Political Discourses of Trust: Stance-taking Acts in the Thai PM’s Weekly TV Addresses

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to investigate the Thai PM Gen Prayuth Chan-o-cha’s use of stance expressions to construe trust, comprising attitudinal stance, epistemic stance and modality, in his weekly addresses broadcast on national television from March to December, 2017. The linguistic investigation incorporating Critical Discourse Analysis and trust frameworks shows that the three main aspects of trust are pursued. Integrity is however predominantly constructed through the use of a modal verb kʰᴐ̌ː ‘would like’ and an attitudinal verb jà:k ‘want’. Interestingly, a relatively small number of stance markers are found to project competency and benevolence. The results have led to the conclusion that the PM’s trust-building strategies mainly involve the construal of integrity by asserting his moral values linked with national reform, reconciliation, and advancement. These characteristics of linguistic hegemony via the construction of trust-building are expected to raise more sociopolitical awareness in the Thai political context.

INTRODUCTION
To retain power and stability, politicians have sought ways to build trust through taking action to establish a sustainable approach to national development. Politicians’ trustworthiness, however, is mainly manifested by discourse, a form of social practice in which societal power relations are embedded, produced and reproduced through the use of language. Trustworthiness has been evaluated as constructed from three main aspects: competency, integrity, and benevolence (Fuoli & Hart, 2018; Fuoli, 2016; Wang, 2016; Prevost, Brodeur, Onishi, Lepage & Gold, 2015; Simpson, Harrell & Willer, 2013). The person’s competency is strongly linked with our impression that the person is able to deal with difficulties and take control of unexpected situations. It is also believed that we tend to mentally assess the person’s integrity based on our sense that they are committed to moral beliefs and principles in addition to acting upon a promise. Finally, the trustworthy person tends to be one who has good intentions, as well as empathy towards others.

Recent research on the discursive construction of trust within the realm of Critical Discourse Analysis and Communication has incorporated the investigation of linguistic devices such as lexical choices, stance-taking expressions, metaphors, and discursive strategies in trust-building. For instance, Salvi, (2017)’s work focused analysis on how trust is discursively constructed in European political communication through the investigation of lexical choices linked with immigration issues. Fuoli (2017) examined the relationship between trustworthy corporate identity and the use of specific types of stance markers and constructions. Wang (2016), investigated how Chinese locals dealt with the 2015 Tianjin blasts. Wang found unsatisfactory crisis communication when officials merely focused on the construction of competency, whereas satisfactory officials constructed all three aspects of trust by providing information with credible evidence.

This present study focuses on a critical and linguistic analysis of the Thai PM Gen Prayuth Chan-o-cha’s weekly addresses broadcast across Thai national television and radio stations from March 2017, when a ‘reconciliation social contract’ and the initial plans for a general election were approved, to December 2017. To shed light on how the PM’s trustworthiness is discursively constructed, stance expressions comprising attitudinal stance, epistemic stance and modality (Conrad & Biber, 2000) collocated with the personal pronoun pʰǒm ‘I’ were examined, relying on Critical Discourse Analysis’s theoretical framework, to explore (1) what Thai stance markers were used by the Thai PM as the military leader to mediate his personal quality of trustworthiness; (2) how those particular stance markers...
were used across stance construction types; and (3) what plausible interpretations underlying the use of specific types of stance markers and constructions were in relation to the construction of trust. The linguistic investigation is the main focus of this study as it can be explained without overtly relying on personal interpretations (e.g. non-speech elements including facial expression, volume or gaze) (Carreon & Svetanant, 2017).

Since contextualization of discourse data is very important, this section investigates the social processes in the period the speeches were delivered to achieve better understanding of the contexts (De Saint-Georges, 2013; Bloommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). In 2014, General Prayuth Chan-o-cha launched a coup, dissolving the former Government. Since then, the Thai military government under him has claimed to attempt to heal political division and polarization between the movements which had fought against each other for more than a decade on the grounds of economic and social inequality. To achieve a peaceful and unified society, a ‘reconciliation social contract’ was approved in March 2017, with the primary focus on the Civil-State partnership model—inviting people, government and businesses to work closely together to pursue sustainable development, helping farmers, workers and communities secure their livelihoods. It aimed to strengthen the country’s economy at the grassroots level, empowering local communities and enterprises towards development goals. Additionally, the national reconciliation process was regarded as part of the military government’s plan to restore democracy, preparing for a general election of 2019, after which General Prayuth Chan-o-cha has returned as the PM.

