The Sister, The Puppet, and The First Female PM:
How Gender Stereotypes in Thai Politics are Generated in the Press

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ABSTRACT

As the number of female political leaders and heads of states, worldwide increases, Asian female politicians and national leaders have been stereotyped as being 'political dynastic leaders'. This paper aims to contribute to the growing body of literature and the existing knowledge on the area of gender, politics, and media by taking former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra of Thailand as an example, to examine and discuss how a newspaper generates and gender stereotypes through its linguistic choices. Transitivity analysis based on Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) and referential choices analysis based on van Leeuwen's 'Representation of Social Actor Network framework' (van Leeuwen, 1996, 2008) are employed as the analytical frameworks. The sample data comprises 190 news articles taken from a Thai English language news agency from May to August 2011. Results reveal a pattern of linguistic choices that reinforce gender stereotypes of female politicians in the media in Thailand.

Keywords: Asian female political leader, Thai female politicians, dynastic leader, gender politics and media, gender stereotypes

1.   GENDER, POLITICS, AND MEDIA

Sociologists and scholars in related fields hold true that gender is socially and culturally constructed (Oakley, 1985). In the mid-1930s, for example, men and women were believed to have evolved differently to fulfill different functions and duties necessary for survival (Shields, 1975). In most societies, different expectations are placed upon women and men. Typically, women need to stay home and be responsible for domestic activities and are attributed with the qualities of nurturance and emotional expressiveness, whereas men who are regarded as being agentic, are characterized as having leadership qualities, being assertive and independent and assumed to have responsibilities outside the home or in public activities (Eagly, 1987).

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These later represented gender stereotypes in which men were ascribed the role of financial providers, while women were ascribed the role of caretakers. Consequently, these standards of masculinity and femininity govern the behavior of men and women using the stereotypes of their social roles.

Politics is in the public sphere and is largely viewed as a predominantly male prerogative or a 'man's world', as one of the qualities of politicians is leadership (Schein, 2001). Leadership is a behavioural concept related to power which is defined as a possibility to influence others (Handgraaf et al., 2008). Thus, the taken-for-granted beliefs about what makes a good political leader are more similar to their stereotypical views of agentic qualities associated with men rather than women, (Schein, 2001). Women seeking leadership positions in the political sphere have to face many obstacles. One of the most intractable obstacles for women is the normalized patterns of belief that they 'lack …fit' (Heilman, 1983; 2001) or the incompatibility between the qualities traditionally associated with women and with leadership posts which are traditionally male positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

These traditional beliefs about the attributes of women which are incongruent with political leadership appear to be the 'glass ceiling', a metaphor introduced in the 1980s for the invisible obstacles or (artificial) barriers of prejudice blocking women from advancing to various leadership posts, including political empowerment (Oakley, 2000; U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission,1995; Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1994). Even though the stigma of having comparatively less leadership seems to retreat begrudgingly, the small number of women trying to penetrate through the glass ceiling, for example entering the political arena, has to some extent increased. The statistics from the Inter-Parliamentary Union show that, as of 1 November 2014, the percentage of women represented in national parliaments was 21.9%, a slight increase from 15.6% in 2004 (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2014). However, women remain comparatively under-represented in governments worldwide. In addition, some of the successful women who are able to shatter the glass ceiling have to encounter another stereotype and societal prejudice— being branded as 'patron-client political leaders' or the beneficiaries of 'dynastic descent' who typically get into power with families ties (Derichs & Thompson, 2013; Jalalzai & Krook 2010; Fleschenberg, 2008;). Even though in 1972 it was stated that "patron-client structures are not unique to Southeast Asia, there is much in evidence particularly in Latin America, in Africa and in the less developed portions of Europe" (Scott, 1972, p. 91), and currently, this phenomenon is rather pronounced in Asia, especially more in Southeast Asia than in other parts of the world (Branigan, 2011).

As the political environment in Asia remains "patriarchal, paternalistic, and unreceptive to gender equality in terms of options and empowerment" (Fleschenberg, 2008, p. 38), Asian women politicians and state leaders continue to be stereotyped as being 'female dynastic leaders', inheriting political power and legitimacy from their male kin or family connections (Derichs & Thompson, 2013; Ockey, 2005; Jahan, 1987). Examples include Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka and Wan Azizah Wan Ismail of Malaysia who are said to have taken political power after their husbands,

and Indira Gandhi of India, Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia, Corazon Aquino of the Philippines, and Park Geun-hye, South Korea's first female president, who are all said to have inherited power from their fathers (Vishakh, 2012).This phenomenon is claimed to be "the magic formula of Asia" (Branigan, 2011, p. 3) and is represented over and over in media worldwide.

Media institutions are said to be male dominated as "most media professionals and certainly all the owners and controllers of media institutions are men and the way in which politics is reported is significantly determined by a male-oriented agenda" (Ross & Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1997, p. 106). Men design and define media policies, priorities and agenda including how women are portrayed and presented (Ismail, 2010). When reporting political news, media represent and construct the contrast between femininity and politics (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007). Studies in various parts of the world have drawn attention to gender bias and female stereotypes in media coverage of those female political figures. Studies have found, for example, that female politicians receive less coverage than their male counterparts (Kahn, 1996; Gingras, 1995). The coverage about woman politicians tends to focus on their personal characteristics and appearances, or highlights the typical feminine stereotypes, rather than personal achievements (Dunnaway et al., 2013; Ross, 2002; Robinson & Saint-Jean, 1991, 1995). They also report more on 'gender identification' rather than the political experience and abilities of the woman politician (Anderson et al., 2011). It is also found that language use and framing techniques in political news generate gender stereotypes (Armstrong & Nelson, 2005), distort and subjugate women political figures (Campus, 2013; Sheeler & Anderson, 2013), and are sexist in nature (Stevenson, 2013). It is noticeable from the results of those previous studies that mainstream media's stereotypical representations of female politicians across the world do not fit in with the male dominated political arena.

