging facts and guarding against distortion due to partiality and bias when receiving complicated topics and sensible information relevant to socio-political issues from online news media. To avoid being deceived by the sophisticated language used and underlying ideology of the news providers, news readers are suggested to obtain information from various news sources and base arguments on such information before passing judgments or forming viewpoints on a certain social actor involved in any political incidents.

Limitation

Even though the current study has achieved its purpose with the availability of an inside interpretation of the discursive relationship between ideologies and online political news discourse, these empirical findings are subject to potential limitations. It should be in mind that the findings of the study cannot be generalized as they merely mirror the ideological perspectives of Bangkok Post or Reuters towards the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists; in other words, the findings of the study are unrepresentative of other news outlets that share diverse socio-political orientations. In addition, the new generation of pro-democracy activism is active at the time when the research conducted has been summarized; hence, the new wave of youth activists may bring on various protest strategies leading to different representations on the online news discourse, compared to the beginning of its political campaigns. Furthermore, the research focuses on the application of English-written discourse on the selected news websites while ignoring other visual discourse features (e.g., photos or videos) that can affect the construction of the representation of Thai pro-democracy activists in the news generation. Therefore, a narrow range of representative news agencies, the emphasis on a certain type of discourse strategy, and time constraints are acknowledged as limitations, and the findings of the present study should be interpreted with these cautions.

Recommendation

Further studies should be conducted for a better understanding of the discursive relationship between the application of discourse strategies and underlying ideologies in online news discourses. Further investigation could study the representation of the new generation of Thai pro-democracy activists using different sources of samples or types of news discourse (e.g., news coverage or editorial news). Also, the future study could offer a comparison of the representations of social actors and their actions at the start and end of the political movement to witness how ideologies have shifted as time has passed. Such further investigations could contribute to broader aspects of language and discourse employed and underlying ideologies in political news in modern times.

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Appendix A

News Samples from the Bangkok Post Website

The following texts are English news samples written about pro-democracy movement of the new generation in Thailand. There are 15 online news articles downloaded from Bangkok Post website and the total word counts.

There are 5 news articles, BKP1 to BKP5, written on the demonstration of pro-democracy activists, and the total number of words are 2,472. The details on the news contents, the day of publication, and the digital source of each article are as follows.

BKP1

'We're staying until PM quits' (799 words)

Protesters' ultimatum after tense mass rally

October 15, 2020

Anti-government protesters have besieged Government House and threatened to camp out there until Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha bows to one of their demands and quits.

Their sit-in has scuppered the government's plan to receive Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at Government House Thursday -- he will probably be welcomed at the Defence Ministry or Ban Phitsanulok instead. Mr Wang is visiting the kingdom to bolster cooperation between the two countries and will meet the PM Thursday.

Pro-democracy protest leaders announced last night that they would camp out in front of Government House until Gen Prayut resigns. Their two other key demands are for parliament to hold an urgent special session to deliberate charter amendments and reform of the monarchy.

After more than 10 hours of marching which was occasionally blocked by police, the anti-government protesters set up camp on Phitsanulok Road outside Government House Wednesday evening as police gave up trying to stop them.

The number of protesters was estimated at 20,000, according to journalists covering the event. During the day the protesters occupied Phitsanulok Road from the Misakawan intersection and Chamai Maruchet Bridge all the way to Nang Loeng intersection.

Police declared they would not allow the protesters to enter the nearby Royal Plaza and, as the Bangkok Post was going to press last night, they were still ordering protesters through loudspeakers to head home by 10pm in order to comply with the public assembly law. The police did not spell out what they would do if the protesters remained where they were.

One of the protest leaders, Parit -- aka "Penguin" Chiwarak -- claimed at least 200,000 people had attended the rally, despite police estimates that only 8,000 people had turned up.

More than 14,000 police officers were deployed to maintain order.

The demonstration was organised by the "Khana Ratsadorn" (the People's Group), formerly known as the Free People movement.

Protesters began gathering at Democracy Monument on Ratchadamnoen Avenue Wednesday morning, led by human rights activist Arnon Nampa, a core member of the group.

This followed an announcement that the demonstration earlier planned to start at 2pm had been moved up to 8am following the arrest of 21 protesters near the Democracy Monument and Satriwithaya School on Tuesday afternoon.

The group began marching to Government House to press their three key demands -- the departure of Gen Prayut, a new constitution and monarchy reform -- but were halted by police barricades.

"Down with dictatorship. Long live democracy," the marchers chanted as they left Democracy Monument, where they had assembled. and came face to face with thousands of yellow-clad royalists.

The protesters walked from the Democracy Monument to Government House via Nakhon Sawan Road as security authorities blocked them from marching down Ratchadamneon Nok Avenue, which was being prepared for Wednesday's royal motorcade.

Mr Arnon and other protest leaders promised there would be no violence during the rally.

Yellow-clad people had gathered along Ratchadamnoen Avenue, waiting for the motorcade of His Majesty the King, who was scheduled to go to the Temple of the Emerald Buddha inside the Grand Palace in the afternoon for the graduation ceremony of monks and novices who had completed Pali studies.

The yellow-clad royalists dispersed after the royal motorcade had passed.

The protesters were blocked by four police buses at the end of Nakhon Sawan Road and those in the front line started trying to push one of the buses out of the way. Their leaders told them to stop and to show restraint.

They then sat down along Nakhon Sawan Road and waited for their leaders' next move. Police later removed the buses and allowed them to move on to the Nang Loeng intersection,

About the same time, the royal motorcade of Her Majesty the Queen passed along Phitsanulok Road, which was cordoned off by security officers to stop protesters. Their only gesture was to defiantly flash the three-finger salute as the motorcade passed.

Her Majesty, representing His Majesty the King and accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Dipangkorn Rasmijoti, was to offer robes to monks as part of a kathin ceremony at Wat Arun Ratchawararam and Wat Ratcha Orasaram.

Deputy police spokesman Pol Col Kissana Phathanacharoen said Wednesday that police would try to contain the protesters, whose numbers he estimated at 8,000.

Pol Col Kissana urged the public to avoid the routes occupied by the protesters, whom he urged to comply with the law and not violate other people's rights.

Suthep Thaugsuban, former protest leader of the now-defunct People's Democratic Reform Committee, was among the yellow-clad people who waited for the royal motorcade of His Majesty the King.

He said he joined other Thais to show loyalty to the monarchy but denied mobilizing yellow-clad supporters to counter the anti-government protesters.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2002191/were-staying-until-pm-quits>

BKP2

Anti-govt groups vow to intensify protests as leaders charged (498 words)

February 10, 2021

Pro-democracy groups have vowed to intensify their protests calling for monarchy reform and a new constitution, a day after a Bangkok court sent four of their leaders into pretrial detention on royal defamation charges.

Activists will gather at Pathumwan intersection for a second day to demand the immediate release of leaders and warn the refusal of bail is a sign authorities are adopting a confrontational stance, one of the key protest leaders, Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul said on Wednesday.

The Criminal Court on Tuesday denied bail to lawyer Anon Nampa, student leader Parit "Penguin" Chiwarak and two others accused of breaking Thailand's lese majeste law. The detained leaders are among activists who have spearheaded a movement that's broken long-held taboos about publicly discussing and questioning the monarchy.

More frequent protests will pile pressure on Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha's government, which is facing a no-confidence vote next week and battling a slump in the trade- and tourism-reliant economy. While political analysts expect the authorities to charge more activists in the coming days under the lese majeste act to weaken the protest movement, Gen Prayut has said the government is merely enforcing existing laws.

Thailand's lese majeste law is one of the harshest in the world, mandating as many as 15 years in prison for each instance of defaming, insulting or threatening the king, queen, heir apparent or regent. Since late November, the authorities have charged at least 58 activists who have led demonstrations and called for a review of monarchy's powers.

'No compromise'

The Bureau of the Royal Household has said it doesn't give comments to the press. Gen Prayut said on Wednesday Thai people should help one another and learn from protests in the past when asked about today's planned gathering.

The movement that started mid-2020 is demanding constitutional reforms and the resignation of Gen Prayut, who ruled the country as junta leader for five years before becoming premier after 2019 elections. While street rallies had become less frequent since mid-December due to the country's fresh wave of Covid-19 infections, public demonstrations will now resume, Ms Panusaya said.

"The court's refusal to allow our friends to get bail is a sign that there's no compromise" Ms Panasuya said. "So we now have to come out and show our strength and tell them that we won't stop with our demands."

Human Rights Watch expressed concern about the increasing use of lese majeste laws against pro-democracy activists and said the detained leaders may spend years in jail without trial.

"Holding people in pretrial detention for peaceful expression portends a return to the dark days when people simply charged with this crime end up spending years in jail while their trials drag on interminably," Brad Adams, Human Rights Watch's Asia director said in a statement Wednesday.

"The Thai government should address the demands of critics and protesters instead of putting them in jail for long periods before they are tried on flimsy charges."

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2065987/anti-govt-groups-vow-to-intensify-protests-as-leaders-charged>

BKP3

Activists hold 'no-confidence' rally (450 words)

February 20, 2021

Ratsadon group stages colourful protest outside Parliament following censure debate

A few hundred activists gathered on Saturday evening for what they called a people's no-confidence debate outside Parliament amid tight security provided by 4,000 police officers on rotating shifts.