Immediately after the successful coup, the TV program “Returning Happiness to the Nation’s People” was broadcast weekly between May 2014 and October 2016 across all national television and radio stations, on Fridays from 8:15-8:45 pm. This program was initially produced to seek the understanding of the Thai people after the coup, helping ensure the stability of the military government. In October 2016, the TV program title was changed to “From the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to Sustainable Development Goals” to honor and pay tribute to the legacy of His Majesty the late King Rama IX by highlighting the King’s philosophy, along with promoting the PM’s 12 national core values, primarily concerned with upholding the three “pillars”: Nation, Religions, and Monarchy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Discourse Analysis

Political discourse is possibly the most widespread social domain topic that Critical Discourse Analysis practitioners have continuously worked on, attempting to find ways to raise people’s awareness of manipulation, exploitation, power abuse, political ideology, and social inequalities (Chilton, 2004; Wodak, 2009; Fairclough & Mauranen, 1997; van Dijk, 2007; Fairclough, 1992). This study adopted Fairclough (2010, 2003)’s three-dimensional framework for formulating and analyzing discourse by initially looking into
adjective + post-predicate complement clause (e.g. annoying, critical, embarrassing, important, necessary reasonable, etc.) (see Fuoli, 2017). The final category of stance expressions are in the form of modality, expressing (1) permission/possibility/ability (e.g. can, could, may, might, etc.), (2) necessity/obligation (e.g. must, should, etc.), and (3) volition/prediction (e.g. shall, will, would, etc.) (see Fuoli, 2017).

In Thai grammar, Thai stance markers exist in a similar categorization as classified by Fuoli (2017), though with more variations in terms of construction types and semantic functions of epistemic verbs. Kitikanan (2012) found 10 types of Thai verb complementation. Prasithrathsint (2009) further explained that the occurrence of each of the complementizers depends on the type of verb in the matrix clause. For instance, the complementizer thii occurs with emotive verbs, whereas wa: is found with communicative verbs. Similarly, hay occurs with directive verbs. Some epistemic verbs like t³.m.k³.n ‘want’ can function as a manipulative verb if followed by hay as well as functioning as a modal verb when the subject in the main clause also serves to function as the subject of verb complement. Rangkupan (2005) investigated a system of epistemic modality in Thai and established four syntactic categories: (1) preverbal auxiliaries, (2) initial particles, (3) adverbs, and (4) final particles. Epistemic modality can also be classified into five semantic categories: (1) assumptive, (2) speculative, (3) deductive, (4) dubitative, and (5) certainty.

**METHODOLOGY**

This present study examined the Thai PM’s use of specific stance-act markers in manifesting his personal quality of trustworthiness by analyzing a total of 44 weekly addresses in the TV program *From the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to Sustainable Development Goals*, from March 3, 2017 to December 29, 2017, aired on national television and radio stations on Fridays between 8:15 and 8:45 pm. The addresses were retrieved from the website of the Royal Thai Government at http://www.thaigov.go.th both as YouTube video clips and verbatim transcriptions. The total number of words in the 44 weekly addresses is 554,896 and the total number of the personal pronoun p³m ‘I’ is 1,329. Table 1 summarizes the details of each TV address.

At the micro level, the procedure to identify and quantify first personal pronoun use was achieved with MSWord’s advanced find function prior to proceeding with careful manual word and utterance semantic/functional analysis, taking into account the context from which the data were drawn. As discussed previously, stance markers which could not be identified as belonging to the PM’s personal identity, like ‘government’, were excluded. The present study aims to analyze stance markers collocating with the personal pronoun p³m ‘I’ only. The framework for analyzing stance-taking acts proposed by Fuoli (2017) and for analyzing Thai verb complements and modality in the system of Thai grammar by Kitikanan (2012) were incorporated into the manual.

