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“Peace Journalism and the Tak Bai Incident: the case of *the Bangkok Post*’s and *the Nation*’s coverage on the Southern conflict in Thailand”

MA thesis

Global Journalism

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Abstract

The study investigates the media practices of two Thailand's popular English newspapers: *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*. The coverage on the Tak Bai incident during 26 October – 2 November, 2004 are selected as a case study to analyze how the two newspapers presented the conflict. In an attempt to shed light on the implication of Peace Journalism (PJ) model in the specific conflict, this study is conducted with two main purposes: to analyze the ways in which the selected newspapers characterize the Tak Bai incident and to identify contributing factors as well as limitation to the PJ model in this context specific conflict.

The conceptual focus on this paper emphasizes on the media outputs and practices on the local conflict of Muslim minority in the southern part of Thailand. The researcher applies the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theorized by Fairclough (1995) to analyze the representation of the conflict, and the Peace Journalism model in the media text, practices and socio-cultural practice. At the discourse practice, the interview findings show that journalists of the two newspapers encounter the same difficulties: the limit of freedom of expression and access of to the local sources. Two PJ characters found in the coverage of *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation* include truth-oriented and people-oriented aspects. At text level, discursive features including passive voice without agent, linguistic transformation (word in passive form) and lexical choices that convey dominant meaning are found in the media texts of the two English dailies.

The CDA and interview analysis also discover a selective way of presenting voices of others in both newspapers. They are mainly based on authority voices as their sources. However, *the Bangkok Post* covered a wider specter of religious leaders than *the Nation*. On the contrary, voices of local people, victims and human right activists and Islamic academics were more constituted in the news story of *the Nation* than in *the Bangkok Post*. This study concludes with identifying lessons learnt from the coverage of the Tak Bai incident and recommendations for other conflicts.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Thailand is considered one of countries in Southeast Asia, where people of different ethnicities, religions and races have been living together harmoniously for centuries. In recent years, however, more conflicts and violence have occurred in the country. The most serious and complex one is the re-emergence of separatist movements in the southernmost provinces. The media response to the situation has been widely debated and discussed among media professionals in Thailand about the ways they report this issue. Media professionals and academics voice their concern over expression of prejudice, sensational words and subtle way of stereotypical condemnation in the news text, urging the media to be more aware of the consequence of this unethical practice.

These tendencies are condemned as having contributed to a polarized development of the Thai society and escalating conflicts. Moreover, in today's world, advanced information technology enhances the capacity of the news media to reach larger groups of readers in different parts of the world. As such, what have been presented via online media would have a wider effect. From the researcher's perspective, mass media represents a crucial source of beliefs and values from which audiences develop their pictures of their worlds. For this reason, media ethical practices of the media are required.

In reporting conflict and violent situations, the Thai media are always urged to uphold their ethical standard for the sake of national unity. At the same time, a new way of journalistic conflict reporting has been internationally promoted to create a media role in peace building. Nevertheless, Peace journalism appears to be difficult to practice because it lacks of case studies in domestic conflicts in an area which journalism can play a conflict transformation role (Tehrani, 2002:74). This inspired the researcher

to conduct a master thesis on peace journalism on a specific domestic incidence at Tak Bai¹, which is part of the ongoing insurgency in the south of Thailand.

This study offers a qualitative contribution to the peace journalism framework in a specific local context. The researcher intends to test the Peace Journalism (PJ) as a method and come up with useful recommendations for the media to apply to a particular complex domestic situation. Two main areas of inquiry; media discourse and peace journalism are explored for the insight of understanding the integral relation of text and context. To shed light on the idea of PJ and power of media text in framing conflict settings, this study will examine the PJ practices in the Tak Bai incident with following main purposes:

- To analyse the ways in which *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post* newspapers characterise the Tak Bai incident
- To identify contributing factors and limitations to peace journalism in a specific context, the Tak Bai incident

In this study, the researcher applies a concept of media power that focuses on influence of the media language when people and events get reported, as well as the way that reality is constructed. This is based on the assumption that the production processes of media text tend to provide the audiences with a specific perception of reality. The researcher also would like to conduct textual analysis to explore the power of language in the text. Furthermore, the implication of PJ can be applied in different contexts; therefore, practical limitations of the situation will be examined.

The Tak Bai incidence is important for many reasons. First, the press did not know exactly what happened at that time. They just got a report from local stringers and correspondents that there was a protest at a police station and the security forces tried to crackdown the protesters. Not many of them followed up the situation until it was found that almost 80 protesters died from suffocation after the crackdown (interviews, 12th January – 8th February, 2008). Second, the incident relates to human rights violation and has been widely criticized in international forums.

¹ A district of Thailand's southernmost province, where local Malay Muslim people protested the incarceration of six village volunteers in October, 2004. The protesters were crackdown, resulting in loss of over 80 lives and serious consequences.

Lastly, it intensifies the problems in the southern border provinces of Thailand, leading to many serious consequences such as killings, and bomb attacks. As a result, the government declared marshal law and tightened security measures in the area. Since the re-insurgency broke out in 2004, almost 3,000 people have lost their lives. The insurgence enters its fifth years and has become the most violent conflict in the whole Southeast Asian region.