The event came hours after a series of votes inside the legislative chamber, where Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and his nine cabinet ministers survived a censure debate as coalition MPs closed ranks around them.

The evening activity was held by the United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration, a student group under the umbrella of the broader Ratsadon or People's Movement, outside the Parliament complex at the Kiat Kai intersection.

The rally was preceded by rumours that its guards would be armed with 40 ping-pong bombs, a claim denied by Panusaya “Rung” Sithijirawattanakul, a core leader who insisted the demonstration would be peaceful.

Organizers on Saturday handed out pamphlets on civil disobedience and participants were asked not to carry with them any kind of weapons, especially bombs, guns and firecrackers.

The precaution was taken in order to avoid a repeat of last Saturday, when a number of protesters were seen throwing stones and objects and splashing paint at a stationary line of police. Most of the violence took place after the majority of demonstrators had dispersed peacefully.

The demonstrators’ demands remain the same — Gen Prayut’s resignation, a rewrite of the constitution and reform of the monarchy.

The demonstrators were asked to make their own placards to send messages to the government. Most of them focus on Section 112 and the need for monarchy reform.

No stage was set up but key members addressed the crowd from a pickup truck.

Organisers announced an end to the peaceful event shortly before 9pm.

Meanwhile, a group calling itself the “Progressive Red” started gathering near the Democracy Monument at about 3.30pm, with food supplies and a pickup truck equipped with loudspeakers.

They claimed they did not know the rally site was at Parliament. However, they remained where they were because the protest site there would not be safe if there were a clash between protesters and the police.

At Sanam Luang, razor wire and barriers made of double-stacked containers were put up around the Royal Palace. Authorities explained they needed to protect important sites, even though protest organisers had said they had no intention of going to the area.

Also on Sunday, more people joined the march from Nakhon Ratchasima to Bangkok led by the Dao Din group to campaign for the release of four activists held during pre-trial on lese majeste charges. Among them was the mother of Parit “Penguin” Chiwarak, one of the four who had been denied bail twice.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2071611/activists-hold-no-confidence-rally>

BKP4

Rallygoers likely to face legal action (374 words)

Protests draw big crowds, more on way

June 24, 2021

Police are gathering evidence to take legal action against protest leaders and participants who turned up at city rallies on Thursday in violation of the emergency decree, says the deputy Royal Thai police spokesman.

Pol Col Kissana Phathanacharoen said the protesters also violated a health safety announcement issued by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Bangkok has been designated a Covid-19 maximum and strict control zone, with a ban on gatherings of more than 50 people.

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered on Thursday at the Democracy Monument in Bangkok to mark the 89th anniversary of the June 24, 1932 revolution. They also rallied on Ratchadamnoen Avenue last night.

About 500 people, led by activists Jatupat "Pai Dao Din" Boontaraksa, human rights lawyer Arnon Nampa, Panupong "Mike" Jadnok, Atthapol "Khru Yai" Buapat and Promsorn Veerathamjaree, began the rally on Ratchadamnoen Avenue.

Demonstrators wrapped a huge cloth banner around the monument before lighting candles in remembrance of the June 24, 1932 revolution by Khana Ratsadon that transformed Thailand from an absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy.

Another group calling itself "Re-solution" set up a table to collect signatures in support of a bid to amend the constitution to remove the Senate and scrap the 20-year national strategy and reform plan. Some 46,781 signatures were gathered as of Thursday. The constitution allows the submission of a draft amendment supported by at least 50,000 people for consideration by parliament.

The "Prachachon Khon Thai" group led by activist and lawyer Nitithorn Lamluea also marched to Government House to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Prayut Cha-o-cha. The protesters were blocked by crowd control police at Chamaimaruechet Bridge. Police had two water canon and detention trucks on hand in case trouble flared.

However, the "Prachachon Khon Thai" group later moved to Nang Loeng intersection. Mr Nitithorn said he received reports that a third party would instigate violence. The group will gather again tomorrow. The "Thai Mai Thon" (Impatient Thais) group led by red-shirt leader Jatuporn Prompan also marched to Government House. The group dispersed at about 8pm and Mr Jatuporn said the group would gather again tomorrow at Phan Fa Bridge. There were no reports of violence as of press time.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2138039/rallygoers-likely-to-face-legal-action>

BKP5

Protesters submit statement opposing absolute monarchy to German embassy (351 words)

November 14, 2021

A large group of protesters on Sunday marched from Bangkok's Pathumwan intersection to the German embassy to submit a statement opposing absolute monarchy.

Three representatives were allowed into the embassy premises to hand in the statement.

"The move is against absolute monarchy and to protect democracy," the statement said.

One protester was injured by rubber bullets during the march from Pathumwan and was sent to Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital.

It was the second rally outside the embassy, following a demonstration on Oct 26 last year that led to the indictment of 13 leaders on lese majeste and other charges.

Earlier on Sunday, protesters occupied Pathumwan intersection in Bangkok to vent their anger at the recent Constitutional Court ruling and demand reform of the highest institution.

No particular groups claimed to have organised the rally, the first major protest since the court's ruling on Wednesday.

The court ruled the demands made by Arnon Nampa, Panupong "Mike" Jadnok and Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul, together with subsequent actions by them and other protesters, were aimed at bringing down the constitutional monarchy.

The court ordered them to cease all moves deemed threatening to the democratic system with the King as head of state.

Citing the ruling and the order, protesters accused the court of attempting to bring back absolute monarchy.

The protesters also called for the end of the lese majeste law and the release of all activists detained by police.

"We don't want absolute monarchy," they shouted at the rally site. "Reform not abolition," they added, referring to a call to reform the highest institution.

They also burned nine effigies representing the nine judges sitting in the court.

Deputy Prime Minister Wissanu Krea-ngam on Thursday warned protesters to obey the court's ruling, but the Move Forward Party argued that the ruling could bring about further social rifts.

Demonstrators originally planned to gather at Democracy Monument and then march to Sanam Luang. The venue was later changed to Pathumwan as police blocked access to the monument.

They also installed shipping containers at Sanam Luang to obstruct the march.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2215223/protesters-submit-statement-opposing-absolute-monarchy-to-german-embassy>

There are 5 news articles, BKP6 to BKP10, written on the encounters between pro-democracy activists and police, and total number of words are 2,943. The details on the news contents, the day of publication, and the digital source of each article are as follows.

BKP6

Chaos outside parliament (746 words)

Violence erupts on eve of charter vote

November 18, 2020

Pressure is mounting on parliament to accept the controversial charter amendment bill sponsored by civil group Internet Law Reform Dialogue (iLaw) after clashes between pro-monarchy supporters and anti-government protesters erupted on Tuesday, leaving several people injured.

Police used water cannon to fire teargas solution to disperse anti-government demonstrators who tried to break police lines, barbed wire and barriers to get to the gates of parliament.

A group of demonstrators wearing helmets and other protective gear reached the line of concrete barriers and razor wire near Bang Krabue intersection in front of parliament at 2.30pm. They then attempted to breach the barricade.

Cops use water cannon

Police used a water cannon truck to fire salvos and force them back. Protesters then threw smoke bombs and bags of paint towards rows of riot police on the other side.

After that brief confrontation, police tried to start negotiations with a representative of the approaching men, who were apparently acting as an advance guard for the demonstrators behind.

Pol Col Kissana Phathanacharoen, deputy police spokesman, said police warned demonstrators not to tear down the barricades and when they refused to back off police fired four more salvos from the water cannon.

The first three consisted of plain water. When that failed to deter the demonstrators, he said, police then used the water cannon to fire a liquid that included teargas.

Rally leaders earlier announced they planned to stay overnight outside parliament ahead of Wednesday's decision by MPs on whether to accept for deliberation a proposed constitutional amendment drafted by iLaw. That is one of seven charter change drafts submitted to the parliament, the other six having been sponsored by government and opposition parties.

Parliament on Tuesday started its two-day debate on proposed constitutional amendments and legislators will on Wednesday vote on whether to accept any of the proposed drafts for deliberation.

Some lawmakers were forced to leave parliament by boat as government supporters and pro-democracy demonstrators clashed at the nearby Kiakkai intersection.

Members of the two groups threw missiles at each other at that location but riot police did not intervene, the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights Centre tweeted.

Protesters were held back by thousands of police standing behind barricades, who repeatedly used water cannon to fire teargas solution to prevent them from getting closer to parliament.

MPs, senators and parliament officials began leaving parliament on boats arranged by the Marine Department, from Kiakkai pier on the Chao Phraya River, at about 4.40pm.

Among them were MPs from both camps, including Pol Lt Gen Viroj Pao-in and Karun Hosakul of the opposition Pheu Thai Party, and Chada Thaiset of the coalition Bhumjaithai Party.

Police deployed more water cannons at the main gate on Samsen Road at about 4.30pm, taking the total number of water cannons used on Tuesday to four.

Just after 5pm police withdrew their water trucks from Kiakkai intersection, whereupon demonstrators removed the barricades and barbed wire and occupied parts of the intersection.