Table 1. Summary of information of the weekly addresses

| Tv weekly addresses | Words | I | Tv weekly address | Words | I |
|---------------------|-------|---|------------------|-------|---|
| March 3, 2017       | 11,305| 39| August 4, 2017   | 15,149| 20|
| March 10, 2017      | 10,344| 27| August 11, 2017  | 14,022| 25|
| March 17, 2017      | 15,793| 50| August 18, 2017  | 9,893 | 24|
| March 24, 2017      | 18,913| 32| August 25, 2017  | 9,202 | 21|
| March 31, 2017      | 11,731| 25| September 1, 2017| 11,457| 21|
| April 7, 2017       | 12,173| 21| September 8, 2017| 11,092| 25|
| April 14, 2017      | 11,737| 24| September 15, 2017| 11,920| 29|
| April 21, 2017      | 12,873| 33| September 22, 2017| 15,829| 42|
| April 28, 2017      | 11,183| 19| September 29, 2017| 9,945 | 38|
| May 5, 2017         | 11,754| 26| October 6, 2017  | 5,908 | 24|
| May 12, 2017        | 15,427| 40| October 13, 2017 | 5,371 | 4 |
| May 19, 2017        | 13,667| 30| October 20, 2017 | 14,263| 21|
| May 26, 2017        | 18,643| 47| October 27, 2017 | 3,212 | 5 |
| June 2, 2017        | 13,517| 25| November 3, 2017 | 13,480| 28|
| June 9, 2017        | 9,823 | 14| November 10, 2017| 7,897 | 26|
| June 16, 2017       | 20,615| 82| November 17, 2017| 13,141| 36|
| June 23, 2017       | 16,574| 25| November 24, 2017| 11,189| 18|
| June 30, 2017       | 10,960| 17| December 1, 2017 | 18,590| 118|
| July 7, 2017        | 16,052| 28| December 8, 2017 | 8,641 | 10|
| July 14, 2017       | 12,893| 21| December 15, 2017| 9,003 | 16|
| July 21, 2017       | 17,116| 43| December 22, 2017| 16,288| 46|
| July 28, 2017       | 13,211| 23| December 29, 2017| 13,102| 41|
| **Total**           | **554,896** |  | **1 = 1,329**    |       |   |
analysis by identifying lexical choices that can be categorized as stance markers (epistemic stance, attitudinal stance, and modality) and then categorizing each identified stance marker collocating with the personal pronoun pʰəm ‘I’ into the sub-categories of trust components: benevolence, competency, and integrity.

As the present study relied on Fairclough (1992, 2003)’s Critical Discourse Analysis framework, the macro-level analysis of discourse was carried out after the linguistic investigation to explore the conditions of production of the identified stance markers. More specifically, it intended to explain why particular types of stance markers were employed by the PM and why certain aspect of trust were paid more particular attention than others, with the hope to raise sociopolitical awareness of linguistic hegemony via the construction of trust-building.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall Distribution of Stance Markers

This section focuses on the analysis of the stance markers used by the Thai PM in his weekly addresses to enact his identity as a trustworthy politician. The overall distribution of Thai stance markers projecting the three main aspects of trust-building strategies—benevolence, integrity, and competency—is illustrated in Table 2. The specific construction types of stance markers categorized into ‘benevolence’, ‘integrity’, and ‘competency’ is then discussed.

Table 2 illustrates that the majority of stance markers used represent the PM’s personal stance in terms of trust-building categorized as language used to enact integrity, whereas around 23 and 6 percent of all the stance markers found in the data were linguistic devices projecting competency and benevolence, respectively. The examples of stance markers used to signal integrity are kʰɔː ‘would like’, jàːk ‘want’, hến ‘think’ which were found to express the PM’s moral beliefs. The remaining stance markers are those connected with the construal of competency (e.g. dàːj ‘be able to’, cǎʔ ‘will’) and benevolence (e.g. hėn ‘see’, kʰɔːwɛj ‘understand’), which were found to express the PM’s ability to deal with specific issues, and inter-subjectivity or the interchange of thoughts and feelings between the speaker and audience, respectively. The detailed analysis underlying the use of stance markers is given in the next sections.

Stance Markers and Constructions Projecting Benevolence

Based on the findings in Table 2, the PM’s weekly addresses were scarcely concerned to emphasize inter-subjectively shared thoughts and feelings with the people, as only 6 percent of the stance markers used by the PM were found to project benevolence. Table 3 reports the specific types of stance markers as well as the frequency and distribution of those stance markers and constructions concerning benevolence.

Table 2. Overall frequency of stance markers constructed from the three components of trust

| Components | Frequency of stance markers | Percentage |
|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Benevolence| 54                         | 6.05%      |
| Integrity | 633                        | 70.97%     |
| Competency| 205                        | 22.98%     |
| Total     | 892                        | 100%       |

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who is attentive to the Thai people’s well-being. In 2), the PM claims insightful understanding of multifaceted issues. Since he understands the phenomenon well, he also knows how to cope with them. Apart from claiming full awareness of the country’s problems, the PM also acknowledges positive developments claimed to result from his actions and support, as shown in 1). The manifestation of shared understanding creates the impression of ‘being there’ for the Thai people. This is used to emphasize his identity as a benevolent and altruistic leader.