Figure 1: Map of Tak Bai district

source: www.economist.com

At that time, the Thai government claimed its legitimacy and authority to clear out and control the situation in the south urging all media to stop reporting the violence for the sake of the country's image. However, TV and video clips or footages clearly showed that the soldiers treated the detainees very brutally and without respect to human rights. Most of them had their hands tied behind their back with their face on the ground. Then they were dumped like logs and crammed in the lorry to transport them out.

It is considered the most shocking concentrated incident which the Thai government was condemned by the international community for human rights violations. The incident also resulted in deteriorating relations with Muslim community around the world, particularly neighboring countries like Malaysia. For these reason, the tragedy needs to be studied to rectify the situation in view of the significant

implications to the peace, harmony and security of the country, the ASEAN region² and the world as a whole.

The researcher does not intend to prove who is right or wrong in this conflict but rather to investigate the media performance and limitations of the PJ model in this specific context of violence. The qualitative approach of textual analysis in this study explores the linguistic features in the media text that exhibit a relationship between media language and the social reality. Of particular is the implication of the PJ frame in the news coverage of the two mainstream Thailand's English dailies. Based on the assumption that in different conflicts the media can apply peace journalism under their restricted conditions, three research questions are posed.

1.) How do the coverage of the two newspapers (*The Nation* and *The Bangkok Post*) on the Tak Bai incident conform to the peace journalism practices?

2.) What kinds of representation of the TAK BAI incident in relation to the Peace Journalism model are presented in the media text?

3.) What are the limitations to the peace journalism in this context-specific incidence (Tak Bai)?

1.1 Background of the conflict

The southernmost area of Thailand comprises three provinces; Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. In the past, this region was part of the independent sultanate, the ancient kingdom of Raya Pattani or Greater Pattani (Upward, 2006: 4-6). At that time, the region included Songkla and Satul provinces. Majority of the people are Malay-Muslim. They had their own civilization in the past. At that time, the region had their own identity and language called YAWI, that is similar to Arabic. The Patani region was conquered by Thailand for the first time in 1786.

Then under the Anglo-Thai Treaty between Thailand and the Great Britain, new borderline in the southern Malayu was established (Samae, 2003). Thailand ceded four

² The Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok by the five original Member Countries, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Then, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia joined the group respectively. As of 2006, the ASEAN region has a population of about 560 million, a total area of 4.5 million square kilometers. (<http://www.aseansec.org/64.htm>)

provinces namely Kelanta, Trengganu, Kedah and Peris to Great Britain and the region around Thai-Malaysia border was acknowledged as part of Thailand. However, the attempt to assimilate the people in this area has never been successful.

Grievances against the Thai state were originated from this hundred-year-old division. Since its annexation, the region has been treated as backwater and has been neglected, socially, politically and financially (Upward, 2006). The resistance movements have been operating since 1960s. In the past few decades, many separatist parties have been transformed. The major ones include Barisan Nasional Pembelaan Patani (B.N.P.P.), Barisan Revolusi Nasional Patani(B.R.N.), Patani United Liberation Organization (P.U.L.O), and Barisan Bursatu Kemedekaan Patani (BERSATU).

In the present movement, Islamic insurgents were behind over four years of the violence (2004-present) across this region and demand the Pattani kingdom back, and are willing to spill the blood of both Buddhists and Muslims to achieve their goal of autonomy. They claim that Thailand rules the three southernmost provinces with “colonial oppression” and have vowed to continue killing innocent people if self-rule is not returned to Pattani (Ibid.).

However, the local people want to live in peace and had no desire for autonomy and have been pressured into backing militant groups through fear and intimidation. They cooperate with extremists and separatists because they have to live with these people every day, and the troops can not protect them. Leaders of separatist movements are like warlords and if you do not cooperate, you are in big trouble. Despite their notoriously reclusive nature, secessionist groups like PULO and the Barasi Revolusi Nasional coordinate had previously approached the government with a view of holding talks to end hostilities in return for autonomy. But the Thai government has always refused (Samae, 2003). With Thai TV and newspapers splashed with pictures of burning schools, bombed cars and even headless corpses, some say resistance to Bangkok rule is not the only problem Thailand faces. Like other people in other parts of the world, many Thai people now assume Muslims in that area are terrorists.

1.1.1 Chronology events before Tak Bai crackdown (January – October 2004)

The form of conflict in the southernmost of Thailand varies from time to time. This depends on how well the government deals with the situation. The tension was

reduced when people had more opportunity to take part in Thai politics during 1990s. But in 2004, the situation came to a crisis again as explained in following order:

January 4th, 2004 – 60 unidentified attackers raided into the Narathiwat Rajanakarin army camp in Narathiwat province. They killed four soldiers and stole more than 400 rifles, 20 pistols and two machine guns. After that, the area was in turmoil with daily killings. The perpetrators attacked officials and local people. The authorities later came up with an idea to establish a Martial Law to control the situation.