Remarkably, studies focusing on the issue of stereotypes of female politician in media coverage have been mainly conducted and only focused on female political figures in the West, for example, United States, Canada, France, and Great Britain, (see for example Stevenson, 2013; Anderson et al., 2011; Jalalzai & Hankinson, 2008; Ross, 2002; Robinson& Saint-Jean, 1995). In addition, although the interest in Asian female representation in politics is increasing, scholars who work on this topic are mainly interested in field research focusing the policy dimension or political representation in general (Derichs & Thompson, 2013).

There are some interesting documents and pieces of published research that discuss the issues of women in Asian parliaments and Asian dynastic female leadership (see for example Joshi & Och, 2014; Derichs & Thompson, 2013; Iwanaga, 2008; Thompson, 2003; Richter, 1990). Joshi and Och (2014), for example, that studied the descriptive representations in terms of the demographic characteristics of over 4000 members of parliament from sixteen countries in Asia. They found that female parliament members are generally unrepresentative of their country's female populations. Derichs and Thomson (2013) conducted a three-year field research to examine the phenomenon of female political top leaders in Asia. The study found that the rise of females in political

leadership positions in Asia is linked to their being members of prominent families. However, women were selected to inherit the political power from their male kin not because of the shortage of men, rather because of the women's abilities to symbolize non-partisanship   and to unite the faction through their integrative character which were considered more important than their actual political skills.

Although the previous studies mentioned shed light on how female politicians in other parts of the world are represented in media, only a small number of studies on particular women, particularly from the Western world, can be found. A good number of approaches have been employed in inquiring into the gender stereotypes in politics in media, but they are mostly content analysis-based. The linguistics aspect as a meaning-making resource which plays a significant role in constructing the representations of those female politicians has been ignored. More specifically, very little research has empirically investigated the representations of Asian female political leaders and politicians in the media. For these reasons, conducting analyses on how media represent a female politician and how gender stereotypes are linguistically generated in media would help contribute to the field of language and gender, specifically, language, gender and politics in media discourse.   By employing two analytical frameworks, one from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the other from van Leeuwen's Representation of Social Actor Network framework (1996, 2008), this paper aims to investigate how media linguistically construct and generate stereotypes of female politicians. This paper takes Yingluck Shinawatra, the first female Prime Minister of Thailand, as an example to examine how the Thai press use language to construct the identities of the female politician and how the stereotypes associated with women and politics are distributed in local and international society through media texts.

2.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The objective of this paper is to investigate the following:
RQ1: How were representations of Yingluck Shinawatra, Thailand's first female Prime Minister, linguistically constructed in the English language press in Thailand?
RQ2: How were gender stereotypes in Thai politics distributed through media discourse?

3.   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY: THAI WOMEN AND THAI POLITICS
Though Thailand is the first country in Asia to grant equal political rights for both males and females in voting and running for political positions, Thai culture remains patriarchal in its ideology and its distribution of power. The public sphere, including politics, has long been controlled by men as the "History, law and religion were mainly in the hands of men and perpetuated for the purpose of male dominance" (Satha-Anand 2004, p. 19). For nearly 80 years, since the first national elections in 1933, a handful of females have run for political elections, regional or nationwide. Statistics from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2012 showed that out of 7,000 political positions in villages and towns across Thailand, women accounted

for only 4 percent. In the Parliament, female politicians made up only 16 percent. This is regarded as exceptionally low, considering the fact that women represent more than half of Thailand's population (UNDP.org, 2012).

Thai women's roles are always stereotyped according to social values as shown by UNESCO research. According to UNESCO (1993), the reason why there have been few successful women in politics, public arena, and decision-making in Thailand is due to socialization and the socio-cultural environment rather than legal barriers, unlike (???) in some countries. The preconceptions about femininity and gender roles are still deeply rooted in Thailand. That is, to be a 'proper lady', a woman's role is to be responsible for taking care of family members and various domestic activities. Politics, thus, is seen as being outside the feminine domain.

In the General Election on 3 July 2011, however, Thailand elected its first female Prime Minister, Yingluck Shinawatra, after her party won 265 out of 500 seats in a landslide election and became the 28th Prime Minister of Thailand. Prior to her Pheu Thai Party nomination as the Thai prime minister candidate, Yingluck was a largely unfamiliar political figure in Thai and international media until the day she was nominated as the party candidate for the election.

Yingluck Shinawatra grew up in a political family in which her father and her brother were politicians. After gaining a master's in political science from the United States, she pursued a corporate career instead of politics. Later, she became a successful businesswoman holding high positions in various companies mostly founded by her elder brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Her business career was not in the media limelight; however, she appeared to be a newsworthy character and attracted the attention of national media a few months before the elections of 2011. At 44, she was also the youngest Prime Minister in the history of Thai politics.

During her tenure as Prime Minister, not only was national media pouring interest on her, but also worldwide media. In 2012, Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra was ranked as the 30th most powerful woman by Forbes and later as the 31st in 2013. She was praised by Forbes which wrote: The PM of one of Asia's fastest-growing economies has succeeded at keeping a fragile peace between the country's color-coded political enemies: Democrats ("yellow shirts"), associated with monarchists, and Pheu Thai party ("red shirts"), with a base of farmers and the working class. Hence, mainstream media, social networks and discussion forums could well reflect this phenomenon. Thus, this prominent woman politician and national leader, Yingluck Shinawatra, would be a good example to study if and how the stereotypes of female politicians are reproduced and generated in media texts.

4.   ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS:
4.1   Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)
To investigate how stereotypes or ideological positions are constructed and generated in media texts requires a linguistics analytical framework that embraces both linguistic theory and social theory in explaining how meaning is created. Thus, among a limited number of potential frameworks, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is considered

suitable to be used as the analytical framework for this study.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which draws mainly on the work of M.A.K. Halliday, is essentially a theory of language centered on the notion of language function. Language is viewed as a meaning-making resource, and one of the functions of language use is to talk about what is happening, what will happen, and what has happened (ideational function), (Martin, Matthiessen & Painter, 2010; Butt et al., 2000; Halliday, 1994). The main concept is that the use of language is motivated by a purpose. Whatever the situation or social and cultural context may be, the user is making choices. These choices are essentially choices about meaning, but they are expressed through choices from within the systems of formal linguistic features or structures made available by a language which is referred to as a 'system of meaning'. This system is referred to as Transitivity system.