In addition to the use of the verb *hên ‘see’,* another epistemic verb that was frequently found is *kâwcaj ‘understand’,* which serves to project benevolence by empathizing with people’s problems and showing that he is devoted to assist with solutions. The epistemic verb *kâwcaj ‘understand’* is used as a grammatical marker of epistemic stance in the following constructions: (1) a certainty verb + nominalized complement following *wâ:/* nominalized complement/ no verbal complement; (2) a certainty verb + sentential complement following *wâ:/* nominalized complement; (3) a certainty verb without verbal complements as shown in the following instances.

3) *pʰém kâwcaj kʰâw.caj wâ: k.n câ? jút: râ:um.kan n aj sâg. kâm dâj jà: y.pen.pâ.kà.tâj. sâk nân raw tân ?a.sâj táj kôt.ma:j.ca.: râ: t.prâ.p’e.ni: lê? kôt.ma:j.la:j. lâk. t.kâ.ksâ:n PN:1SG myself Verb:to understand COMP NMZ ASP to live together in society; POSS ABI happily and safely EMP PN: 1PL INCL MOD: OBL to abide both common law and civil law. (I *myself understand that* to live together in the society happily and safely, we must rely on the common law and civil law.) (April, 21, 2017)

4) *pʰém kâwcaj kʰâw.caj kʰâw.m.dì: à.t.rî:n k’hûŋ p’tân PN:1SG Verb:to understand trouble POSS you tê tân tông kâwcaj kʰâw.caj kʰâw.m.dì: à.t.rî:n k’hûŋ p’têt dû:jaj (I *understand* your hardship, but you must understand the country’s hardship too.) (July, 7, 2017)

5) *lâj k’hôn k’hû: t.a: t.ca jàf lam. bâk.kaj jú: pʰém kâwcaj hên.ca:j k’hû:j a:j à:r. cà tám dâj m’d.k. r’t:sút nà k’hâp p’hû:n. k’hô:j càj càj rû:j. c’é:t. t.na:rom r’hâ: tû: nhà:m k’hû:j p’â:k.raw tâk.kôn nà k’hâp PN:1SG Verb:to understand (Many people may still feel uncomfortable. *Understand* and will try to help as much as I can with our heart and strong will.) (September 1, 2017)

From the findings above, the PM claims an in-depth understanding of Thailand’s problems in logic by indicating causes of problems when the verb *kâwcaj ‘understand’* is used in a certainty verb + sentential complement following *wâ:/* as shown in 3). To illustrate this, in 3), the PM logically ascribes both common law and statute law to our peace in the society. The verb *kâwcaj ‘understand’* is further used to display empathy towards people’s difficulty, but with the use of a nominalized complement, conceals actual causes of hardship, as shown in 4). The disclaimers ideological discourse strategy ‘I *understand it, but…’ structure (van Dijk, 2013) is used with the verb *kâwcaj* when it is followed by nominalized complements to express apparent empathy while at the same time negatively representing others (people who oppose him). Doing so, he represents himself as a devoted politician attempting to resolve conflicts and social issues while other people oppose him. Finally, when the verb *kâw-

Table 3. Overall frequency of stance markers and construction types involving ‘benevolence’

| Markers          | Frequency | Percentage | Stance Type/Construction type |
|------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------------|
| *hên ‘see’*      | 14        | 25.93%     | Epistemic stance certainty verb + nominalized complement |
| *kâwcaj ‘understand’* | 12       | 22.22%     | Epistemic stance certainty verb + sentential complement following *wâ:/* nominalized complement/ no verbal complement |
| *mây rû:/ mây sa:p ‘don’t know’* | 10      | 18.52%     | Epistemic stance certainty verb + sentential complement following *wâ:/* |
| *sa:p/rû: ‘know’* | 5         | 9.26%      | Epistemic stance certainty verb + sentential complement following *wâ:/* |
| *rápfûn ‘consider’* | 4       | 7.41%      | Epistemic stance likelihood verb + nominalized complement |
| *mây hên ‘don’t find’* | 3       | 5.56%      | Epistemic stance certainty verb + verb-phrasal complement/ sentential complement |
| *sa:mpât ‘feel’*  | 2         | 3.70%      | Epistemic stance likelihood verb + nominalized complement following *dàj rûː* |
| *ráprû: ‘perceive’* | 2      | 3.70%      | Epistemic stance certainty verb + nominalized complement following/not following *dàj rûː* |
| *mây kâwcaj ‘don’t understand’* | 1  | 1.85%      | Epistemic stance certainty verb (intransitive verb where no complementation occurs) |
| *hêncaj ‘empathize’* | 1   | 1.85%      | Epistemic stance certainty verb (intransitive verb where no complementation occurs) |
| **Total**        | **54**    | **100%**   | Epistemic stance |
to encourage the young to ask for cooperation from the temple