April 28th, 2004 – Keu Se Mosque incident. Early morning, hundreds of Muslim militants assailed 12 different police and military outposts in Yala, Songkla and Narathiwat. They were young people armed with weapons. Most of them were killed and 17 were arrested during the crackdown. The last group of militants was trapped and killed at Kruse historical Mosque in Patani province. This action resulted in another protest in Tak Bai district, Narathiwat province.

October 25th, 2004 – Thousands of people gathered in front of the police office in Tak Bai district Narathiwat province. The gathering was to protest the incarceration of six Malay Muslim defense volunteers detained for allegedly giving their weapons to militants. The authority failed to negotiate with the protesters and more people from nearby areas stormed the police station.

The confrontation between the authority side and protesters was tense and chaotic. At around 3.00 p.m., some protestors tried to break through the police blockade. Consequently, the security forces controlled the situation by using water, tear gas and lethal force. Warning shots were fired by the police, 7 were killed and 1298 were arrested (ICG, 2005:17). The soldiers made the protestors lie face down on the ground, but allowed women and children to leave the scene. Subsequently, about 1300 protestors were tied and stacked in 28 six-wheeled trucks up to five or six layers deep for the journey to Ingkayuth Army Camp in Pattani province.

On the following day, the death toll increased to 78 during the detention and transportation. However, not all those who gathered were protesters; many were curious onlookers and others came on the request of their village heads and religious teachers. This brought the question of human right, widely debated in international forums.

1.2 Media landscape and freedom of the press (2003-2005)

The researcher focuses on the period of 2003 to 2005, specifically, the Tak Bai incident in 2004 to provide understanding about the media situation in Thailand at that time. Since the Thai Rak Thai Party came to power, freedom of the press had become more difficult. It became worse in 2004 when the government increased its intervention, control directly and indirectly, even buying out of the media in some cases. In a democratic society, the media's rights and freedom are guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19 which states that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression without interference.

In 2004, the Thai media were also protected by provisions in the 1997 Constitution, Articles 37 guaranteed an individual's right to lawful communications while Articles 39 and 41 guaranteed the right of public members and the media to report news and express views that are not against the professional code of ethics. In addition, Article 40 regards communication and broadcast frequencies as national resources that should be used for the benefit of the public. However, these principles had been ignored, giving rise to continued violations and threats against the media freedom.

1.2.1 Complex intervention

Interference in the Thai media by business and political groups has always been interconnected with the aim of mutual benefits. Mostly, intervention came in multifaceted from people in the same groups of business or the same families. This resulted in absolute control of the media through various means, such as monitoring through state power, financial support and advertisements, restraint on the flow of information, influencing news agendas, and creating a 'sense of fears' for critical journalists by issuing them with defamation lawsuit (Siriuyusak, 2005).

Although the print media enjoy more freedom than the state owned media (radio and TV), they are entirely privately owned and have to rely on business purposes. The following are instances of the complex and total interventions as mentioned above.

The newspapers

- Purchases of large amounts of shares in newspaper businesses by investors with connections to politicians in power. One example was moves by relatives to key politician to buy more than 10 per cent of shares in Nation Multimedia Group Plc, making them the company's third largest shareholders. This leads to people's concern about possible impact that it may have on the freedom of the newspapers. (http://www.irrawaddy.org/article.php?art_id=86)
- Some newspapers were cautious in publishing critical comments or negative reports about the government due to offers by companies with links to government figures such as the Export Promotion Department and the Tourism Authority of Thailand to buy advertisement space in their papers. Considering the fact that two-thirds of the newspapers' revenue are from advertisement, most of the papers are not immune from the 'purchasing power' of the government and business which links to politicians in power (Hayes, 2007:149).
- Intervention through executives of newspaper companies. One example was a decision by Post Publishing Plc's board of directors to remove Veera Prateepchaikul, the editor of Bangkok Post Newspaper and former president of the Thai Journalists Association. The reason behind this transfer was because the editor had allowed for disparaging comments about the Prime Minister (at that time) to be published in the newspaper (Hayes, 2007:150-51). This caused great concerns among professional journalists and was considered a serious dent on the media freedom. Types and numbers of print media are shown in the tables below.

There are 32 Thai language newspapers, 2 English dailies, and 6 Chinese dailies. The selected newspapers, *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation* are the leading English newspapers in Thailand and have similar reputations as liberal-minded press. They are rivals in the circulation. *The Bangkok Post* has the daily circulation of 80,000 copies whereas *The Nation* has 70,000 copies a day. The two English dailies compete for the same target groups: foreigners in Thailand and elite and educated locals. They are popular among well-educated and influential members of Thai society.

Both newspapers employ the same sources of international news, i.e. the wire services of Reuters, Associated Press (AP), Agence France Presse (AFP) and United

Press International (UPI), hence the contents of their international news are rather similar. Both have substantially more international news than typical Thai-language newspapers. The two newspapers employ local staff to report and make comments of domestic and Southeast Asian affairs. The news content of both papers is widely regarded as objective, responsible and reliable. They also report considerably more on the neighbouring countries of Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar than the international media in general. Below is a brief profile of the two newspapers: (National Center for Research in Europe, 2005)

The Bangkok Post

The Bangkok Post was founded by an American editor in 1946. It has a mix of foreign and Thais staff. It belongs to the Post Publishing Public Co., Ltd. The Company provides news and information to the public through its magazines and newspapers. The company's main activity is the publishing and distribution of English daily newspapers "*Bangkok Post*", Thai-language business daily newspaper "Post Today" and weekly English newspaper "Student Weekly", magazines and books, namely Elle, Elle Decor and Cleo.