Transitivity is a set of options from which speakers or writers can choose to represent or encode their experience of the external world, and the internal world of his own consciousness, in a clause (Halliday, 1973). The language users can represent experiences (whether about people, things or events) through a manageable set of process types according to whether they represent actions (material), speech (verbal), states of being (relational), states of mind (mental), behavioural actions (behavioural) and/or the states of existence (existential). Process types are "the resource for sorting out our experience of all kinds of events into small numbers of types…. Each of these process types has its own small set of participant roles" (Martin, Matthisen & Painter, 2010, pp. 102-103). The participant roles of the process types will be discussed later in the results section.

Since transitivity is a set of options, that is, the selection of words to arrange into clauses to create meaning to represent the reality, it is not made randomly, but is a result of choices (Foucault, 1972). Thus, the choices made indicate the way the writer views an individual or group of people. As a reason, the choices may be 'ideological' (Machin & Mayr, 2012) which are in place to serve as signposts to align readers to a particular set of ideologies or stereotypes hidden in a text. That is why Transitivity analysis can be used to decode how a social actor is depicted or represented and how ideology or prejudice is concealed in specific texts.

4.2   Referential Choices Analysis: Ideological positioning through referential choices

Van Leeuwen (1996) formulated the 'Representation of Social Actor Network framework' to look at the choices in which social actors can be represented in English discourse. He proposes that a social actor can be represented in a discourse in two ways: exclusion and inclusion. The excluded social actors are those whom the readers are probably assumed to know already, thus it is unnecessary to draw attention to them. The included social actors, which the study focuses on, are those who appear in a discourse.

Social actors can be represented in discourse either by nomination or categorization. Nomination is typically realized by proper nouns in three possible ways: formal (surname only with or without honorific titles), semiformal (given name and surname) and informal (given name only). Categorization in which social actors are represented in terms of identities and functions they share with others is divided into functionalization and identification.

Functionalization is the reference to social actors by an activity they do or by what they are, for example, their occupations or roles. These can be constructed by a noun formed from a verb or a noun formed from another noun through suffixes such as interviewer, politician, pianist, mountaineer, cameraman and chairperson. Identification occurs when social actors are defined in terms of what they are, permanently or unavoidably. Social actors can be identified by relational identification (personal relationships, kinship or work relations), physical identification (physical characteristics or physical appearance realised by nouns, adjectives, prepositional phrases, etc.), and classification (age, gender, class, wealth, ethnicity, religion, etc.).

These referential choices allow language users to highlight or draw attention to certain aspects of identity (Machin & Mayr, 2012) and through these choices the social actors are projected and evaluated (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). Therefore, the journalists' ideological positioning toward a social actor reported in the news can be decoded through the investigation of referential choices. The representational effects of choices used to refer to a social actor are crucial; they can either bring to the foreground or send to the background the identities, characteristics, or roles of the social actor. Especially in actual discursive presentation of media practices, the readers' or listeners' evaluation of the social actor is activated and primed by the representational choices in the texts they consume.

Stereotypes can be regarded as an abstract concept, thus employing a linguistic tool from SFL provides linguistic evidence that this study needs for the investigation of stereotypes embedded in the text. Moreover, employing linguistic tools help the research becomes more systematic and rigorous. Rigorous linguistics analysis can possibly increase the researcher's ability to describe texts, minimize the potential ideological bias, and explain the abstract concept, such as stereotypes embedded in texts

5.   DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

The data for this study were gathered from Bangkok Post, the most popular English-language daily newspaper in Thailand in terms of circulation and readership. It has both online and printed versions. The online version's news items were chosen for the data because of two main reasons. First, it is evident that there is a continuing shift of readership from print to online, as it can reach wider audiences. People nowadays prefer reading news online (Pew Research Center survey, 2009; GlobeScan survey, 2006). Secondly, this analysis required step-by-step extraction of analyzing texts, thus, it was vital that the data had to be available in a downloadable and electronically manageable form.

The search terms 'Yingluck Shinawatra', 'Yingluck', and other related terms such as 'Thailand's election' were used to access relevant reports in the Bangkok Post through NEWSCenter, a real-time online news and information database service. The

sample data comprises 190 news articles, with 'Yingluck' and references to her appearing in the headlines. The timeframe for the data collection was May – August 2011 (two months before and one month after the election). To see the dynamics of the construction of her representations, the data were divided into three phases and three different corpora based on the main events: the Campaigning, Post-election and Position-serving period corpora.

Guided by the procedure from Butt et al. (2000, p. 161), the data analysis began by extracting each sentence (that SFL refers to as a clause complex) in which Yingluck and her references appeared as a participant. From the full data set, there were 1,473 clause complexes found in this stage. Later, after the clause boundaries were identified, they were divided into 2,560 clause simplexes (or single clauses) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The number of news items, numbers of clause complexes and clause simplexes in each phase

Phases	No. of news items	No. of Clause Complexes	No. of Clause Simplexes
Campaigning	87	726	1,250
Post-election	34	278	490
Position-serving	69	469	820
Total	190	1,473	2,560

Transitivity analysis was done by identifying the process types of each clause. The second step was identifying the participant roles in each clause. The last step was categorizing the clauses according to the process and participant roles ascribed to and used to represent Yingluck Shinawatra. After that, the same data set (2,560 clause simplexes) was carefully re-examined in order to extract and identify the referential choices that Yingluck Shinawatra was referred to in the text in each phase. This time, van Leeuwen's Representation Social Actor framework was utilized to code and categorize the references. The unit of analysis from the two analytical frameworks are discussed in Section 6 below. It is worth noting that the Transitivity analysis and Representation Social Actor analysis employed in this article might look similar to content analysis, in a way that content analysis is also based on the quantification of words in text and talk. Linguistics analysis is a more appropriate analysis for the discourse analysis in this article as it sheds light on not only what but how and why different lexical choices have a bearing on the depictions of the social actor. While content analysis is useful in terms of identifying the prevailing patterns of the content of texts, it may become obsessed with numbers without revealing insights. Moreover, content analysis typically disregards the context of the text. Linguistic analysis, on the other hand, focuses on examining the linguistic repertoires that make up the texts which allows further possible explanation on the choices used to represent a social actor in a particular discourse.