PN: 1SG MOD: VOL to encourage MAN the young/young people MOD: POSSI ABI to doingth REL to intend ASP: PERF BEN mother

( I would like to support all our children to keep their promises made to their mother.) (August 11, 2017)

In the system of Thai grammar, kʰɔ̂ː 'would like' functions as a volition modal used to express personal desire and intention. From the analysis, kʰɔ̂ː is found to be most commonly used by the PM, to display a confident stance asserting moral beliefs he finds necessary for national reform that he would like Thai people to adopt. As we can see in 7), the PM expressed his personal morality by giving priority to showing gratitude and doing good deeds to mothers. He asserted that gratitude towards parents is a key to national development.

The other two constructions in which kʰɔ̂ː is used are an attitudinal verb + sentential complement following hâj, as shown in 8) below. When kʰɔ̂ː is used in this construction, the PM did not only require changed behaviour, but also asserted his personal stance linked with beliefs and values towards good citizenship. In 8) the quality of being patient and of adjusting mindsets are required by the PM, who ascribed them to success in conflict resolution.

8) naj cʰɔ̂ː.aj tʰâ ʔâ ni: kʰɔ̂ː.dâː.j.kè: mìnj kʰɔː.ra.ní: wàt.pʰrá. tʰam.ma.kâ:j

PN: 1SG MOD: VOL government officer Buddhist monk Buddhist people (in) general whole country MOD: POSSI ABI be to patient

(This last part includes 1) The Dhammakaya Temple Case. I would like to ask for cooperation from the temple staff, the monks, Buddhists, and people all over the country to be patient, to use your intelligence and discretion to solve the problems altogether.) (March 3, 2017)

The second commonly used type of attitudinal stance marker concerning integrity is jàː kʰɔ̂ː ‘want’, which is used in the following constructions: (1) a desire/intention/decision verb (manipulative verb) + verb-phrasal complement following hâj; (2) a desire/intention/decision verb (manipulative verb) + sentential complement following hâj; (3) volition modality + verb-phrasal complement; and (4) volition modality + verb-phrasal complement following cāː. The analysis of the PM’s use of jàː kʰɔ̂ː ‘want’, when used as a volition modal, shows that jàː kʰɔ̂ː functions as the PM’s expression of positive desire for Thailand’s future. A promising sign of change in terms of human development is often stated, as in 9). Additionally, jàː kʰɔ̂ː is used positively to represent the PM by emphasizing that he is committed to improving peo-
Table 4. Overall frequency of stance markers and construction types projecting integrity