Majority of its readers are people aged 30 up or those at management level. With its 62 years of establishment, *the Bangkok Post* claims that it is always mentioned as the reference in wire services and business discussion.

(http://wrightreports.ecnext.com/coms2/reportdesc_COMPANY_C764CV110)

The Nation

The Nation was founded in 1971 led by Suthichau Yoon. It later took a major turn in 1991 by a team of journalists who broke off from *The Bangkok Post* over reporting principles. The newspaper is operated by the Nation Multimedia Group Plc., one of the biggest media conglomerates in Thailand. The Group's principal businesses are the publication and distribution of magazines and newspapers, importation and production of children's books for education, television and radio program production and the provision of advertising services and on-line information and news services. As part of the group's strategy to build the widest English-language media audience in Thailand with a strong focus on economic and national affairs, the newspaper has launched an English freesheet to expand its readership among younger readers.

Its corporates includes Daily Express (English)Krunthep Turakij (Thai business newspaper), Kom Chad Luk (Thai newspaper), Nation Channel (Thai & English TV). Nation Radio (Thai), Nation Weekend (Thai news), NJ Connect, Biz Book and Biz Week.

(http://wrightreports.ecnext.com/coms2/reportdesc_COMPANY_C76458620)

To provide an overview of the media scene in Thailand, many interventions in radio and television are in the following lists:

Radio and TV

- Broadcast media are main targets of intervention through sponsorship because they attract a large group of audience, 86 per cent for TV and 36 per cent for radio, compared to 21 per cent for newspaper readership. Substantial investments is required to ensure smooth operation therefore, radio and TV have to rely heavily on advertisement income, which make them prone to intervention from businesses and politicians.
- The Prime Minister at that time founded his own radio and television program under the title “Prime Minister Thaksin talks to the people”. It was weekly program that Mr Thaksin recounted his political activity and publicized the achievements of his administration.
- Although there had been efforts to liberalize the electronic media under the Article 40 of the 1997 Constitution, the progress was slow progress and became an issue of conflict of interest. The state agencies still control over radio and television stations (see appendix 1-2). The concessions are allocated to the bid winners according to a certain period under the concession contract. Therefore, companies that won the concessions to run radio or television programs have to avoid the content deemed critical of the government and relevant state agencies in order to increase their chances of having the concessions renewed.

During 2003 to 2005, a significant number of defamation lawsuits were filed against journalists, newspapers, and activist, who criticized the Prime Minister and his administration or his business empire (Hayes, 2007: 145). This illustrates another way

that politicians and the business sector violate the freedom of the press in Thailand. Following are cases of such lawsuits:

The media interference instances cited above led to a decline of the watchdog role of the media played in Thai society. Efforts to scrutinize politicians in power were weakened and senior journalists kept their mouth shut, allowed the government to set news agendas and let businesses as well as politicians to meddle with its editorial policies and content. In the meantime, most social critics and academics had also become less critical of the government. This led to reduced sources for the media.

1.2.2 Internet as a news medium

The more channels of information people have, the more the chance of seeing the truth. The Internet is a new medium for Thai society and it is becoming more accepted and influential in Thailand. Online news first started to serve the public's need for current news and information, especially for those living abroad. It offers timely news and it is easy to access (Mongkolsiri, 2003: 392). Typical online readers in Thailand need time, money and computer competence to access online news therefore, most of the online readers are more educated than those ordinary news readers. They are also able to afford the extra costs of the Internet access.

An in-depth study was conducted and found that readers of Thailand's online newspapers are a worldwide: located across Asia, America, Australia, Africa, and Europe (Ibid). They read online news as their fourth source of information after TV, newspaper and radio. While those living abroad access it more often and second only to TV. The most common material is headlines and breaking news, followed by entertainment. The sections that readers accessed most are front page news, followed by technology, marketing and political news. However, online news is not yet a substitute information channel for Thai society due to several limitations such as computer literacy skills and inadequate infrastructures. In 2004, there was a threat to close down or block certain news and political websites that were against the Thai government.

1.2.3 Access to the Internet in Thailand

According to a survey in 2004, there were almost 7 million Internet users, 35 websites hosted by newspapers, 146 websites hosted by magazines, 38 sites hosted by radio station and 20 sites hosted by TV stations. Although online providers face many

challenges such as business models and multilingual fonts, the Net has promising news potential especially for youth and expatriate populations (Mongkonsiri, 2003:391). By the year 2008, it is expected that the Internet users in Thailand will increase to approximately 14 million.

1.3 Limitations of the study

Few limitations were found in this study, the main one is the researcher's lack of access to the primary sources, particularly, protestors in the conflict and local stringers. As this incident occurred in 2004, it is difficult to approach all of those who were involved in the incident. Moreover, data provided in archives are in text forms not include pictures.

