

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusion of study of a transitivity analysis of the representation of Thai Muslims in the Bangkok Post. It comprises three main sections. The first section is the summary of the overall structure of the research. The second section is the conclusion of the research results. The last section suggests a few limitations and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Overall Structure of the Research

This section presents the overall structure of this research such as the objective, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to conduct an analysis of language used in news articles about Muslims in Thailand. This study intends to answer the main research question: “How is language used to portray Thai Muslims in Thailand?”, using the transitivity analysis of representation in newspapers.

Data Collection

Data used in this study were 20 news articles obtained from the search engine program - NEWSCenter 3.0 provided by Kasetsat University. By using the keywords; “Muslim teacher”, “Islamic teacher”, “Muslim student”, and “ponoh”, the database program has yielded hundreds of news headlines. After that, 20 news articles were selected for the analysis.

Data analysis

The data analysis consisted of two main stages. The first stage involved the identification of the processes used to present Muslims teachers, Muslim students, and ponoh schools, found in the corpus. The study employed the transitivity analysis introduced by Simpson (1993) as the analysis framework. The analysis of transitivity concentrated on describing the different types of process and their associated configuration of participant roles. The different types of processes being studied were: Material processes, Mental processes, Relational processes, and Verbal processes.

The second stage was the analysis of the frequency of occurrence of words found within the material processes within the representation of each group. This stage was conducted to support the results from the analysis of transitivity analysis presented in the first stage. This stage aims to see the frequency of the verbs of action or doing in the representation of Thai Muslims. A computerized concordancing program named “ConcApp Concordance and Word Profiler Version 4” was used for the analysis. Frequency of words found in the corpus were recorded and calculated for the percentage.

Conclusion of the Research Results

The aim of the study is to explore how Thai Muslims are portrayed in the news articles. The study employed transitivity analysis to study their representation in the texts. From the analysis of 20 news articles, Thai Muslims are mostly presented in material processes. The overall results suggest that the Thai Muslim teachers, Thai Muslims students, and ponoh schools were portrayed as involving in violence in the deep south. From the analysis, they were portrayed as being behind the violence in accidents which occurred in the region. In addition, verbal processes are found to be used in a high percentage which mean the news or events are also reported from Thai Muslims’ point of view. These could help in creating a balance in the news reports. However, the series of negative images of Thai Muslims represented in the newspaper might create a stereotype of Thai Muslims to readers. By reading these kinds of

stories, readers might form the conceptual sense that Thai Muslims are terrorists and harmful to the society.

Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

This study was inevitably limited to a certain degree. Since it focuses only on the analysis of the representation of Thai Muslim teachers, Thai Muslim students, and ponoh schools in the southern most provinces, it could not be generalized to Thai Muslims in Thailand as a whole. And since the corpus of the study is only 20 news articles, which were published in the Bangkok Post between the years 2004 – 2005, no generalization should be made about the representation of Thai Muslims. Nevertheless, it might be possible that the results from this study could help point out some interesting points on the language and the representation of a particular group in Thai society in the newspapers. It would also be interesting to further the study as follows.

1. Since no generalization could be made, increasing numbers of the corpus for further study is recommended.

2. It would be interesting to perform the same kind of analysis on news broadcast on other types of media, such as television or broadcast.

3. It would also be useful for a comparative study of the representation of Thai Muslims between two newspapers, for example the Bangkok and The Nation. Moreover, comparing the representation of Thai Muslims in Thai English language newspapers with other international newspapers is also interesting. Besides, a study on a particular social area is also possible, for example, the representation of women politicians in newspapers.

4. Apart from transitivity analysis, other models of linguistic analysis, for instance, genre analysis is also useful for studying English for specific purposes.

5. Apart from the representation of Thai Muslims, there are other various topics which might be interesting to study. Analysis of the language and representation by using a corpus-based approach might be interesting as well. A corpus is a large collection of writings of a specific kind or on a specific subject. It is also useful for linguistic analysts to use or create their own corpus to analysis the representation of specific subject they want.