| Markers | Frequency | Percentage | Stance Type/ Construction type |
|---------|-----------|------------|--------------------------------|
| kʰː  | 146       | 27.66%     | Modality volition modality + verb-phrasal complement |
| ‘would like’ | (23.06%)     |            |                                  |
| kʰː hâj | 29        | 4.60%      | Attitudinal stance desire/ intention/ decision verb (manipulative verb) + sentential complement following hâj |
| já:k ‘want’ | 45        | 7.11%      | Modality volition modality + verb-phrasal complement |
| hâj | 90       | 14.22%     | Attitudinal stance desire/ intention/ decision verb (manipulative verb) + verb-phrasal complement/sentential complement following hâj |
| já:k cáʔ | 26        | 4.11%      | Volition modality + verb-phrasal complement following cáʔ? |
| hën / wâː / kʰːt/ mɔːj ‘think’ | 117 | 18.48% | Epistemic stance likelihood verb + sentential complement/verb-phrasal complement following wāː |
| eϲɔː / ϲʉː.mǎn / tɔː ‘believe’ | 28 | 4.42% | Epistemic stance likelihood verb + sentential complement/ verb-phrasal complement following wāː |
| penkaywon ‘be worried’/ mâncaj ‘be confident’/ yîndii ‘be pleased’/ pʰːcaj ‘be satisfied’/ sōpsdaj ‘be doubtful’/ sîːcæj ‘be sad’/ dîːcæj ‘be happy’, etc. | 28 | 4.42% | Attitudinal stance emotion/attitude verb + sentential complement following wāː/ verb-phrasal complement following tʰː(dâːj)/ nominalized complement following kâp |
| māj ják ‘don’t want’ | 24 | 3.79% | Attitudinal stance desire/ intention/ decision verb + verb-phrasal complement/ sentential complement (manipulative verb) following hâj |
| tɔːg.kæzn ‘want’ | 19 | 3% | Attitudinal stance desire/ intention/ decision verb + nominalized complement/ sentential complement (manipulative verb) following hâj |
| wâː | 16 | 2.53% | Epistemic stance likelihood verb + sentential complement following wāː |
| yām / nēn / nēn.jām / yũnyan ‘confirm’ | 15 | 2.37% | Epistemic stance certainty verb (intransitive verb where no complementation occurs) certainty verb + verb-phrasal complement following hâj / cáʔ / sentential complement following wâː:a |
| tɔːgcam.pen tɔːg ‘must’ | 12 | 1.89% | Modality necessity/obligation modal + verb-phrasal complement |
| pʰːygpəyam ‘strive’ | 10 | 1.58% | Attitudinal stance desire/intention/decision verb + verb-phrasal complement following t’hː cáʔ |
| māj dâːj mɔːk’wâːm ‘don’t mean’ | 6 | 0.95% | Attitudinal stance desire/intention/decision verb + sentential complement following wâː |
| pʰːrɔːm ‘ready’ | 5 | 0.79% | Attitudinal stance ability or willingness adjective + verb-phrasal complement following t’hː cáʔ |
| Other markers with less than 5 frequencies e.g. māj plæːŋ ‘mean’, tâŋcæj ‘intend’, mːː céːtta.nːa: ‘have the intention’, etc. | 17 | 2.68% | Attitudinal stance, Epistemic Stance, Modality |
| Total | 633 | 100% |                                  |
people’s quality of life sustainably, not in the short run, as in 10). In so doing, the PM asserts personal values, beliefs, and preferences in leadership, change, creativity, responsibility, sustainability, and technology development as these lay solid foundations for Thailand.

9) prôm  geçen jàk hên phè n:n:y:kàː ràːat c’a: kà:n
PN:1SG myself MOD:VOL Verb: to see government officer (in family sense)

(1 myself would like to see that our government officers carry out their duties as the leaders for change.) (March 31, 2017)

to ask all of us Thais to think and

(What I would like to emphasize again is that solving

10) sin vīː prôm jàːk nè:n jàm k’rāŋ kɔː k’wù:
thing REL PN:1SG MOD:VOL Verb: to confirm again also COP

people about morality and good citizenship. However, the use of cāʔ ‘will’ as a volition/prediction modal verb emphasizes the higher degree of the PM’s commitment and devotion to resolve the nation’s problems and conflicts. This can be clearly seen in 11), when the PM strongly begged Thai citizens to consider and revise their own roles and duties as well as trying to have true understanding of the King’s philosophy.

11) sùː t’laj niː prôm jàːk cāː fàːk hâj
finally MAN PN:1SG MOD:VOL TAM:PRSP IRR VOL to entrust MAN

(Please review yourselves by to improve our.

12) naj p’àː p:ruː am prôm jàːk hâj t’laj fàːk jàːm muː can sàːn
PN:1SG MOD:VOL MAN every part to cooperateto build up

trust/confidence

(Overall, I would like all parties concerned to cooperate to build confidence and trust in one another to perform good deeds for all of us.) (October 20, 2017)

13) prôm jàːk hâj wàːj c’hàː p:ruː b’aː n díː niː:
PN:1SG MOD:VOL MAN  to trust government this

To project integrity, the study has found a substantial proportion of instances of the verb ‘think’ – hên wàː k’lùː mɔːŋ — in the addresses used to express attitudes that are strongly linked with moral beliefs and optimism about the countries future. This Thai likelihood verb in the epistemic stance is used in a likelihood verb + sentential complement and verb-phrasal complement following wàː. When these cognition verbs are followed by a verb-phrasal complement, subject in the verb-phrasal complement is omitted but can still be well-understood in context. Instances conveying this type of epistemic stance act are shown in 14) and 15):

14) prôm hên wàː sin vīː miː sàn sám k’àn
PN:1SG Verb: to think COMP thing REL to have part important

(June 23, 2017)

Likewise, jàːk used in a volition modal + verb-phrasal complement following cāʔ construction is used to teach Thai people about morality and good citizenship. However, the use of cāʔ ‘will’ as a volition/prediction modal verb emphasizes the higher degree of the PM’s commitment and devotion to resolve the nation’s problems and conflicts. This can be clearly seen in 11), when the PM strongly begged Thai citizens to consider and revise their own roles and duties as well as trying to have true understanding of the King’s philosophy.