Only two chosen newspapers may not provide adequate in width study of the issue, and offer enough range of articles needed to make an effective conclusion. Although, coverage of the two news newspapers is adequate to answer the research questions, there should be further study conducted on other newspapers.

The other limitation concerns data interpretation. The qualitative approach of this study provides no statistical evidence to support the findings. All analysis is subjective and dependent on a personal perspective. No matter how diligently the researcher may try to be objective, personal values and beliefs are still an integral part of the researcher's own bias towards the material being analyzed.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study contributes to the promotion of the role of the media in conflict mitigation and increase social responsibility. It also comes up with recommendations for Thai and international media in applying the PJ framework to their coverage on different conflict settings. This also contributes to long-term conflict mitigation and reconciliation.

1.5 Thesis outline

This qualitative textual and contextual study attempts to demonstrate how the two Thai English newspapers, *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post* covered the context specific conflict in the south. It specifically examines the media practices of the two

English newspapers on the Tak Bai incidence, at production and text level, focusing on journalistic representation and Peace Journalism framework. Twelve news articles from both newspapers published during the period of 25 October – November 2004 were selected as media text to be analyzed. In the following chapter, theoretical approaches of the study will be sketched out, and related previous research will be reviewed.

Then Chapter three explains the thesis methodology, describing how the study is conducted. Chapter four explains theoretical approaches and analytical frameworks. Findings will be analyzed and presented in chapter five. All results will be discussed and concluded in the final chapter, where research questions will be answered, final remarks and recommendations for further studies will be made.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Two main theoretical approaches are sketched out in this chapter: social responsibility of the media and critical theories that include the Critical Political Economy, Hegemony theory, the Birmingham School, media discourse and Critical Discourse Analysis. Then studies related to cause of the conflict in southern Thailand, peace building role of the media in different conflicts, and implication of peace journalism will be reviewed. This chapter is divided into five sections. The first one highlights theoretical approaches. This is followed by previous studies on causes of the conflict in Southern Thailand. The part reviews research on media's role in peace building process. Then, in the fourth part, studies on war and peace journalism in media practices will be reviewed. This chapter concludes with the gaps to be filled by this study.

2.1 Theoretical approaches

2.1.1 Mass communication theory: social responsibility of the media

While the press claim that freedom is important to perform their duty and in the society, a mechanism is required to monitor the role of the press and protect the right of the public. In response to this requirement, social responsibility theory is proposed. This notion derives from a report of a private commission of inquiry in 1942 that set up to examine the US media. According to McQuail (2005), the theory of social responsibility involves a view of media ownership as a form of public trust or stewardship, rather than as an unlimited private franchise (McQuail 2005: 171). The main principles of the theory are:

- The media have obligations to society, and media ownership is a public trust
- News media should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant
- The media should be free, but self-regulated
- The media should follow agreed codes of ethics and professional conduct
- Under some circumstances, the government may need to intervene to safeguard the public interest (ibid)

2.1.2 Peace Journalism

Peace Journalism (PJ) is an alternative way proposed by Johan Galtung (1970) for the media to play their social responsibility role in transforming conflict. Galtung formulates peace as a result from non-violence and creativity of PJ in war/ conflict/ or violence reporting. Similarly but include the role of media in peace processes, Gadi Wolfsfeld (2004) observes how reporting of peace processes is produced under specific news values of the media, namely, 'immediacy', 'drama', 'simplicity, and 'ethnocentrism'. He comes up with suggestions on intrinsically inimitable to the need for calm, incremental progress and the recognition of the multisided composition and cultural complexities that should ideally inform peace negotiations (Wolfsfeld, 2004: 15-23 cited in Allen & Seaton, 1999: 104).

Then the concept of PJ is developed by Lynch and McGoldrik (2005), who place more emphasis on practical sense of media performance and come up with PJ model. Key players in this model are editors and reporters.

Peace Journalism is when editors and reporters make choices, about when to report and how to report it, which create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent, developmental responses to conflict (ibid).

Table 1 : Peace Journalism model

<u>Peace/ Conflict Journalism</u>	<u>War/ Violence Journalism</u>
<p><i>I. Peace/Conflict-Orientated</i></p> <p>Explore conflict <u>formation</u>, x parties, y goals, z issues, 'win-win' orientation</p> <p>Open space, open time; causes and outcomes anywhere, also in history/culture</p> <p>Making conflicts transparent</p> <p>Giving voice to all parties, empathy, understanding</p> <p>See conflict/war as problem, focus on conflict creativity</p>	<p><i>I. War/Violence-orientated</i></p> <p>Focus on conflict <u>arena</u>, 2 parties, 1 goal (win), war, zero-sum orientation</p> <p>Closed space, closed time; causes and exits in arena, who threw the first stone</p> <p>3. Making wars opaque/secret</p> <p>4. 'us-them' journalism, propaganda, voice, for 'us'</p> <p>5. See 'them' as the problem, focus on who prevails in war</p>