Protesters' 'victory'

Just before 8pm, anti-government protesters eventually broke through barricades and advanced towards parliament.

Protest leader Parit (aka Penguin) Chiwarak then declared "victory" as the protesters gathered outside parliament.

Police remained, however, to prevent demonstrators from entering the parliament premises.

Earlier, police announced that they would use rubber bullets to stop the protesters if the use of teargas solution failed to stop them.

Protest leader Amon Nampa later said on Facebook that police had indeed fired rubber bullets at protesters, although there was no immediate independent confirmation of his claim.

Further clashes broke out between anti-government protesters and yellow-clad royalists at about 8.30pm.

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Erawan centre reported last night that at least 18 demonstrators were injured and were being treated at Vajira Hospital.

Meanwhile, during day one of the debate in parliament, Wirote Lakkana-adisorn, a Move Forward Party MP, asked parliament president Chuan Leekpai to tell police not to use force against protesters and allow them gather near parliament.

However, Chaiwut Thanakhamanusorn, a Palang Pracharath Party MP, told the meeting that the protesters must not pressure parliament, while chief government whip Wirat Ratana-sate said that police must take decisive action against anyone who tried to storm the building.

Sompong Amornvivat, leader of the main opposition Pheu Thai Party, says opposition parties agreed to accept all seven charter amendment bills.

Chief opposition whip and Pheu Thai MP Sutin Klungsang said that opposition parties had studied the iLaw bill carefully and approved it.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2021203/chaos-outside-parliament>

BKP7

Police and protesters face off again (891 words)

Democracy Monument draped in red banner calling for freeing of four movement leaders and end to S112

February 14, 2021

A confrontation between police and pro-democracy protesters turned ugly late Saturday with a number of injuries and arrests, following a peaceful protest earlier in the day at Democracy Monument in Bangkok.

Tensions had been high all evening but most rally participants had dispersed peacefully, with a promise to stage another rally next Saturday, when a showdown between a small group of demonstrators and police turned violent.

One video that was widely circulated online showed officers in full riot gear chasing down a man wearing what appeared to be a yellow volunteer medic vest, with at least one officer beating him with a truncheon as he fell to the ground. His condition was not known.

Numerous loud noises were heard, believed to be from homemade explosive devices and firecrackers. Police said later that as many as 20 officers had been injured and seven demonstrators arrested and taken to the Chana Songkhram station.

The clash came after an earlier standoff at the City Pillar Shrine, to which the demonstrators had walked after their afternoon gathering at Democracy Monument. Eyewitnesses reported bottles being thrown and smoke filling the air, a lot of it from fireworks. Three people were reported injured, including a journalist said to have been struck by a smoke grenade. It was not clear who threw the projectile.

Riot police formed a barrier near Sanam Luang and two water cannon trucks were also moved into the area. They were not used.

At 8pm, the protesters — some of them carrying their own police-style riot shields — asked police to turn off lights on their crowd-control vehicles but their demand was not met. Guards moved to the front line and clashed with police, who later asked them to negotiate.

Finally, the police agreed to turn down the lights and to allow a small ceremony to be held.

Attapol “Kru Yai” Buapat, another key protester from Khon Kaen province, represented the demonstrators in paying respects inside the shrine. He emerged a few minutes later.

“I paid respects to the shrine, praying for it to protect Ratsadon [citizens] in fighting for the right that should have been theirs. We will return on Feb 20 to demand the release of our friends,” he said.

The gathering that began around 3pm at Democracy Monument was staged to demand the abolition of the royal defamation law and the release from detention of four key members of the movement.

The protest “Counting one to million ... Returning Power to People” attracted a few hundred people.

Activist Panupong “Mike” Jadnok, a key member of the Ratsadon group, vowed not to back down if there were any attempts to break up the rally.

“Now is not the time to fear, to step back. We will only fight today — there will not be an order to retreat from me,” he said.

“Whoever wants to be on the frontline, let’s be prepared. If anything happens, let state officers start first so we will not lose our legitimacy in our push for democracy.”

Pol Col Thotsaphol Ampaipipatkul, chief of the Samran Rat police station, used loudspeakers to ask demonstrators to stop the gathering as it was in violation of the emergency decree and the disease control law.

His announcement was met with boos and the beating of pots and pans by protesters, a tactic borrowed from anti-coup demonstrators in Myanmar, who believe it helps chase away evil spirits.

At the foot of the monument, the demonstrators placed drawings of Arnon Nampa, Parit “Penguin” Chiwarak, Somyot Prueksakasemsuk and Patiwat “Mor Lam Bank” Saraiyaem.

The four were denied bail during a pre-trial hearing on Feb 9 after prosecutors formally indicted them on charges of lese majeste and other lesser charges. The court cited as reasons the severe punishment of the charges and the tendency of the accused to repeat the offences.

Their supporters argued that the court’s rationale ran counter to the principle of “presumed innocent” and assumed the four are guilty as charged even before the trial begins, which could be months from now.

Surrounded by hundreds of police including a bomb squad, the demonstrators on Saturday afternoon removed hundreds of plant pots neatly put there last week by City Hall, supposedly to prevent people from assembling there.

Some of the pots were then used to form the number “112”, along with coconut shells from several provinces.

For the progressive movement, coconut shells symbolize a lack of perspective among conservatives, who feel content with the status quo regardless of progressive values and developments elsewhere in the world.

It stems from a Thai saying about a frog who has lived under a coconut shell for so long that he thinks it is perfectly fine and comfortable and doesn't want it lifted ever, simply because he isn't aware what's going on outside his shell.

The highlight activity was a 30mx30m red banner on which participants are asked to write their thoughts about the government and the country.

The banner was then hoisted up and wrapped around the monument.

Most of the messages on the banner were about problems involving Section 112 of the Criminal Code, the demand that their friends be released, and the economic hardships they were facing in the wake of the Covid pandemic.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2067647/police-and-protesters-face-off-again>

BKP8

Police fire water cannon, rubber bullets, tear gas at protesters (436 words)

July 18, 2021

Police in Bangkok on Sunday fired water cannon, rubber bullets and tear gas at protesters demanding that Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha step down and the government be held accountable for its gross mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The demonstrators clashed with police after some tried to dismantle barbed wire and metal barricades set up across Ratchadamoneon Nok Avenue in a bid to prevent them from marching to Government House.

A number of people were injured, and an area near Wat Ratchanadda near Democracy Monument was set up for health volunteers to help protesters injured during the police onslaught.

"Murderous government!" Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul, a protest leader, tweeted after the use of force.

The marchers got as far as Nang Loeng intersection, where they displayed mock body bags and burned effigies of the prime minister.

At around 6.30pm, the Free Youth movement announced the end of the rally.

Earlier, cars and motorcycles joined a throng of demonstrators walking from Democracy Monument to Government House. Led by the Free Youth movement and its allies, the anti-government protesters were defying a ban on public gatherings by assembling at the monument on Ratchadamnoen Avenue where thousands attended a rally exactly one year ago.

Demonstrations began early last year by calling for the ouster of the former junta leader and the restoration of democracy but have recently added the government's mismanagement of the coronavirus pandemic to their agendas.

"The government has been poor at managing the situation and if we don't do anything there will be no change," one protester, Kanyaporn Veeratat, 34, told Reuters.

Several mock body bags were brought to the site, symbolising the government's failure to curb the spread of the virus that has led to 3,341 deaths since the outbreak began early last year.

Car drivers and motorcyclists honked their horns as the organisers kicked off their march from the monument to the office of the prime minister.

The rally came in spite of the government's ban on assemblies of more than five people in Greater Bangkok in what it said was a bid to prevent further spread of the virus. The lockdown in 10 provinces, including the capital, has been extended to Aug 2, while another three provinces will come under the same restrictions on Tuesday.

More than 2,000 police were deployed to counter the rally.

Pol Maj Gen Piya Tawichai, the deputy commander of the Metropolitan Police Bureau, said a number of effigies of the prime minister had been seized at the monument to prevent the protesters from setting them on fire outside Government House.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2150783/police-fire-water-cannon-rubber-bullets-tear-gas-at-protesters>

BKP9

Protesters clash with police in Din Daeng (453 words)

August 10, 2021

Some anti-government demonstrators clashed with police in Bangkok's Din Daeng area on Tuesday evening after a rally earlier in the day.

The clash capped a day of protests in cars and on motorcycles by the so-called car mob on Tuesday. It was led by the United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration.

Earlier in the day, the protesters stopped outside buildings linked to cabinet members or supporters of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha to make speeches and call for resignations. They accused the government of mismanaging the pandemic and abusing its power to silence critics.

"The government lacks the ability to manage the country and only sees the interests of the elite," Benja Apan, a student activist, said in a statement read out from the top of a truck in a business district.

"If the situation remains like this then we can expect the country to face an unsurvivable disaster," she said.

The protesters first gathered at Ratchaprasong intersection about 1pm. Then they moved along Ploenchit Road to Asok intersection and then to Asok Montri and Phetchaburi roads to Sino-Thai Engineering and Construction Plc.