6.   RESULTS
6.1   Results of the Transitivity Analysis
As can be seen in Table 2, the majority of the process choices the writers chose to represent Yingluck Shinawatra includes Material, Relational and Verbal processes, having the highest percentages in every phase. The most frequent process type used to represent her in every phase is Material process. This suggests that the press chose to represent Yingluck to news readers as the social actor who acts, does something, is acted upon, or brings about change to some other entities. Relational process, in which she was identified as being someone or having particular attributes, is the second most frequent during the campaign phase, but the third during the post-election and position-serving phases. Verbal process, in which she was represented as a participant who says or is judged or targeted by the saying, is the third most frequent process type chosen to represent her during the first period, but the second most frequent process used to represent her during the Post-election and the Position-serving periods.

Table 2. Numbers of clauses of the process types used to represent Yingluck in each phase

Process	Phases		
	Campaigning	Post-election	Position-serving
Material	581 (46.4%)	230 (47%)	425 (51.8%)
Relational	309 (24.8%)	75 (15.3%)	125 (15.2%)
Verbal	273 (21.8%)	167 (34%)	221 (27%)
Mental	80 (6.4%)	18 (3.7%)	47 (5.7%)
Behavioral	5 (0.4%)	0	2 (0.3%)
Existential	2 (0.2%)	0	0
Total	**1,250 (100%)**	**490 (100%)**	**820 (100%)**

It can be observed that only a few instances of Mental, Behavioral and Existential processes were chosen to present her to the readers. At first glance, one might conclude that this might be just an ordinary pattern of news reports where the main function is to report what happened, who did what, or who said what, thus dealing with and using mostly action, identification, and verbal processes. However, by means of analyzing transitivity patterns of texts to investigate the social actor's representations, it is recommended to go beyond merely looking at the numbers or the frequency of clause process types found. Going a step further, the analysis will look deeper into the various roles the press assigned to Yingluck. However, because of space limitation, this paper will discuss particularly her ascribed roles found in the representation though the Material process. That is, we will be looking at her representations through her action roles. The importance of why we need to look into the ascribed roles in the news texts is based on the notion proposed by van Leeuwen (2008, p. 32) that "there need

not be congruence between the roles that social actors actually play in social practices and the grammatical roles they are given in texts. Representations can reallocate roles or rearrange the social relations between the participants". His suggestions on "which options are chosen in which institutional and social contexts, and why these choices should have been made, which interests are served by them, and what purposes were achieved" (p. 32) are the issues that critical analyses should be concerned about and investigate.

6.2   Representation through Action Roles

A Material process verb describes an action or an event involving a physical action: applying, throwing, working, campaigning, walking, attacking, and so on. It can be 'transactive' or 'nontransactive'. Transactive action involves two participant roles: the Actor (one who does the action) and the Goal (to whom or what the action is extended or affected by). On the contrary, a nontransactive action requires only one participant, the 'Actor' (Halliday, 1985). Any material process has an Actor even though the Actor may not be explicitly mentioned in the clause.

The relation of power between these two participants is described by the relationship between Actor and Goal as van Leeuwen (2008) proposes that "the ability to transact requires a certain power, and the greater that power, the greater the range of "goals" that may be affected by an actor's action." (p. 60). In addition, the Actors in a nontransactive process "are represented as having less of a material effect upon the world or environment" (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 111); hence, they are less powerful. Focusing on the role of the Goal in a transactive process, it is important to differentiate between the actions that affect people (interactive transaction) and actions that affect other kinds of things (instrumental transaction) (van Leeuwen, 2008). Other optional participant roles are Beneficiary and Scope. Beneficiary is divided into Recipient and Client referring to the participants which are not directly affected by the action, but instead benefit from the action that is given or done for them. Scope remains unaffected directly by the action, but only specifies the scope of an event.

To see how her representation is dynamically constructed in the press, the following sections discuss the details of her representation chronologically from the point when she became a party list candidate campaigning for the election until her landslide victory and her inauguration as Thailand's first female Prime Minister.

Table 3. Participant Roles Assigned to Yingluck Shinawatra by the Material Process in Each Phase

Participant Roles	Phases		
	Campaigning	Post-election	Position-serving
Actor	383 (66%)	159 (69%)	303 (71%)
Goal	115 (20%)	45 (20%)	75 (18%)
Recipient	41 (7%)	13 (6%)	24 (6%)
Client	26 (4.5%)	10 (4%)	5 (1%)
Scope	14 (2%)	3 (1%)	18 (4%)
**-Circumstance	2 (0.5%)	0	0
Total	**581 (100%)**	**230 (100%)**	**425 (100%)**

6.3   Campaigning Phase

The campaigning phase began when Yingluck started to be a newsworthy character as the apparent choice for the number one party list candidate and was officially nominated byPheu Thai. During this phase, in 383 out of the 581 Material clauses, Yingluck appeared to be represented mainly as an Actor, the most grammatically powerful participant in a clause. Of 383 clauses, there are 291 transactive and 92 nontransactive actions. By looking at the two numbers, at the surface level, one might assume that in the news reports, Yingluck is represented as the social actor whose strong leadership is seen through her transactive actions. However, of the 291 transactive actions, there are 229 instrumental and 62 interactive actions. The numbers suggest that her actions were particularly those that directly affected other things (ex. institution, her party, and situation) rather than other individuals or groups of people. Examples of instrumental transactions are: 'she has stepped in to manage the party's finances', 'to restore the economy', 'seek justice in the judicial process', 'to help put an end to the problems of social division and violence', 'was willing to lead the next government', and 'bring about change to Thai political culture'. In terms of interactive actions, she is represented as a political newbie who is open-minded and willing to work with others as in 'will meet Mr. Sanoh', 'will consult academics', 'try to meet as many people as possible', 'welcomed coalition parties', or 'led the key members of Pheu Thai to campaign'.