<p>Humanization of all sides; more so the worse the weapon</p> <p><u>Proactive</u>: prevention before any violence/war occurs</p> <p>Focus on invisible effects of violence (trauma, damage to structure/culture)</p> <p><i>II. Truth-Orientated</i></p> <p>Expose untruth on all sides / uncover all cover-up</p> <p><i>III. People-Orientated</i></p> <p>Focus on suffering all over, on women, aged, children, giving voice to voiceless</p> <p>Give name to all evil-doers</p> <p>Focus on people peace-makers</p> <p><i>IV. Solution-Orientated</i></p> <p>Peace = non-violence + creativity</p> <p>Highlight peace initiatives, also to prevent more war</p> <p>Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society</p> <p>Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation</p>	<p>6. Dehumanization of 'them'; more so the worse the weapon</p> <p><u>Reactive</u>: waiting or violence before reporting</p> <p>Focus only on visible effect of violence (killed, wounded and material damage)</p> <p><i>II. Propaganda-Orientated</i></p> <p>Expose 'their' untruths / help 'our' cover-ups/lies</p> <p><i>III. Elite-Orientated</i></p> <p>Focus on 'our' suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece</p> <p>Give name of their evil-doers</p> <p>Focus on elite peace-makers</p> <p><i>IV. Victory-Orientated</i></p> <p>Peace = victory + ceasefire</p> <p>Conceal peace initiatives, before victory is at hand</p> <p>Focus on treaty, institution, the controlled society</p> <p>Leaving for another war, return if the old flares up again</p>
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Source: Peace Journalism (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:6)

2.1.3 Political economy of the media

Derived from a Marxist perspective that the ownership of media belongs to the ruling class and the way messages are presented has to follow the interests of the owner, critical political-economic theory places emphasis on the relations between economic structure, media industries and ideological content in the media (McQuail, 2000). The primary concerns of this theory cover the awareness of media ownership, commercialisation of content, the "commoditised" audiences, and the levels of

information available to the various social classes. Marx (1818) described the relationship between economic, political and cultural power, and the ruling class:

The class which has the means of material production has control at the same time over the means of mental production so that, thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they...among other things ... regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch. (cited in Murdoch and Golding, 1977:22-23 and Thussu, 2006: 41)

As part of the economic system, linked closely with the political system, the media have to produce content under conditions of pressure to expand markets, and the underlying economic interest of owners and decision makers (Garnham, 1979 as cited in McQuail, 2005). That is, the media content is forced by the economic system to make a profit for the owners or investors.

The theory predicts that this economic system decreases independent media outlets, many of which focus more on their ethics than on making a profit. In addition, the cost of investment is reduced by cutting content or programmes that do not increase revenue, such as educational programmes. Another way to save cost is through conglomerate media business. Similar content can be produced differently and disseminated through various channels under the same network. Moreover, there is a new point of view towards the audience, which becomes the primary target of the media product.

Underpinning the economic purposes of the media institutions, studies conducted in this vein have been based on the assumption that the dynamics of the “*culture-producing industries*” can be understood primarily in terms of their economic determination (Murdock & Golding, 1977; Carrant & Seaton, 1981). As a result, the media content and meaning depend mainly upon the economic base of the media institutions that presents the message. Golding and Murdock (1996) indicate that the increase of new ownership forms and commercial strategies on cultural production leads to further reduction of the “public sphere” and more pressure on the autonomy of those who work within the media industries. Furthermore, cultural consumption that focuses only on making profit may reduce the diversity of the content. Lastly, public interest in communication is subordinated to private interests.

To meet the necessity of making profit, audience-maximizing products and constructed ideology or “false consciousness”, are adopted. In this respect, the role of media content can be that of concealing, misrepresenting, and distorting any aspects of the world’s reality (Golding & Murdock, 1996). However, Murdock and Golding contend that the demands to increase audiences and revenues produce a consistent tendency to avoid the “unpopular and tendentious and draw instead on the values and assumptions which are most familiar and most widely legitimated” (Murdock & Golding, 1977: 37). For this reason, mass media is legitimised as a powerful shaper of public consciousness or consent, but in the interests of the ruling class, who want to maintain existing power structures (ibid). This ideological domination is presented through media content under control of those in authority.

2.1.4 The Birmingham School

To a remarkable extent, the critical cultural theory of the Birmingham School views the significance of media culture in a more positive way. In the opinion of Hall (1982), hegemony is a constantly reasserted definition of a social situation, by way of discourse rather than political or economic power. Consequently, the mass media define the reality of the world in favour of those who have authority (McQuail, 2000). Hall (1982) notes that, by itself, ideological compulsion on a subordinate class is not enough to explain this complicated process because of the different interpretations of the audiences. According to Hall, dominance can be accomplished at the unconscious as well as the conscious level: to see it as a property of the system of relations involved, rather than as the overt and intentional biases of individuals in the very activity of regulation and exclusion which function through language and discourse (1982: 95).

The theoretical perspectives on this social-cultural approach focuses on the internal articulation of the signifying systems of the media text, trying to find codes or dominant meaning in it, the emphasis on social process, through to the oppositional reading of media text. The process that enables the mass media to perform the “ideological work is the process of systematic encoding and decoding”, according to Hall (1974). It refers to selecting the codes, which transfer meaning to different events or things. Furthermore, there are several ways of encoding specific events, especially problematic ones that breach our common-sense expectations, or threaten the status quo in some way.