At Sino-Thai, protest leaders slammed the giant company for having connections with Deputy Prime Minister and Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and giving financial support to the Prayut government.

Sino-Thai is owned by Mr Anutin's family.

Then they told demonstrators to head for the residence of Deputy Agriculture and Cooperatives Minister Thamanat Prompow on Rama IX Road.

From Mr Thamanat's residence, demonstrators moved on Asok-Din Daeng Road heading for King Power Group on Rang Nam Road.

On the way, some protestors confronted security officials who blocked access to Vibhavadi Rangsit Road near Din Daeng intersection, leading to the residence of the prime minister. Big firecrackers were thrown there.

The rally was called off at around 5pm but some protesters remained in the Din Daeng area and were blocked by crowd control police, who told them to disperse.

The clash near Din Daeng intersection started at about 5.40pm. Riot police pushed protesters from the intersection using tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannon trucks. The clash also continued on Rachaprarop intersection. A riot policeman was shot in his leg.

A police box was seen going up in flames in Din Daeng. Another tourist police box was later burned near the Victory Monument.

At 8.30pm, Pol Maj Gen Piya Tavichai, deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Bureau, said protesters tried to break through police's barricades and attacked police with stones, bricks, sharp steel rods, big firecrackers, ping pong bombs and improvised explosive devices. Six policemen were injured in the clash.

Pol Maj Gen Piya said police arrested six wrongdoers and seized nearly 100 motorcycles of demonstrators.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2163199/protesters-clash-with-police-in-din-daeng>

BKP10

Protesters around Thailand honk horns to banish Prayut (417 words)

August 15, 2021

Police fired tear gas at an unofficial protest in Din Daeng

Thousands of anti-government protesters in Bangkok and other provinces blared their car and motorcycle horns on Sunday in a deafening call for the ouster of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha.

The honking began at 6pm during the playing of the national anthem, the climax of a day of predominantly peaceful "car mob" rallies in Bangkok and other provinces.

The rallies were organised by red-shirt leader Nattawut Saikuar and activist Somsak Boonngam-anong. Other groups, including Tha Lu Fah, also took part in the parades.

They demanded the prime minister resign over the government's inept handling of the Covid-19 crisis, with new cases and deaths surging throughout the country.

Motorists also hit the roads in other provinces, including Chiang Mai, Chanthaburi and Chon Buri. But organisers in Surat Thani decided to scrap their planned rally for safety reasons after police refused to grant permission for it, citing the ongoing emergency decree.

People lined the streets to show support for the demonstrators as the convoys passed by.

Police secured key locations in Bangkok, including the headquarters of the Royal Thai Police near Ratchaprasong intersection -- the starting point for one of the rallies -- and a section of Vibhavadi Rangsit Road leading to the residence of Gen Prayut, where they blocked the road with freight containers to forestall a march on his house.

The day of protests was overwhelmingly peaceful, but violence did erupt at Din Daeng intersection, the scene of other recent clashes. Police fired water cannon, rubber bullets and tear gas at demonstrators who approached the shipping containers.

It was not immediately clear which group organised the Din Daeng protest, since the location was not on the itinerary of the car mob rallies planned by Mr Nuttawut and Mr Sombat.

The red-shirt leader said on Voice TV's Facebook page that all sides should end the violence, and called on security forces to set an example.

He abruptly left the rally site at Ratchaprasong shortly before the playing of the national anthem and rushed to the scene of the clash in Din Daeng, where he pleaded with defiant protesters to retreat and avoid confrontations with police.

"Please move back from the area because it is not safe. We will not try to defeat riot police. We will defeat Gen Prayut," he said before negotiating with police to end the clash.

Several protesters remained in the area, however, with sporadic skirmishes continuing.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2165619/protesters-around-thailand-honk-horns-to-banish-prayut>

There are 5 news articles, BKP11 to BKP15, written on the arrests of pro-democracy activists, and total number of words are 2,193. The details on the news contents, the day of publication, and the digital source of each article are as follows.

BKP11

Three of four freed protest leaders rearrested (669 words)

October 30, 2020

'Mike Rayong' taken to hospital after scuffle with police

Four detained protest leaders were granted temporary release on Friday but three of them were promptly rearrested and one of them ended up in hospital after struggling with police.

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR) said the Criminal Court had granted bail to Panupong "Mike" Jadnok, Parit "Penguin" Chiwarak, Patiwat Saraiyaem and Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul.

Mr Panupong, Mr Parit and Mr Patiwat were being detained at Bangkok Remand Prison and Ms Panusaya was at the Central Women's Correctional Institution nearby.

Mr Patiwat walked out of Bangkok Remand Prison around 8pm to cheers from supporters waiting to greet him outside.

However, concern about the status of the remaining three rose after a Metropolitan Police Bureau car and a prisoner transport vehicle from the Pracha Chuen police station were seen entering the compound.

Noraseth Nanongtoom, a lawyer for THLR, said he suspected Mr Parit, Mr Panupong and Ms Panusaya would be detained in connection with other cases. The three were not allowed to meet their lawyer, he added.

Shortly after he spoke, the three were taken to the Pracha Chuen station to be booked on charges stemming from their participation in other protest events. A crowd of supporters quickly arrived on the scene.

Video images showed Mr Panupong slumped and being carried from a police van that had brought him from the prison to the station before being taken away in an ambulance. He is being treated at Praram 9 Hospital.

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights said the activist was not in danger but would be kept in hospital overnight. The group said it believed he passed out after being put in a chokehold in the van. Police were not immediately available for comment.

An officer had earlier said he had orders to take them from prison to the police station. A lawyer for the three said they were being taken away to be charged again, arguing that it was unlawful to do so because they had already pleaded not guilty to the same charges.

In chaotic scenes outside the police station, Mr Parit — who stripped off his shirt — and Ms Panusaya gave an impromptu address to scores of supporters who had gathered there. They challenged the legality of their rearrest and pledged to keep protesting peacefully.

“No matter what happens the movement will have to continue. We don’t want violence,” Ms Panusaya said.

They have denied all charges against them.

Mr Parit and Ms Panusaya along with Mr Patiwat — all Thammasat University students — are already facing charges of sedition, as well as other charges for their roles in a Sept 19 pro-democracy rally at Sanam Luang.

Mr Panupong has been charged with inciting unrest or sedition under Section 116 of the Criminal Code. He also faces charges of violating the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums, and violating Sections 116 and 215 for his role in installing a new plaque to symbolise people’s power at Sanam Luang on the morning of Sept 20.

Ms Panusaya and Mr Parit were arrested on Oct 15 in connection with a major rally held the previous day. They were held for four days, released and arrested again on Oct 21 and taken back to jail.

All told, more than 80 people have been arrested in connection with the protests staged in recent weeks, according to TLHR. Most are now free on bail but a handful remain behind bars.

Among those still in jail is human rights lawyer Arnon Nampha. He has been charged with sedition in connection with the events of Sept 19 and 20 at Thammasat University and Sanam Luang.

The Court of Appeal upheld a lower court refusal to allow Mr Arnon’s temporary release on Wednesday, but the decision was not made public until Friday.

Also denied bail earlier was activist Ekachai Hongkangwan, who was charged with causing harm to Her Majesty the Queen’s liberty during her motorcade on Oct 14.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2011307/three-of-four-freed-protest-leaders-rearrested>

BKP12

Two high schoolers face protest charges (353 words)

November 20, 2020

'Bad Student' leaders, aged 15 and 17, accused of violating emergency order in October

Police have summoned two teenaged leaders of the “Bad Student” group to answer charges of violating an emergency decree by taking part in an anti-government rally on Oct 15.

The summonses issued on Tuesday called on Benjamaporn “Ploy” Nivas, 15, and Lopnaphat “Min” Wangsit, 17, to report to Lumpini police on Nov 30. Pol Maj Gen Yingyos Thepchanong, a spokesman for the Royal Thai Police, said the two would be questioned in the presence of their parents and a lawyer.

The Bad Student Facebook page on Friday posted images of the police documents and a message: “Urgent! Ploy Benjamaporn, a Mathayom Suksa 4 student, and Min Lopnaphat, a Mathayom Suksa 6 student, received police summonses for violating the emergency decree. This is intimidation by the state against youths aged below 18. Is the country called the ‘land of compromise’ as said? Should every group move ‘one step back’ as said?”

The last sentence was a reference to a brief remark by His Majesty the King, who recently called Thailand the “land of compromise”, and to a request Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha made for those involved the political conflict to take “one step back”.

Thai media reported that the summons had been issued in connection with the students’ roles in the rally on Oct 15 at the Ratchaprasong intersection in Bangkok. The two made speeches there.

The event took place just after Gen Prayut declared a “serious emergency” in the capital in an attempt to stop protests from taking place. He rescinded the order a week later as it was proving difficult to enforce.

The media quoted Thai Lawyers for Human Rights as saying that Benjamaporn was the fourth person aged under 18 facing a case related to recent political gatherings.

“Even if you arrest protest leaders, there is not enough space in prison because hundreds more will rise up,” Benjamaporn told Reuters in an instant message.