(1 noticed that there have been two important factors contributing to the reform: 1) the participation of all sectors, professions, people of all ages and genders as the owners of the country and the stakeholders.) (August 4, 2017)

15) prː n:j prːa c’ʔ en c’ʔ wàː t’laj t’laj k’hàː p’kàː sàːn t’laj
PN:1SG Verb: to think COMP PN:1PL INCL VOL to reform oneself by

(My dear Thai fellows,

For the sustainable development of our country, I think that we need to reform ourselves by improving our mind which includes 1) conscience such as virtue, ethics.) (December 8, 2017)
to signal capabilities to achieve goals and deal with problems. They are also used to display determination to carry out certain actions and ensure that plans and goals can be accomplished. Although relatively low in terms of frequency, the obligation modal verb ต้อง ‘must’ and the epistemic verb คิด ‘think’ are also used to signal competency when expressing possibilities of plans being achieved in future. Table 5 shows the overall frequency of stance markers and constructions involving the discursive construction of competency.

In Table 5, possibility/ability modal verbs are by far the most common type of stance markers employed to highlight ability and possibility to accomplish certain actions and plans. The Thai modal ต้อง ‘be able to’ is found to be employed the most frequently with the speaker’s emphasis on past actions he was able to manage or achieve. Semantically, this modal also signals the meaning of ‘having an opportunity/possibility to do or accomplish something’. Thus, the sense of trust is likely to be discursively transmitted through the use of this modal verb. The Thai modal verb ต้อง ‘be able to’ is used as a grammatical marker in the following construction: a possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement. Below are examples of instances in which ต้อง was used:

16) ต้อง สนใจทุกเรื่องของทางการเมืองทุกประเด็นที่เกี่ยวกับ ต้อง สนใจทุกเรื่องของทางการเมืองทุกประเด็นที่เกี่ยวกับ (PN:1SG MOD:POSSI ABI) to enjoin MAN every department

17) ต้อง สนใจทุกเรื่องของทางการเมืองทุกประเด็นที่เกี่ยวกับ (PN:1SG MOD:POSSI ABI DISCUSS COM department various)

The other commonly used modal of volition/prediction to be discussed here is ต้อง ‘will’, which is found to be in a volition/prediction modal + verb-phrasal complement. The analysis suggests that the PM attempted to emphasize his goals and objectives to solve conflicts and social issues. The Thai modal verb ต้อง is also used to underline PM’s strong will to accomplish those goals and to presuppose that he is likely to be committed to carry out the goals he established. It is noted that concrete material processes, such as ‘do’, ‘follow’, or ‘proceed’, following the modal verb ต้อง, as shown in 18) and 19) is value added to the PM’s competency as those lexical choices connote ‘concrete actions’ (Machin & Mayr, 2012). The instances conveying the use of this modal verb are illustrated below.

18) ต้อง สนใจทุกเรื่องของทางการเมืองทุกประเด็นที่เกี่ยวกับ (PN:1SG MOD:POSSI ABI DISCUSS COM department various)

19) ต้อง โปร่งใส ‘will’ which is used in an attitudinal verb + verb-phrasal complement following ทำ is used to project his integrity revealing his need to change the Thai people and the entire nation by requiring them to conform with what he finds morally right, such as the 12 national core values. We can find substantial instances demonstrating his desire to witness Thai people’s devotion to the nation and collaboration with the government.

The aspects of competency and benevolence were far less pursued. The results show only 23% and 6% of stance markers used to manifest these two, respectively. The two most commonly used modal verbs ต้อง ‘be able to’ (possibility/ability modal verbs) and ต้อง ‘will’ (volition/prediction modal verbs) were found to express competency in having opportunities to accomplish political plans to reform the nation and collaboration with the government. By highlighting particular actions taken, such as attending international conferences, resolving particular problems or instructing officials to do certain things, he communicated his identity as a competent leader. He, however, rarely displayed the quality of a benevolent politician, who understands and shows empathy towards people’s problems and needs. The two epistemic verbs which are found to be used most commonly to express benevolence are เห็น ‘see’ and รู้ ‘understand’, which are used to display shared intersubjectivity with the people towards both positive and negative scenarios in Thailand. More specifically, the PM said he witnessed a good example of people who applied the King’s philosophy in real life as well as understanding the people’s
hardship. As explained earlier, when negative scenarios like the citizen’s economic hardship is emphasized, the PM used disclaimer ideological discourse strategy to dismiss his responsibility and instead asked for the entire nation’s collaboration to solve conflicts.