As seen from the examples above, by putting her in such a focal position, news readers are primed to see her as an entity who is active and powerful and whose actions could directly affect or bring about changes to other things, in this case, to the country. The range of her Goal is just something a typical politician, a party list candidate and a prime minister candidate should do or, to be precise, vowed to do. On the other hand, the nontransactive actions help to identify her qualifications as a politician running for the premier post. She was represented as one, for example, who 'graduated with a bachelor's degree from the faculty of political science and public administration', 'gained a master's in political science from Kentucky State University', 'she worked at Shinawatra Directories Ltd', 'will work side-by-side with all Pheu Thai members', 'would do all she could', 'work towards the reconciliation',

and 'had grown up in a family of politicians'. Though Yingluck was in fact a politically inexperienced politician, as could be seen during this phase, the press constructed her representation as a businesswoman-turned-politician who grew up in and was surrounded by politicians in her family, had a good educational background in politics, and had a strong will to run and develop the country. She seemed to be a good fit to be campaigning for the premier's post.

However, a different role was constructed when looking at her ascribed role as Goals of the processes. When represented as the No. 1 listed candidate for the premier's post, the press sometimes vaguely and implicitly mentioned how she was chosen for the position; for example, 'Ms. Yingluck would be put in the No.1 slot, 'Yingluck Shinawatra, the youngest sister of fugitive former Prime Minister Thaksin, has been chosen by unanimous vote', or 'the resolution to place Ms. Yingluck at the top party list'. The actor(s) who performed the action of choosing her for the post was (were) left out from these passive clauses. However, when the press clearly and explicitly mentioned how she got into the position, she was frequently represented in active clauses as being handpicked by her older brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin, for the post. For example, in 'Thaksin picked Ms. Yingluck', 'he chose Ms. Yingluck, his younger sister for the post', or 'Thaksin Shinawatra might choose Yingluck for the prime minister's post'.

Frequently, she was represented through the action processes which constructed her to be a merely passive figure relying on others' assistance or even being controlled by other members, most of whom were men, in the party. The examples are 'the core members accompanying Ms. Yingluck', 'the minders ushered Khun Yingluck away from the interview', 'They (the party members) also evaluate her performance', 'They (the support team members) monitor Ms. Yingluck's speeches', 'she was styled', 'Ms. Yingluck's public image team adjusted the pattern of her speech-making' and 'Pheu Thai tries to keep Yingluck's star polished'. Moreover, during this phase when she firstly appeared in the news as the party candidate, being inexperienced in politics, and working only in the family's business firms, she was accused by many of being merely a puppet with her older brother, the former PM, as the puppeteer. The above examples clearly support this claim.

The role attributed to her as being a Recipient and Client of others' actions can even help emphasize her representation as being a puppet who was controlled or needed to rely on the party's decisions and assistance. For example, 'her speeches are designed for her', 'he (Mr. Thaksin) had trained Ms. Yingluck', 'The party can campaign for her as the country's first female Prime Minister', '(Pheu Thai) to help her deal with political opponents', 'he (Thaksin) firmly supported Ms. Yingluck as the Pheu Thai's prime ministerial candidate', and 'Mr. Chalerm and Natthawut Saikua stepped up to cover the party's policies for her'.

To sum up, in the first phase, when Ms. Yingluck started to appear in the news as the number one party list candidate for Pheu Thai, the press chose to represent her as a politically inexperienced politician who fortunately had an educational background related to politics and had grown up around and was surrounded by politicians. She

was depicted as a novice politician who showed high ambition in managing and solving Thai problems. At the same time, she was implicitly represented as lacking leadership, not being her own woman, and merely being a proxy for her brother, the former PM who had been ousted by a military coup. Through these roles, she was made to appear less powerful, which downplayed her reputation as a politician running for the premier post.

6.4   Post-election Phase

The post-election phase started after the general election day, in which the Pheu Thai Party had won an overwhelming victory, and she was likely to become the first female Prime Minister as she simply had to wait for the official endorsement by the Election Commission. During this period, similar to the first one, she was mainly introduced to readers via her roles as Actor and Goal followed by Recipient, Client and Scope (of the actions). During this phase, in 159 out of 230 Material clauses, Yingluck appeared to be represented mainly as Actor, the most powerful participant in the clauses. Of 159 clauses, there are 132 transactive and 27 non-transactive actions. Of 132 transactive actions, there are 106 instrumental and 22 interactive actions. In this phase, she was introduced to readers mostly through instrumental transactive actions as a prime minister-in-waiting who 'will keep her promises', 'will make the country stronger', 'to prove herself as a capable leader of the new government', 'tackle the country's pressing problems', 'busy working on drafting policy', and 'to create public confidence'. Some interactive transactive actions were found to support this representation that she could become a very capable prime minister as she was ready for the job and started doing her job right away. She was presented then as a powerful social actor, a presumptive prime minister who could choose cabinet members, or assign position of others. Some examples are 'Ms. Yingluck has called a meeting of all Pheu Thai's elected candidates on July 12', 'will later today meet with her party's economic team', 'tried to convince people', 'to bring on board many advisers and consultants', ' would consult all parties concerned on the matter', and 'that she is playing a part in assigning cabinet posts'.