The Bad Student group is planning a protest on Saturday and Benjamaporn said she would still attend.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2023039/two-high-schoolers-face-protest-charges>

BKP13

'Ammy' confesses to burning portrait (458 words)

March 3, 2021

Singer Chai-amorn Kaewwiboonpan, aka "Ammy The Bottom Blues," arrested yesterday for setting fire to a portrait of His Majesty the King, as well as on charges relating to arson and computer crimes, is believed to have admitted committing the crime in a Facebook post attributed to him.

On The Bottom Blues' Facebook fanpage, Chai-amorn posted yesterday that: "The burning of the portrait was done by myself. I take sole responsibility, and this has nothing to do with any movement. My reason is easy to understand."

"I admit that the burning of the portrait was a foolish idea and this has put me in danger," his post reads.

"When I was arrested on Oct 13 last year, Penguin [activist Parit Chiwarak] was the first to telephone me when I was in the police van and called for a rally... But this time, Penguin and my brothers and sisters have been in jail for more than 20 days now, but I have not been able to help them. I feel ashamed and disappointed with myself," the singer wrote in his post, which his lawyer confirmed was authentic.

Pol Maj Gen Piya Tawichai, deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Bureau, said the singer was arrested yesterday about 12.40am in a rented room in Ayutthaya province.

Bangkok police chief Pol Lt Gen Pakapong Pongpetra later said Chai-amorn had earlier suffered an injury to his left shoulder and hip, believed to have happened after he fell from some scaffolding, he climbed up to set fire to the portrait.

Police officers took him to Rajthanee Hospital for initial treatment, and then to Police General Hospital in Bangkok.

He said police had witnesses and forensic evidence to charge Chai-amorn for participating in the burning of the royal portrait, which included footage from security cameras at the scene.

In the footage, Chai-amorn was seen getting out of a Toyota Fortuner to set fire to the portrait while two other suspects waited in the car.

The Criminal Court yesterday denied a bail request posted by Chai-amorn's mother, explaining the singer posed a flight risk.

The court also approved a police request for an initial 12-day detention of Chai-amorn.

The singer was put in police custody at the Police General Hospital yesterday and he is expected to be sent to jail today, police sources said.

On Tuesday, the Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for suspects in the burning of a portrait of His Majesty the King in front of Klong Prem Central Prison in Bangkok on Sunday.

Chai-amorn and two others are facing severe penalties -- five to 20 years, life in prison or death for arson; three to 15 years for royal insult; and five years for trespassing and for computer crimes.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2077707/ammy-confesses-to-burning-portrait>

Constitutional Court rules activists aimed to overthrow monarchy (514 words)

November 10, 2021

Court orders all moves to end all acts threatening highest institution

The Constitutional Court ruled on Wednesday that three activists aimed to overthrow the state and the monarchy in their speeches and ordered them and other parties to end all moves against the highest institution.

The court said Arnon Nampa, Panupong "Mike" Jadnok and Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul attempted to overthrow the democratic institution with the King as head of state in demands made during a rally at Thammasat University Rangsit campus on Aug 10, 2020 and on other occasions afterwards.

The activists listed 10 demands in their manifesto delivered at Thammasat and at subsequent events, including a call for reform of the monarchy and the abolition of Section 112, known as the lese majesty law.

The judges ruled that these demands were in violation of Section 49 of the constitution.

The court also ordered the three respondents and others to end their movement.

"The three respondents, other organisations and networks must cease their actions," the judges said in their ruling, read out at the court on Wednesday afternoon.

The court said the ruling carried no penalty for the three respondents.

Only Ms Panusaya was at the court. Mr Arnon and Mr Panupong sent representatives to hear the ruling. They all refused to stay in the courtroom and waited outside.

The court was ruling on a petition filed by Natthaporn Toprayoon, a former adviser to the Ombudsman, on Sept 3 last year. He asked the court to decide whether the activists' demands were in violation of Section 49.

"No person shall exercise the rights or liberties to overthrow the democratic regime of government with the King as Head of State," the unofficial translation of the section reads.

He named eight people in the petition - including Parit "Penguin" Chiwarak, Juthathip Sirikhan, Siripachara Jungteerapanich, Somyot Prueksakasemsuk and Artitaya Pornprom, who spoke at other rallies.

The court decided later that only Mr Arnon, Mr Panupong and Ms Panusaya were involved in the incidents cited in the petition.

All parties involved, including public prosecutors, police, other security authorities, the university and the three protest leaders were ordered to submit evidence to the court.

The three leading protesters said in a closing statement as part of the evidence sent to the court that they had no intention to overthrow the highest institution. Their demands were intended to strengthen the constitutional monarchy, the statement said.

The court decided on Sept 27 this year that the petition contained grounds for consideration.

Mr Natthaporn told BBC Thai earlier that the ruling could be used as a basis for authorities working cases against them and other activists and their supporters, including academics and political parties.

In February, he filed a complaint seeking the dissolution of the Move Forward Party on grounds that members' actions were considered hostile to a democratic institution with the King as head of state.

The court premises were declared off-limits on Wednesday, but supporters of the activists gathered beyond the off-limits areas near the court for the reading of the ruling.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2213147/constitutional-court-rules-activists-aimed-to-overthrow-monarchy>

BKP15

Court convicts webmaster (169 words)

March 5, 2022

The Criminal Court sentenced a web administrator at GuKult to two years in prison yesterday for breach of the lese majeste law after he posted stickers on a portrait of His Majesty the King in front of the Supreme Court on Sept 19, 2020.

According to the ruling, 31-year-old web administrator Narin Kulpongsathron's act outside the court in Phra Nakhon district, Bangkok, insulted and showed contempt towards the high institution.

The conviction mandated that Narin spend three years in jail but the sentence was commuted to two years as a result of his cooperative testimony.

He was later released on 100,000 bail pending an appeal.

Apart from being charged with lese majeste, Narin was also charged with crimes in contravention of the Computer Crime Act, according to the Criminal Court's arrest warrant no 1425/2020 dated September 2020.

That charge accused Narin of frequently posting Photoshopped pictures on his "GuKult" Facebook account, as well as posting messages that were intended to insult the monarchy and the government.

News source <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/politics/2274131/court-convicts-webmaster>



Appendix B
News Samples from the Reuters Website

The following texts are English news samples written about the pro-democracy movement of the new generation in Thailand. There are 15 online news articles downloaded from the Reuters website and the total word count.

There are 5 news articles, RT1 to RT5, written on the demonstration of pro-democracy activists, and the total number of words is 2,020. The details on the news contents, the day of publication, and the digital source of each article are as follows.

RT1

'I want freedom': Thais mass to defy protest ban (642 words)

October 15, 2020

From shops, offices and schools they spilled onto a Bangkok Street in their tens of thousands, voicing shock and anger and above all defiance.

Thailand's government had announced emergency measures to ban gatherings of five or more people to try to end three months of protests. The response was one of the biggest demonstrations so far, in the heart of the capital.

"I'm not afraid. Emergency or not, I have no freedom," said 26-year-old illustrator Thanatpohn Dejkunchorn, who left work early to attend the protest with friends. "I want freedom to exist in this country. I want it to be free from this vicious cycle."

Protests have built since mid-July in the biggest challenge in years to the political establishment - seeking the removal of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a former junta leader, and to curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

"We have to create understanding with the protesters," government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri told Reuters, complaining that protest leaders were not giving protesters "complete information."

Police said they would arrest all protesters, though they did not explain how they would charge tens of thousands of people.

The Royal Palace has declined all comment on the protesters or their demands.

Until Wednesday, the government had largely allowed demonstrations to happen, while making no sign of meeting protesters' demands.

But that changed after an incident in which protesters jeered Queen Suthida's motorcade as she and the king were paying a rare visit from Europe, where they spend most of their time.

The government cited that as well as the risks to national security and the economy from protests and the danger of spreading coronavirus as reasons for imposing emergency measures.

The government then launched a crackdown, sweeping away a camp set up outside Prayuth's office and arresting three protest leaders - among around 40 arrests in the past week.

“EXCESSIVE AND UNNECESSARY POWER”

“It's obvious that the state wants to exercise excessive and unnecessary power on people,” said 22-year-old student Pattanun Arunpreechawat, who joined Thursday's protest after studies.

Protesters want to oust Prayuth, who first took power in a 2014 coup, saying he engineered election rules last year to keep his position - an accusation he denies. Breaking a longstanding taboo, protesters have also challenged the monarchy - saying it has helped entrench decades of military influence.

They gathered in the shadow of upmarket shopping malls and shiny tower blocks that are home to multinationals and other businesses in Southeast Asia's second biggest economy.

But the Ratchaprasong Intersection also has a historic resonance for protesters. In 2010, it was the scene of bloodshed as security forces cracked down on Red Shirts who battled pro-establishment Yellow Shirts during a decade of turmoil.

“I'm not afraid. I've been chased by guns,” said beef noodle seller Thawat Kijkunasatien, 57, a veteran of the bloody crackdown a decade ago and another in 1992.

“Wherever the kids go, I go,” he said at the protest while sipping a can of beer.

One characteristic of the latest Thai protests has been the extent to which they are led by students and other young people. Most protest leaders are in their 20s, but an even younger generation is following.