Lastly, the interrelationship between the use of stance markers, discursive practice and social practice shows that the PM’s attitudinal stance towards moral values and principles assigned to the nation’s reform was produced, transmitted, and reinforced throughout his weekly addresses through the use of modal verbs and attitudinal verbs. The core moral concepts concerning collaborating with government agencies, upholding the monarchy, showing gratitude to parents, being patient and believing in the government’s political actions were persistently delivered to manipulate people to capitulate to his power. The PM, however, rarely demonstrated the quality of benevolence through discursive devices and strategies. This lack of shared understanding with the people and responsibility denial when máj rúː/ máj sa:p ‘don’t know’ is repeatedly used, therefore, causes him to appear like a manipulative political leader who requires people, but not his government, to change and adjust their values and attitudes, a basic foundation of national reform. While strongly persuading people to believe in what he has done, not many concrete and successful actions have been discursively construed to project his competency, one aspect of trust-building. Some information has been concealed and not been explicitly stated. This reflects Thai-style political discourse situated in an undemocratic country between March and December 2017 where political hegemony has been constructed through media manipulation and the mediation of linguistic devices.

**CONCLUSION**

The present study offers insights into how the Thai PM discursively shaped trust through analysis of his use of stance markers to project benevolence, integrity, and competency prior to the general election. The integrity aspect of trust was employed as the major discursive trust-building strategy, while competency and benevolence were rarely construed. This political hegemony and its relation to the PM’s use of specific stance-taking acts projecting integrity reveal the sociocultural fact that Thais generally value goodness or the moral high ground and tend to link them with the quality of being trustworthy. Additionally, linguistic forms used to construe social responsibility denial and display little in-depth insights into social issues determine one form of political manipulation in the Thai sociopolitical context. However, it is impossible to definitely conclude that communicating integrity by strongly asserting the PM’s stance towards moral values and beliefs and requiring people to comply with his set of beliefs is effective trust-building in the Thai political discourse since there are other various factors (e.g. timespan or global influences) influencing trust. More importantly, discourses appear to be interpreted differently by different groups of social actors with different backgrounds, beliefs and values. As Simpson, Harrell & Willer (2013)’s study of trust indicates, the person’s moral judgment is likely to affect how he or she perceives others.

| Markers                  | Frequency | Percentage | Stance Type and Construction                                      |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| dâ:j ‘be able to’        | 134       | 65.37%     | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| câʔ ‘will’               | 44        | 21.46%     | Modality, volition/prediction modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| tɔŋ ‘must’               | 6         | 2.93%      | Modality, necessity/obligation modal + verb-phrasal complement    |
| cʰuːca/ cʰuːca.mân ‘believe’ | 6        | 2.93%      | Epistemic stance, likelihood verb + sentential complement following wâ: |
| kâːmplâː ‘to be going to’ | 5         | 2.44%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| ʔàːt.câʔ/ kʰoŋ.câʔ/ ‘may’, ‘can’ | 3   | 1.46%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| máj saːmâːt câʔ ‘won’t be able to’ | 2  | 0.97%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| máj ʔàːt.câʔ ‘may not be able to’ | 2  | 0.97%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| saːmâːt ‘be able to’     | 1         | 0.49%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| câʔ tɔŋ ‘will have to’  | 1         | 0.49%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| ʔàːt ‘can’, ‘may’        | 1         | 0.49%      | Modality, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement     |
| **Total**                | 205       | 100%       | Modality, Epistemic stance, possibility/ability modal + verb-phrasal complement |
as trustworthy, and future research in the area of trust in the political context and stance-taking acts may take into consideration the exploration of how different social groups in terms of age or social status make sense of trust through the use of different types of stance expressions projecting the three aspects of trust. This experimental study may be used to complement the qualitative or linguistic investigation in the field of discursive construction of trust in the Thai political context in the future.

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APPENDIX

List of Glossing Abbreviations

1 first person
ASPECT aspect
BEN benefactive
COMPLEMENT complementizer
COPula
DIRectional marker
EMPhasis
EPISTIC modal
INCLUSION inclusion
IRRrealis mood
MANipulative
MODality
NEGation
NMZnominalizer
OBLigation
PERFECTIVE
PLural
PNoun
POSSessive marker
PRSProspective aspect
PURPOSE
RECPROCAL
RELATIVIZER
SINGULAR
TAMTENSE aspect or mood/modal
VOLition