However, her assigned role as Goal of other entities' actions shows that though she led the party in a landslide election victory and was waiting for the endorsement, the skepticism about Thailand having her as the first female Prime Minister still existed. For example, 'Thaksin may keep his sister in the prime minister's seat for a short while', 'As soon as she is confirmed in office she will be judged on performance rather than her image', 'Her success will be judged on her ability', '(the daunting) tasks facing her', '(the pressure) that is piling on her', or 'how many complaints had been made against her'. Besides the doubts about her abilities, the society was still not positive whether she would definitely be endorsed for the reason that there were some legal questions related to her role in her brother Thaksin's assets seizure case. Examples of her assigned role as Goal of legal action are: 'the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) to take legal action against prime minister-to-be Yingluck Shinawatra for perjury', 'whose (Ms. Yingluck's) endorsement as MP has been suspended by the Election Commission pending investigation.', and 'she could be

disqualified over shareholdings'.

Similar to the first phase, her role as Recipient and Client also helped illuminate her representation as allegedly being a proxy for her brother, Thaksin, and having him pave the way for her to reach the position. This is illustrated in, for instance, 'Pheu Thai's de facto leader Thaksin Shinawatra to smooth the path for his sister Yingluck', 'As a guarantee that they would vote for his sister during the selection process of the new prime minister in parliament', 'how Pheu Thai, especially its red shirt network to drum up support for Thaksin and Ms. Yingluck',and 'fugitive former prime minister Thaksin, another banned politician, helped her campaigning through his slogan "Thaksin thinks, Pheu Thai acts". In other words, she would benefit from the actions that were given to and done for her which signifies that she needed to rely on others to run the campaign and to get to the position.

In this phase, what the press chose to represent her in the reports can be summarized as a political figure who successfully won the election, who would keep those promises to competently tackle the country's crises, and the soon-to-be prime minister who showed her readiness and capability for the premier's duties. Regarding these representations, she was still represented as being under her brother's mantle, working under his shadow and people still having concerns about her leadership capability in governing the country.

6.5   Position-serving Phase

The last phase, the position-serving phase, was during the time when Yingluck was officially and royally endorsed as the 28th Prime Minister of Thailand. During this period, readers could experience who she was primarily through her roles as Actor (71 %) followed by Goal (18%), Recipient (6%), Scope (4%) and Client (1%). She is the Actor of 256 transactive and 45 non-transactive action clauses. Of the 256 transactive actions, 194 are instrumental and 62 interactive actions. Thus, the vast majority of her representations came from such as acting on policies, or setting up the cabinet. Her representations appear to be very positive. At this phase, she was represented as one who had much power 'to control the game on her own', 'carries herself well in public', 'to solve the economic problem', 'to combat the high cost of living', 'restore national harmony', and who 'would not do anything for the benefit of any particular group of people'. In addition, through the interactive transaction actions, she was no longer represented as being a passive agent waiting for or relying on party decisions. She was now represented as the Prime Minister of Thailand who had the executive power to order, act upon and directly affect others as a typical prime minister should do. Example clauses include 'her success in the election alone has empowered Thai women all over the country', and 'the selection of the new House speaker will be jointly decided by Ms. Yingluck and Mr. Yongyuth'. She was not represented as being a helpless political novice anymore as she was now the one who was offering help: 'she would help party candidates', 'she allowed certain banned politicians', 'to select suitable people', and 'She has assigned cabinet members and MPs'. Her role as Goal of other entities' actions were mostly related to her representation as being not guilty

of all legal charges and accusations as in 'the SEC cleared her of accusations', or 'Mr.Thirachai clarifies Ms. Yingluck's legal position'. She was also represented as a legitimate prime minister since she was 'overwhelmingly chosen by the Thai people in the July 3 general election'.

The number of her roles as Recipient and Client also supports the positive 'representations mentioned above, for example, 'Prime Minister Yingluck had received strong support from the people', and ' A total of 296 MPs voted in support of Ms. Yingluck, the country's first female prime minister'. She is also represented as being not guilty of all legal charges and accusations as 'the EC would give her justice', and 'the Election Commission paving the way for her'. Her role as Scope of the actions also shored up these representations. She passed through legitimate processes, for instance, 'the office earlier received from the House of Representatives a request for Ms. Yingluck's royal endorsement', and 'the House speaker forwarded the request for Ms. Yingluck's endorsement'. She was now represented as one who gained more acceptance from people as in 'More people pay attention to news stories about prime minister-designate Yingluck Shinawatra than to stories about outgoing Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva. It should be noted that in this phase she was rarely represented as being under her brother's shadow.

To sum up, in the last phase it can be observed that when she was endorsed as the Prime Minister, her representations appeared to be very different and purely in a positive light compared to the first two phases. She was now portrayed by the press as being her own woman with authoritative and executive power to command, assign, and have something done for her. She was no longer represented as a puppet being manipulated by her brother.

6.6   Results of Referential choices Analysis

Of the 190 news items, the referential choices occurred 1,023 times. As seen from Figure 1 below, Ms Yingluck was introduced in the texts throughout the three phases by nomination followed by categorization. That is, Ms Yingluck was constantly and mainly represented in the news by her proper nouns. As illustrated in Figure 2, she was consistently referred to by formal nomination as 'Ms Yingluck Shinawatra', and 'Ms Yingluck' (more than 80% in every phase).
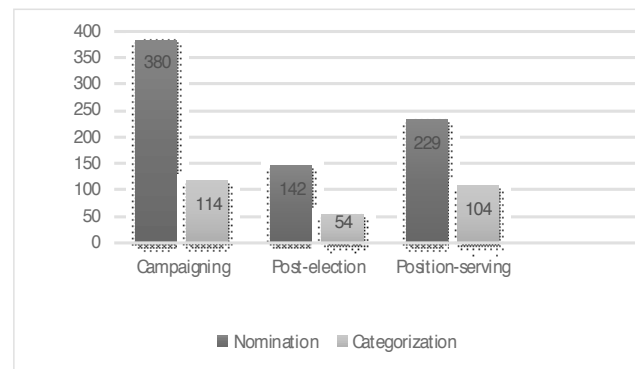
Figure 1. Distribution of Yingluck's representation choices in each phase