From giving the three-finger salute of protest when the national anthem plays at school to tying white ribbons in their hair and on school bags as symbols of protest, high school students have rallied to the campaign.

Many left school to join Thursday's protest - among them 18-year-old Tan, who came along after finishing school exams. He declined to give his full name for fear of reprisals.

“I make sure I'm prepared for exams before I go to protests. I have to give importance to both things,” he said. “We can't let it go on like this, or it will never end.”

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/thailand-protests-scene-idUSKBN27108W>

RT2

Thai protesters take to streets in protest at royal insults law (367 words)

February 10, 2021

Hundreds of Thai protesters gathered in Bangkok on Wednesday to demand the release of four activists remanded in custody pending trial on charges of insulting Thailand's king, a crime punishable by 15 years in prison.

Many protesters banged pots and pans, borrowing from nightly displays of discontent in neighbouring Myanmar at last week's coup, while some held Myanmar flags to show support for the country's pro-democracy movement.

The Bangkok demonstration had originally been organised to show solidarity with protesters in Myanmar, but it morphed into calls to change or end the strict "lese majeste" law after the four activists were detained on Tuesday.

Police in riot gear briefly scuffled with protesters when activists marched near a police station. A smoke canister was seen on the ground near the protest site.

"If we come out to the streets in the hundreds of thousands, we can reform monarchy," protest leader Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul said.

Youth-led protests in Thailand last year broke traditional taboos by openly calling for reform of the powerful monarchy and the denial of bail for the four protest leaders prosecuted for royal insults has enraged activists.

About 1,000 protesters had gathered by nightfall, some holding signs that said "free our friends" and "abolish 112", referring to the article of the criminal code that covers royal insults. Others struck metal pans bearing the numbers 112.

Some 44 opposition lawmakers earlier on Wednesday submitted a proposal to amend the article.

Protest leaders declared the rally a resumption of last year's street demonstrations, which were disrupted by a second wave of coronavirus infections that has seen Thailand's cases increase five-fold since mid-December.

"Today is the first gathering, first opening and a battle after an unjust system jailed our friends," Panupong Jadnok, a protest leader said.

They renewed last year's three demands: ousting Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, rewriting the military-backed constitution and reforming the monarchy.

Panupong said events in Myanmar should inspire the Thai movement.

Prayuth, who led a coup in 2014, said the return of protests will harm Thailand.

"Is it appropriate? If it's not, then don't go support them. Haven't we had enough in Thailand?" he said.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-protests-idUSKBN2AA1NF>

Thai protests outside parliament after PM survives vote (385 words)

February 20, 2021

Hundreds of protesters gathered outside Thailand's parliament after Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha and nine ministers survived a parliamentary no-confidence motion on Saturday after a four-day censure debate.

"It was a disappointment, but expected," protest leader Attapon Buapat said.

Over 1,000 protesters rallied outside the parliament gates. Organisers gave assurances the protest would not turn violent.

"We want a peaceful protest," protest leader Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul told reporters after speaking to the police. "There is no reason for police to break up this demonstration."

Earlier, lawmakers voted in favour of Prayuth and other ministers, which had been widely expected.

Opposition lawmakers have taken aim at what they say is a slow government roll-out of the coronavirus vaccine and at its economic policies, vowing to continue investigating.

"We've opened a wound and now will pour salt on it," Pita Limjaroenrat, head of the Move Forward Party told reporters after the vote.

Prayuth, a former chief of the armed forces, overthrew an elected prime minister in 2014 and stayed in office after a 2019 election that his rivals said was badly flawed.

The government has said the elections were free and fair.

Prayuth was expected to survive Saturday's vote due to his coalition government's majority in the lower house.

"The debate went well, but the government must continue its work," Prayuth said in a podcast after the vote. "I would like to ask all Thais to work together to bring the country forward."

The no-confidence motion came as pro-democracy protests returned after a lull brought on by a second outbreak of COVID-19.

"Some 4,000 officers have been prepared," police deputy spokesman Kissana Pattanacharoen said, adding that the rallies were violating an emergency decree to control the coronavirus outbreak.

"Police duty is to maintain order," he said when asked if there would be use of force.

Earlier this month, protesters demanding the release of activists scuffled with police.

Youth-led protests last year reached hundreds of thousands, occupying major commercial intersections in Bangkok and spreading to university campuses across the country.

"It's a critical moment in Thailand. We cannot wait, we don't want people to think this is just on Twitter or Facebook," 20-year-old student Ngamluk Montim told Reuters. "We are coming out to raise our voice. This is just the start."

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-protests-idUSKBN2AK06E>

RT4

Thai protesters return to streets demanding constitutional changes (284 words)

June 24, 2021

Hundreds of Thai pro-democracy protesters took to the streets on Thursday, calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha and constitutional changes that would curb the influence of the country's powerful monarchy.

The rally, which defied a ban on public gatherings due to the pandemic, comes as Prayuth's government faces public criticism over its handling of coronavirus outbreaks, a slow economic recovery and a vaccine policy that involves a company owned by King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

"The constitution must come from the people," protest leader, Jatupat "Pai Daodin" Boonpattaraksa, told the crowd in the capital Bangkok.

Youth-led demonstrations last year attracted hundreds of thousands of people across the country, but they stalled after security forces began cracking down on rallies, detaining protest leaders and after new waves of COVID-19 infections broke out.

Protesters had broken traditional taboos by criticising the king, risking prosecution under a strict lese majeste law that makes insulting or defaming the king, queen, heir and regent punishable by up to 15 years in prison. Most of the protest leaders have been released on bail.

In March, several dozen were injured when police fired water cannon, tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse a protest.

Thursday's rally, which also included some former Prayuth supporters, marks the day when Thailand declared an end to absolute monarchy on June 24, 1932. [read more](#)

"In 89 years since the end of absolutism we have not got anywhere," Jatupat said.

About 2,500 police officers had been deployed to maintain order, said the deputy head of Bangkok police, Piya Tavichai.

"A gathering at this time is not appropriate because it could lead to further spread of the virus."

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thai-protesters-return-streets-demanding-constitutional-changes-2021-06-24/>

RT5

"No absolute monarchy:" Thousands of Thais march for royal reforms (342 words)

November 14, 2021

Thousands of Thais took to the streets of the capital on Sunday demanding reforms of the monarchy, defying a court ruling that such demands are a veiled attempt to overthrow the institution.

Youth-led protests that began last year by calling for the removal of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, 66, a former coup leader, have become the biggest challenge in decades to the monarchy which is constitutionally enshrined to be held in "revered worship".

Protesters marched against rows of riot police behind shields, waving placards that read "No absolute monarchy" and "Reform is not abolition".

"The king's increased powers in recent years are pulling Thailand away from democracy and back to absolute monarchy," a protester read in a statement after the demonstration reached the German embassy in Bangkok.

"This is a fight to insist that this country must be ruled by a system in which everyone is equal."

Protesters also marched to the German embassy in October last year to urge Germany to investigate whether King Maha Vajiralongkorn, who spends much of his time in the country, was conducting state business from there.

"The word 'reform' is not equivalent to abolition," said protester Peeyawith Ploysuwan, 25. "You (authorities) only want to do the things you desire and see people with opposing views as bad guys... If society continues like this, how can we move forward?"

The protests have broken longstanding taboos in Thailand, whose lese majeste law sets jail terms of up to 15 years for anyone convicted of defaming the monarchy.

Since the protests began last year, at least 157 people have been charged under the law, according to records compiled by the Thai Lawyers for Human Rights group.

Sunday's protest came in response to the Constitutional Court's ruling last week that a call for reforms to the monarchy by three protest leaders in August last year was unconstitutional and designed to topple the institution.

Three protesters were wounded on Sunday, a police spokesman said, adding that the incidents were being investigated.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/no-absolute-monarchy-thousands-thais-march-royal-reforms-2021-11-14/>

There are 5 news articles, RT6 to RT10, written on the encounters between pro-democracy activists and police, and total number of words are 2,016. the details on the news contents, the day of publication, and the digital source of each article are as follows.

RT6

At least 55 hurt in Thailand's most violent protests since new movement emerged (476 words)

November 18, 2020

At least 55 people were hurt, some with gunshot wounds, when demonstrators marching on the Thai parliament clashed with police and royalist counter-protesters, in the worst violence since a new youth-led protest movement emerged in July.

Police fired water cannon and teargas at protesters who cut through razor-wire barricades and removed concrete barriers outside parliament. The police denied that they had opened fire with live ammunition or rubber bullets, and said they were investigating who might have used firearms.

The protest movement, which has called for deep constitutional reform to a system demonstrators say has entrenched the power of the military, has emerged as the biggest challenge to Thailand's establishment in years.

Thousands of demonstrators converged on parliament to put pressure on lawmakers discussing changes to the constitution. The protesters also want the removal of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a former army ruler, and to curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

Bangkok's Erawan Medical Centre said at least 55 people were hurt. It said at least 32 were suffering from teargas and six people had gunshot wounds. It did not say who might have used firearms.

"We tried to avoid clashes," the deputy head of Bangkok police, Piya Tavichai, told a news conference. He said police had tried to push back protesters from parliament and to separate them and the yellow-shirted royalist counter-protesters.