In this respect, Hall suggests three basic codes in circulation: *dominant meaning* associated with power; *negotiated code*, in which media text and reader interact; and *oppositional code*, which depends on contexts. As indicated in this model, the transmitted ideology is not always similar to the received ideology. To successfully construct an ideology, especially in case of the Tak Bai incident, the codes must be carefully selected to embody in the text. Therefore, the codes that naturally incarnate the rationality of a particular society and that are accepted by most people, i.e. “preferred codes”, are needed.

However, the ideological construction through the preferred codes may not work if the codes are differently interpreted. Audiences, whose decoding will inevitably reflect their own material or perception of reality and social conditions, will not necessarily decode events within the same ideological structures as those in which they have been encoded (Hall, 1974; Morley, 1974). This is in line with the concept of effective communication aiming to win the consent of the audiences to the preferred reading, and to get them to decode within the hegemonic framework.

The idea on different decoding is considered “re-empowering” the audience and returns to some optimism to the study of media and culture. This is an outstanding point of the social-cultural approach; it shifts the focus from ideology embedded in the media texts to how the encoded ideology is read by the audiences. All features of ideology construction are found in language of media text and the theory of critical discourse analysis can explain this.

2.1.5 Media and Discourses

The definition of discourse is overlapped between two main disciplines; linguistics and social science. According to James Paul Gee (2002), discourse with little ‘d’ connotes language beyond the sentence boundaries, while the word with capital ‘D’ conveys social communicative practices in which ideological effects and social beliefs portray themselves through language use. To be more precise, by the way people communicate, a particular context is formed. In this study, language is considered a communicative event, consequently, discourse analysis takes into account of language use in media text, which shapes and expresses beliefs and understanding in a situation.

Media and Discourses or contexts relate to each other in terms of meaning constructed by language in the media text. Meanings in media text are produced in the

process of reading not writing (Fiske, 1987:305); therefore, they are more a product of negotiation (Garret & Bell, 1997:2). As defined by Cook (1992:1) discourse analysis concerns not only language, but also the context of communication that includes:

“who is communicating with whom and why; in what kind of society and situation, through what medium; how different types of communication evolved, and their relationship to each other.” (ibid)

Bell (1995a: 23 cited in Barret & Bell, 1997: 3-4) gives four reasons for studying media discourse; its ready accessibility of data for research, its influences and representations of people’s attitudes, its connotation of social meaning and stereotypes, and its reflections and influences on the formation and expression of culture, politics and social life. An approach to media discourse has been developed by Fairclough in 1995 focusing on media text and context. Taking the view of van Dijk and Fairclough, discourse analysis needs to take a closer look at contextual elements inherent in the news texts themselves (Tveiten and Nohrstedt, 2002: 136). Media texts in this study are written texts of two newspapers that present context of violence in a local conflict. They can tell interrelation between media practice in texts and the conflict situation.

2.1.6 Critical discourse analysis

According to Threadgold (2003), a group of scholars at the University of East Anglia, in Great Britain, developed the idea of critical linguistics (CL) in the 1970s based on Michael Halliday’s systemic functional grammar, Chomskyan transformational linguistics, and the work of Barthes and early French semioticians. Initially, the CL approach focused on analysing text as discourse. It placed less emphasis on the production and interpretation of texts. Furthermore, the relationships between discourse and the wider process of social and cultural change were overlooked. In the 1980s and 1990s the process of textual interpretation and production became the major focus of interest since social semioticians received influences from post-structuralism, French structuralism and semiotics, the work of Umberto Eco, and a variety of feminist writers.

Later on, Fairclough was among the influential critical discourse analysts such as Ruth Wodak, and Tuan van Dijk. His theory of discourse and social change was labelled as critical discourse analysis or CDA. It is based on Foucault, a number of neo-Marxist writers, and other social theories. Fairclough combines a version of functional

linguistics with social and cultural theory (Threadgold, 2003). He defines “discourse” as spoken or written language use and views it from social theory perspectives. His theory is called “critical” in the sense that it investigates the connections between the use of language and the power that is exercised through social practices. Fairclough (1995b: 55) states that language is socially shaped, but is also socially shaping (socially constitutive). Critical discourse analysis is applied to explore the tension between these two sides of language use (being shaped and shaper) in a communicative event. He proposes a three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis, as shown in figure 2.