It is worth noting that in this analysis the model was slightly adapted to suit the cultural context of the text. Thai names follow the Western European pattern in which the surname follows a first or given name. However, different from the Western culture, Thais refer to or address each other by the title 'Khun' followed by a given name not a surname. Thus, 'Khun Yingluck', 'Ms. Yingluck', 'Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra' would be coded as 'formal' while only her name and surname without a title as in 'Yingluck Shinawatra' was coded as 'semiformal', and only first name as in 'Yingluck' was coded as 'informal'. In each phase, there are only a few instances that she was referred to semi-formally and informally referred to without the honorific title as 'Yingluck Shinawatra', and 'Yingluck'.
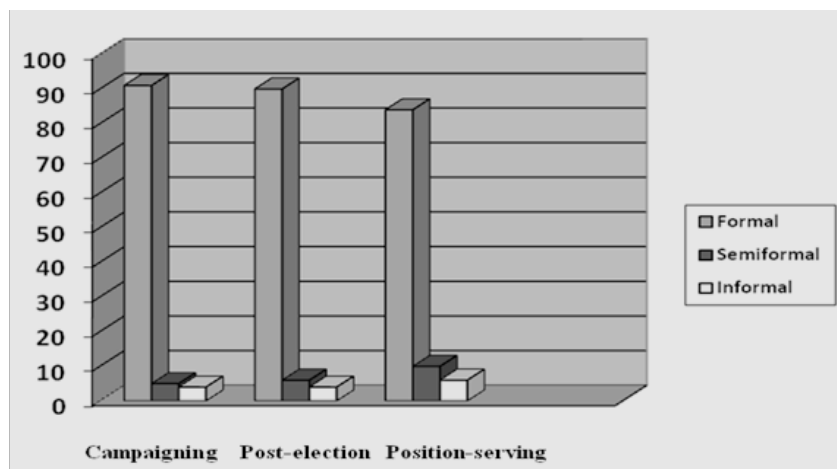

Figure 2. Distribution of Nomination in three phases

Regarding categorization in which Yingluck was represented with the identities and functions she shared with others, as illustrated in Figure 3 below, overall in each phase Yingluck was generally represented in all phases by mainly referring to the activities or her role in the political context. However, in the campaigning, the figure is quite different from other phases as functionalization (48%) and relational identification (45%) appear in similar numbers. During this phase she was represented as, for example, 'one of Pheu Thai Party's would- be candidates for the premiership', 'No.1 party list candidate of the Pheu Thai Party', 'candidate Yingluck', and 'prime ministerial candidate'. And also with relational identification as, for instance, 'former prime minister Thaksin's youngest sister', 'the youngest sister of deposed prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra', and 'Thaksin's sister'. Interestingly, physical identification (3%), and classification (4%) were rarely found from the data. There were only a few times that she was identified according to her physique as 'a young and attractive', 'the
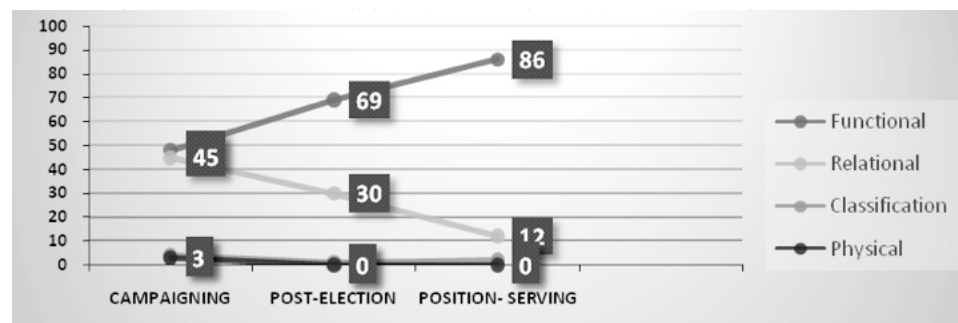

Figure 3. The percentage of distribution of the Categorization in each phase

However, the pattern of representation was shifted during the 'Post-election phase' when she was mainly referred to by her "functions' or roles as the top list candidate, the prime ministerial hopeful, a novice politician, and the presumptive primeminister (69%), whereas the number of the relationship and kinship references dropped to 30%. In this phase, no physical identification was found and age was 1% of all the mentions.

In the position phase, she is mainly represented by her roles as 'the in-waiting prime minister', 'the prime minister-designate', 'Prime Minister, the premier', or'PM' (86%). She was represented by the relational identification as 'the sister of the former prime minster' or 'the sister of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra' less as seen from the drop to 12%. From the findings, her representations as a social actor in the political discourse were dynamically constructed and shifted through time depending on the context of the situation in each phase.

7.   DISCUSSION

By examining semiotics choices, the empirical analysis reveals that the social views toward a female politician reflected and constructed in the press are presented in paradoxical ways. When Yingluck Shinawatra started to appear to be a newsworthy character as the number one party list candidate for Pheu Thai, she was represented, through her actions, as a political actor who had professional skills, a strong will to govern and solve all economic and political problems.

Meanwhile, her positive representation was done by foregrounding her as a passive figure, a political newbie who was inexperienced, lacked leadership, and needed to rely on other party members (most of whom were men) in running the political campaign, giving speeches or even dealing with political opponents. These helped resonate gender stereotypes in which women are attributed with the qualities of being passive, submissive, indecisive, and followers, and as a consequence, do not adhere to leadership roles.