Protesters advanced on police with makeshift shields, including inflatable pool ducks. After about six hours, police pulled back and abandoned their water trucks, which the protesters mounted and sprayed with graffiti.

"I hereby announce the escalation of the protests. We will not give in. There will be no compromise," Parit "Penguin" Chiwarak told the crowd at the gates of parliament before protesters dispersed.

Another protest was set for central Bangkok on Wednesday.

Government spokesman Anucha Burapachaisri said police had been obliged to use teargas and water cannon to keep parliamentarians safe.

Prime Minister Prayuth took power as the head of a military junta in 2014 and remained in office after an election last year. He rejects opposition accusations that the election was unfair.

Lawmakers were discussing several proposals for constitutional changes, most of which would exclude the possibility of altering the monarchy's role.

There is also discussion of the role of the upper house Senate, which was entirely selected by Prayuth's former junta and helped ensure that he kept power with a parliamentary majority after last year's disputed vote.

Some protesters fought with dozens of royalists who had remained behind after an earlier demonstration by hundreds of right-wing Thais calling on lawmakers not to make changes to the constitution.

"Amending the constitution is going to lead to the abolition of the monarchy," royalist leader Warong Dechgitvigrom told reporters. Protesters have said they do not want to abolish the monarchy.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/thailand-protests-idUSKBN27X0GY>

RT7

Thai activists cover monument to protest royal defamation law (341 words)

February 14, 2021

Youth activists protesting against laws forbidding insult to Thailand's powerful king briefly clashed with police on Saturday after draping Bangkok's Democracy Monument in red cloth.

Protesters threw paint at police and several small bangs were heard during a standoff near a city shrine after the demonstration had moved from Democracy Monument and the main leaders had called for it to disperse.

Activists said the red cloth on the monument represented the blood of fighters for democracy.

Police deputy spokesman Kissana Pattanacharoen said more than 20 police officers were injured in the clashes and seven or eight people were detained for questioning. He also said at least one firecracker exploded at the scene.

The demonstration was in reaction to this week's arrests of four leading protest figures under charges of insulting the monarchy in mass anti-government demonstrations last year.

The "lese majeste" law, contained in Article 112 of Thailand's criminal code, carries penalties of up to 15 years in prison.

Student activists say the law has been abused for decades to crush political opposition to a military-royalist establishment.

"We want Article 112 to be revoked plus the release of four of our leaders and other political prisoners convicted by this law," said protester Chutima Kaenpetch, 24.

The government led by former military junta chief Prayuth Chan-ocha denies any abuse of the law, saying political opposition is allowed but breaking the law by insulting the king will be punished.

Thailand is officially a constitutional monarchy, but the king is held in special esteem by conservative Thai culture that portrays him as the protector of the Buddhist religion and the nation.

The student movement that emerged last year smashed long-held taboos by openly criticising King Maha Vajiralongkorn, who they say has amassed too much personal power since taking the throne after the death of his father in 2016.

The Royal Palace has declined to directly comment on the protests, but Prayuth and government officials have said that criticism of the king is unlawful and inappropriate.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-protests-idUSKBN2AD0GC>

RT8

Thai protesters clash with police near Government House (387 words)

July 18, 2021

Police used tear gas, water cannon and rubber bullets to disperse protesters trying to march on Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha's office on Sunday to demand he resign over his handling of the coronavirus pandemic and its economic impact.

Some protesters attacked police and eight police officers and at least one reporter was injured during the clashes, police said.

Police did not say if any protesters were injured but said 13 protesters were arrested.

Protest organizers called for the demonstration to end just after 6 p.m. but a stand-off between the police and hundreds of protesters continued for several more hours before the police dispersed the crowd just before the start of a 9 p.m. curfew that is in force in the Thai capital.

More than 1,000 people had joined the demonstration.

Police intervened with force after some protesters tried to dismantle barbed wire and metal barricades set up by the authorities to block roads from Democracy Monument to Government House where the prime minister works.

Deputy police spokesman Kissana Phathanacharoen said the protesters attacked police with "ping-pong bombs, sling shots and fire crackers". He added that the police actions followed laws and regulations and fully complied with international standards in controlling crowds.

Street protests against the prime minister have been held in recent weeks by several groups, including Prayuth's former political allies, as frustrations grow over the mounting coronavirus infections and the damage the pandemic has done to the economy.

Thailand reported 11,397 infections and 101 deaths on Sunday, bringing the cumulative total to 403,386 cases and 3,341 fatalities, the vast majority from an outbreak since early April that is being fueled by the highly transmissible Alpha and Delta COVID-19 variants.

Many protesters on Sunday carried mock body-bags to represent coronavirus deaths.

"The government has been poor at managing the situation and if we don't do anything there will be no change," one protester, Kanyaporn Veeratat, 34, told Reuters.

The protest marked one year since the first of a wave of large-scale street protests led by youth groups that attracted hundreds of thousands of people across the country.

The momentum of those protests stalled after authorities began cracking down on rallies and detaining protest leaders, and after new waves of COVID-19 infections broke out.

(\$1 = 32.7900 baht)

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thai-youth-activists-go-ahead-with-protest-despite-gatherings-ban-2021-07-18/>

RT9

Thai police clash with protesters as thousands hold anti-government rally (441 words)

August 10, 2021

Police in Thailand fired tear gas, water cannon and rubber bullets to disperse protesters who took to the streets of Bangkok on Tuesday amid anger over the handling of the coronavirus pandemic by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha's government.

At least six police officers were injured during the clashes, with one officer shot in the leg and three others hit by shrapnel from a homemade bomb, police said.

The number of injured protesters was not known. At least six protesters were arrested, the police said after earlier warning that all public gatherings were illegal under COVID-19 emergency rules.

Two police booths were also set on fire as sporadic violence continued into the night.

"The action of protesters shows intent to damage government property and the public as well as to hurt police officers," Piya Tavicha, deputy head of the Bangkok police, told reporters.

The clashes broke out after thousands of protesters drove in a convoy of cars and motorcycles through the capital.

They stopped at several buildings linked to cabinet members or supporters of Prayuth to make speeches and call for resignations, accusing the government of mismanaging the pandemic and abusing its power to silence critics.

"The government lacks the ability to manage the country, and only see the interests of the elite," Benja Apan, a student activist, said in a statement read out from the top of a truck in Bangkok's business district.

"If the situation remains like this then we can expect the country to face an unsurvivable disaster," she said.

Hospitals have been pushed to the brink by the latest wave of cases and Thailand reported on Tuesday a daily record COVID-19 death toll of 235 - nearly four times as many as in the whole of last year. Thailand's total death toll since the pandemic started is 6,588.

Thailand's youth-led protest movement appears to be regaining momentum after demonstrations last year attracted hundreds of thousands of people before a crackdown by authorities.

The protesters have also broken traditional taboos by demanding reform of the monarchy, risking prosecution under a lese majeste law that make insulting or defaming the king, queen, heir and regent punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

Last weekend, more than a thousand anti-government protesters clashed with police

Protest leaders who had spent time in jail over previous demonstrations and been released on bail have gone back into custody in recent days including Panupong "Mike Rayong" Jadnok, Jatupat "Pai" Boonpattaraksa and Parit "Penguin" Chiwarak.

Human rights lawyer Arnon Nampa also faced new lese majeste and other charges for a speech he made last week.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thai-protest-leaders-detained-ahead-planned-car-mob-rally-2021-08-10/>

RT10

Thai police clash with protesters near PM's residence (371 words)

August 15, 2021

Thai police clashed with protesters near the residence of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha on Sunday for a fifth time in the past week, with officers using water cannon and teargas against demonstrators hurling projectiles towards them.

A separate "car mob" convoy of thousands of cars and motorcycles urging Prayuth to resign amid anger over his government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic had earlier passed through Bangkok peacefully.

But once again the anti-government protests of recent weeks resulted in violent clashes in front of Prayuth's residence. Authorities say public gatherings are illegal under the COVID-19 emergency.

One of the organisers of the so-called car mob, Nattawut Saikua, a veteran political activist, went to the site of the clashes to urge protesters to head home.

Thailand's youth-led anti-government protest movement appears have regained momentum and its support has broadened after demonstrations last year attracted hundreds of thousands of people before a crackdown by the authorities.

Other political groups, including some of Prayuth's former allies, are now joining the protests as the country struggles to cope with its worst wave of COVID-19, with many blaming the government's handling of the crisis.

Throughout the day thousands of protesters carried red flags, honked their horns and tied red ribbons on their vehicles as they moved peacefully in several large convoys through Bangkok.

The organisers made speeches and music performance to supporters through social media platforms to maintain a degree of social distancing throughout the protests.

Many Bangkok's residents came out to greet the convoys, many cheering them on and making gestures of support.

"Our goal is to drive Prayuth out of the position of prime minister and we will do this peacefully," Nattawut said earlier during the vehicle rally.

Police defended their use of force during the clashes, saying it was sometimes necessary to maintain public order. They added that they had complied with international standards in using teargas, rubber bullets and water cannon.

"We need to maintain the law and keep the peace," Thai police chief Suwat Jangyodsuk told reporters, without specifying whether the police intend to use force.