The socially shared underlying prejudice about female politicians rising to power because of family connections was veiled in her representations in the texts. In the first two phases, the press routinely highlighted her relationship with Thaksin Shinawatra,

the ousted former prime minister, by referring to her as 'Thaksin's younger sister', 'the younger sister of fugitive former Prime Minister Thaksin', 'Thaksin's Yingluck' and so on. Regarding the implementation of functionalization and relational identification, van Leeuwen (2008, p. 43) argues that "the use of relational identification has gradually becomes less important than that of classification and functionalization, especially when personal and kinship relations are concerned. The intrusion of such relations into the sphere of public activities may be branded as nepotism or corruption (unless you are a monarch)". Considering the points he has made, it may be assumed that during these phases there was uncertainty whether she was going to win the election, and the press chose to downplay her role and her credibility as a politician by heavily emphasizing the kinship relation.

Looking through the media aspect, one might argue that being Thaksin Shinawatra's younger sister was her fixed identity, and it was a default representation of her. We, however, argue that over-emphasizing her family ties or routinely depicting her as the sister of the former Prime minister is an act of delegitimization and can affect the public support for her. We argue that the word choice in news reports is highly motivated by news values. As a reason, the over-emphasizing of identity is presumably the manipulativa nature of discursive practices of media institutions. Using kinship referential choices, as the sister of the former PM who was charged with corruption and ousted in the coup, raises the values of her prominence, thus increasing the value of news worthiness in terms of prominence and negative news values (Bell, 1991). News values can be described as the "values by which one 'fact' is judged more newsworthy than another" (Bell 1995, p. 320). The main aspect of what the press considers having more news value is not the fact that she is Yingluck, a politician who is running for the premier post, but rather the fact that she is the former PM's sister who is running for the post as his nominee.

As a politician running for the premier position, the focus on the family-tie aspect the press had might have had an impact on how news readers viewed her as they were primed to think that Yingluck Shinawatra stepped into the political arena through the path paved by her brother and his supporters and not through her own capabilities. Thus, this raises the question about her qualifications for the post as Richardson (2007, p. 49) points out that "The way that people are named in news discourse can have significant impact on the way in which they are viewed". Hence, her representations in the first two phases as one who got into political power through the path paved by her brother as his puppet or proxy who needed to rely on the support of other party members help to reinforce the stereotypical perception that Asian female politicians or leaders are dynastic leaders.

We proposed earlier that language is a meaning making resource and the choice of language use is governed by the communicative situation in which the text occurs. In Thailand, the government unofficially has full control of all mainstream media, and there is political suppression that sensitive government issues (in this case, the negative representation of the PM) are not allowed to be constructed or circulated. Good collaboration with Yingluck and her government was needed to be established

and the act of delegitimization of those with more power would be unwise for money-making businesses like the media business. This is evidence that media institution is playing politics as well. It can be observed when the situation was changed, that is, when she was officially endorsed by the Election Commission and the King to be the prime minister, her representations dramatically changed. As the head of the government, she was now represented by the press through the verbal choices and referential choices as a legitimate PM who started to gain more acceptance from the people. It appears that her fixed identity as the sister of the former prime minister transformed as she was chiefly represented professionally by her role as the PM. In other words, her identification as the sister of the former PM was less emphasized by the press. This might appear as if the prejudice about her being a nominee of her brother was starting to fade away. We, however, argue that this phenomenon might be due to some other factors such as media censorship.

8.   CONCLUSIONS

In a patriarchal and paternalistic socio-cultural structure like Thailand, with a strong emphasis on the dominant role of men in the public sphere, women's participation in political processes and leadership remains at a low level. Yingluck Shinawatra's sudden rise to the highest position in the Thai political hierarchy was considered a phenomenon and of great significance. Hence, it has changed the face of Thai politics since then.

Although she became the first female PM through the legitimatized election, her representations in the press were overshadowed by her elder brother, the former PM. The stereotype of Asian female political and nation leaders as dynastic-leaders was, hence, pronounced and distributed through the construction of her representations. Her overall representations help echo the stereotypical perceptions toward Asian female politicians that they are "not roaring tigresses", but just "more like tame kittens within a male-dominated political establishment that is pervaded by a patriarchal socio-cultural context" (Fleschenberg, 2008. p. 49).

Looking through the language used by the press, as can be seen from the results of the Transitivity system and the referential choices analysis, stereotypes of female politicians in media can be studied not only through content analysis, which is mainly looking at the quantity of the coverage, and quantifying and summarizing the content or topic patterns across a large sample of news texts, but also through linguistics analysis. This linguistics analysis allows us to draw social and political connections that social prejudice and gender stereotypes largely prevail in Thailand. The underlying social beliefs, gender prejudices and doubts about the woman's capabilities as the country's leader were vividly apparent in the first two phases as shown through the language resources in the press. The results have shown that the gender stereotype is still a glass ceiling for Thai women and also for Asian women in their attempt to rise to political leadership positions.

The findings also, surprisingly, contradict the results of previous studies in the West which have found that female politicians are still portrayed based on classic

stereotypes of femininity as mothers, housewives or sex objects, or are paid attention to more for their physical appearance. This study has found that the press paid less attention in representing Ms Yingluck in relation to her marital status, personal or physical characteristics or her sexual attribute as a woman. Such gender stereotypes or classic stereotypes of femininity were not as apparent as 'the stereotype of the dynastic leaders of Asian female leaders'.

When concluding her paper on the role of the news media in shaping the view of women in Asian political dynasties, Lithgow (2000) suggests that further examination should be done to see if the news media, as an active agent in social change, has played a role in helping catapult some Asian women into high political office in the latter part of the 20th century. Our current examination has proved that, in this day and age, the news media does not help in propelling Asian women to political empowerment, on the contrary, they set back and delegitimize those women by generating and reinforcing the stereotype of women being dynastic leaders. Since the news media still provokes gender stereotypes in presenting Yingluck Shinawatra, further studies on how she (or other female political figures and political leaders) responded to the way the press stereotypically represented her or how she constructed her own representations through, for example, her Facebook page, might be an interesting aspect to see how she contested the stereotypes generated by the press. Further studies of stereotypical language use can be recommended with the use of corpus analysis. Perhaps, comparisons between male and female characters can be made.

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