More than 130 people have been arrested in the latest round of anti-government protests since mid-July, Suwat said.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thai-protesters-plan-car-mob-rally-demanding-pm-resign-2021-08-15/>

There are 5 news articles, RT11 to RT15, written on the arrests of pro-democracy activists, and total number of words are 1,707. the details on the news contents, the day of publication, and the digital source of each article are as follows.

RT11

Three Thai protest leaders re-arrested, one carried from van (348 words)

October 30, 2020

Thai police carried one of the country's most high-profile protest leaders apparently unconscious from a van on Friday, as he and two others were re-arrested just as they reached the limit for their detention.

Panupong “Mike Rayong” Jadnok, 24, Panusaya “Rung” Sithijirawattanakul, 22 and Parit “Penguin” Chiwarak, 22, were all detained during a crackdown ordered on Oct. 15 to try to end months of protests against the government and calling for reforms of the monarchy.

Video images showed Panupong slumped and being carried from a police van that had brought him from Bangkok Remand Prison to the Pracha Chuen police station before being taken away in an ambulance.

Thai Lawyers for Human Rights said Panupong was not in danger but would be kept in hospital overnight. The group said it believed he passed out after being put in a chokehold in the van. Police were not immediately available for comment.

An officer had earlier said he had orders to take them from prison to the police station. A lawyer for the three said they were being taken away to be charged again, arguing that it was unlawful to do so because they had already pleaded not guilty to the same charges.

In chaotic scenes outside the police station, Parit - who stripped off his shirt - and Panusaya gave an impromptu address to scores of supporters who had gathered there. They challenged the legality of their re-arrest and pledged to keep protesting peacefully.

“No matter what happens the movement will have to continue. We don’t want violence,” Panusaya said.

They have denied all charges against them.

The three have been among the most vocal in calling for curbs on the power of King Maha Vajiralongkorn’s monarchy during protests that began in mid-July. They have been charged with multiple offences from sedition to breaking emergency laws meant to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Scores of protesters, including several protest leaders, were arrested under emergency measures that were dropped a week ago after they backfired by drawing much bigger protests.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-protests-leaders-idUSKBN27F2JW>

RT12

Thai police to charge high school students over protest (371 words)

November 20, 2020

Two Thai high school student leaders will be charged for joining a banned protest last month, police said on Friday, a day after embattled Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha threatened tougher action against protesters.

The students said they had been summoned for violating an emergency decree by joining a protest on Oct. 15, when tens of thousands of people defied a ban by Prayuth aimed at halting protests demanding his removal and reforms of the monarchy.

“Even if you arrest protest leaders, there is not enough space in prison because hundreds more will rise up,” one of the students, 15-year Benjamaporn Nivas, told Reuters in an instant message.

The “Bad Student” group is planning a protest on Saturday and Benjamaporn said she would still attend. The other member of the group who faces charges is Lopanapat Wangpaisit, 17.

Police spokesman Yingyos Thepjunmong said the two were summoned to acknowledge the charge and would be questioned in the presence of their parents and lawyer.

Youth- and student-led protests since July have become the greatest challenge to Thailand’s establishment in years and dozens of arrests and attempts to quell them have so far only brought more people into the streets.

Prayuth has refused the protesters’ demand to resign and rejected their accusation that he engineered last year’s election to keep power he seized in a 2014 coup.

Protesters also seek to redraw the constitution written by his former junta and curb the powers of King Maha Vajiralongkorn, saying the monarchy has enabled decades of military domination.

The Royal Palace has made no comment since the protests began.

On Thursday, Prayuth threatened to use all laws to prosecute protesters who break them, raising concerns among activists that this could also mean harsh royal insult laws under which there have been no prosecutions for more than two years.

Although demonstrations have largely been peaceful, police used teargas and water cannons against protesters on Tuesday. At least 55 were injured from tear gas and six from gunshot wounds.

Another major protest is planned at the Crown Property Bureau on Wednesday. Protesters say they seek to reclaim the palace fortune, which the king has taken under his personal control.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-thailand-protests-idUSKBN2800SR>

RT13

Thai activist accused of burning king's portrait arrested (307 words)

March 3, 2021

An anti-government activist accused of burning a portrait of Thailand’s King Maha Vajiralongkorn was arrested on Wednesday police said, the latest among dozens of people charged in recent months for insulting the monarchy.

Musician and activist Chaiamorn "Ammy" Kaewwiboonpan, 32 was arrested in Ayutthaya province north of Bangkok and is accused of setting fire to the portrait on Sunday in front of a Bangkok prison where four prominent activists are being held.

Chaiamorn is charged under a strict lese majeste law that carries a penalty of up to 15 years in prison if found guilty, as well as arson and trespassing on government property.

"We have both witnesses and forensic evidence," Bangkok police chief Pakapong Pongpetra told a news conference, adding Chaiamorn was not the only person suspected of involvement.

Chaiamorn was receiving medical treatment at a hospital for an injury unrelated to his arrest, police said.

His lawyer Sasinan Thamnithinan said he would be granted access to Chaiamorn later on Wednesday when police take a statement from his client.

Months of youth-led protest against the military-backed government of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha last year also broke traditional taboos by calling for reform of the powerful monarchy.

At least 61 people has subsequently been charged with lese majeste, based on data compiled by legal aid group Thai Lawyers for Human Rights.

Four of those are prominent protest leaders currently in prison awaiting trial.

The portrait burning took place the same day, hours before protesters marched on a Bangkok military base to call for the king to give up direct control over army units transferred to him in 2019 by the government of Prayuth, a former military chief.

Police used rubber bullets against the youth-led protesters for the first time on Sunday, as well as tear gas and water cannon.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/article/thailand-protests-idINKCN2AV0G7>

RT14

Thai court rules students' royal reform call sought to overthrow monarchy (364 words)

November 10, 2021

A Thai court ruled on Wednesday that three anti-government activists who had called for reform of the country's powerful monarchy had violated the constitution by making what it called a veiled attempt to overthrow the institution.

The Constitutional Court, ruling in a case brought by a royalist lawyer, said a controversial 10-point call for reforms of the institution by three student protest leaders in August last year was designed to topple the monarchy.

"The actions have hidden intentions to overthrow the constitutional monarchy and were not a call for reform," a court judge said.

The court was ruling on the constitutionality of their reform call and imposed no penalty but ordered them and their groups "to cease further action in these matters".

The role of the monarchy is a taboo topic in Thailand, where the palace is officially above politics and constitutionally enshrined to be held in "revered worship".

PROTEST MOVEMENT

The calls t

The court case concerned a speech by Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul calling for amendments to crown property laws, reducing the royal family's budget allocation and seeking the abolition of a law that prescribes 15-year jail terms for insulting the monarchy.

Two other protesters, human rights lawyer Arnon Nampa, 37, and Panupong "Mike" Jadnok, 24, also spoke at the same rally.

A group of protesters gathered near the court on Wednesday, among them Panusaya, who said overthrowing the monarchy was not her goal but that she respected the ruling.

Arnon and Panupong are currently in prison in pre-trial detention on other charges and their lawyer, Kritsadang Nutcharat, said they too had no desire to topple the monarchy.

"The ruling could impact future calls for reform," Kritsadang added.

The ruling also comes amid calls from an opposition party for a review of the royal insult law, which would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

The palace has a longstanding policy of not commenting on the issue.

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thai-court-rules-students-royal-reform-call-sought-overthrow-monarchy-2021-11-10/>

RT15

Thai man jailed for insulting monarchy with sticker on king's portrait (317 words)

March 5, 2022

A court in Thailand sentenced a man to two years in prison on Friday for insulting the monarchy by defacing a portrait of King Maha Vajiralongkorn, his lawyers said, the first sentencing for lese majeste in more than a year.

Narin Kulpongsathorn, 33, was found guilty of putting a sticker bearing the logo of a political satire Facebook page on a large portrait of the monarch outside the Supreme Court during a political rally in September 2020.

Narin, who denied the charge, was released on bail pending an appeal, according to the Thai Lawyers' for Human Rights, which represents many Thais charged with lese majeste offences.

The court could not be reached for confirmation of the sentence. Thailand's courts typically do not publicise legal proceedings.

The country has some of the world's strictest lese majeste laws, which make it a crime to defame, insult or threaten the king, queen, heir or regent and carry punishments of three to 15 years in jail for each offence.

Thailand has come under international scrutiny for its harsh penalties for perceived royal insults. The government says the monarchy is a matter of national security and must be protected.

The law was in the spotlight last year when some Thai lawmakers called for a parliamentary review of its application.

Opposition parties have been concerned by a surge in the number of arrests and lese majeste charges against government critics among a youth-led protest movement that had openly called for reforms to the monarchy.

At least 173 people were charged with royal insult over the past 16 months, according to the Thai Lawyers' for Human Rights group.

The last conviction was in January last year, when a 66-year-old woman was jailed for 43 years for violating the law 29 times in sharing and posting content on social media.

(\$1 = 32.6800 baht)

News source <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thai-man-jailed-insulting-monarchy-with-sticker-kings-portrait-2022-03-04/>

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