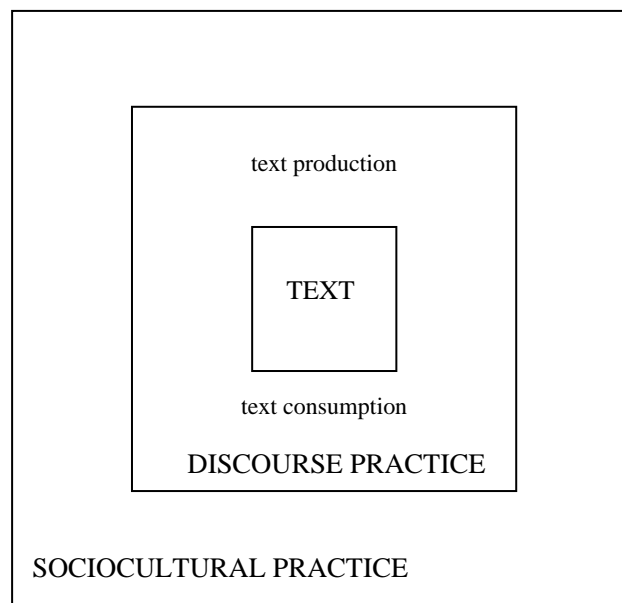


Figure 2: Fairclough's (1995: 59) framework for critical discourse analysis

The first dimension is discourse as text – linguistic analysis at text level. Fairclough believes that text can be analysed in three functions based on Halliday's multifunctional perspective: ideational, interpersonal, and textual function, which he re-labelled as *representations*, *relations*, and *identities* (Fairclough 1995: 17). With a multifunctional view of text, the constitution of systems of knowledge and belief – representation (ideational function) and social relations and social identities (interpersonal function) have to be examined simultaneously in texts.

The second dimension is discourse practice is divided into two facets: institutional processes (e.g. editorial procedures) and discourse processes (transformation of text in production and consumption process). According to Fairclough (1995b: 61), linguistic analysis can be done at discourse practice level, where it is called “intertextual analysis”. He views it as mediation between text and social and cultural practices. Emphasising the boundary of text and discourse practice, he analyses text from a discourse practice perspective and tries to find the traces of the discourse practice in the text. As the core concept of discourse processes, “intertextuality” is classified into two types of intertextuality: it is either *manifest* or *constitutive* (Fairclough, 1992: 104). The former refers to the heterogeneous constitution of texts, and it is marked by explicit signs such as quotation marks, indicating the presence of other texts. The latter refers to the “heterogeneous constitution of texts out of elements (type of convention) of orders of discourse (interdiscursivity)”, which refers to the structure of discourse conventions that go into the new text’s production.

The third dimension is socio-cultural practices, which is the wider context of institutional practice. Fairclough (1995b) broadly divides this dimension into three components: economic (e.g. economy of media), political (e.g. power and ideology of media), and cultural (e.g. values and identities of media). He suggests that socio-cultural practices are selective, depending on the communication event. There is no necessity to analyse all components.

Fairclough (Ibid) uses CDA to analyse media discourse by applying the three-dimensional framework to the communicative event and the orders of discourse (genres and discourses). The communicative event is a particular setting of communication in the media, for example a particular newspaper editorial or television documentary. At the text level, the individual constituents of text are explored in a multifunctional view: representation of social practice, the identity and relationship constructed between the sender and the reader.

At the discourse level, the factors influencing the production processes of the text are attended to. The ways the texts are transformed indicate the influences of society and culture in the media. The *orders of discourse* have a significant role in displaying the text transformation. The orders of discourse are the normal ways of using language in the particular social institution or social domain (Fairclough, 1995b: 55).

Discourse is language used to represent a particular concept in the social practice. The different types of discourse are mixed in the text. Tracing the boundaries and relationships between different discourse types reveals the organisation of the communication event and reflects the number of social practices influencing the media. Fairclough's second dimension is practical for connecting textual analysis with its context and the wider social and cultural contexts within which the text is embedded.

2.2 Previous studies

2.2.1 Causes of the conflict in southern Thailand

A group of scholars placing an emphasis on the structural underpinning of Malay-Muslim grievances against the Thai states, on politics of identity, and a host of other salient background issues (Dorairjoo, 2004; Jihad, 2005; Jitpiromsri, 2006; Upward, 2006). The root causes of troubles in the southern region of Thailand are analyzed from empirical data to explore the aspects and interpretation of the movement in the southern Muslim community of Thailand.

Dorairjoo (2004) clarifies that rebellions began after Siam's administrative restructuring in 1903, several uprisings against the Thai state came as a result of unjust social conditions such as intervention in education, poverty and unfair treatments. This is inline with other studies on the same issue. The International Crisis Group published a study report in 2005 providing more explanations for why violence in the three southernmost provinces has escalated.

Two of the most plausible are the disbanding of key government institutions, and the fear and resentment created by arbitrary arrests and police brutality, compounded by government failure to provide justice to victims and families. Rapid social change has also contributed to insecurity and frustration in Malay Muslim communities and a feeling that their way of life, values and culture are threatened (Jihad, 2005).

Next study also underpins similar cause of the conflict, Upward (2006), points out the construct of Thai identity: the monarchy (devotion to the king); religion (adherence to Buddhism); and language (proficiency in speaking Thai) above all for the ethnically Malay, Muslim minority in southern Thailand. He also identifies the transformation of insurgent ideology from internal secessionist movement to externally aided religious struggle referring to a previous report of ICG by Jihad (2005).

In his study on “Unpacking Thailand’s Southern Conflict”, Jitpiomsri (2006) points out that the escalation of southern violence in recent years makes obvious the patterns of target-oriented and well-planned attacks. The latest waves of militant attacks have had a much more aggressive and ruthless character. Social grievances are a condition behind the bloodshed (Jitpiomsri, 2006:95-112). He mentions the Tak Bai suffocation:

... it was the clear implication of violent repression by Thai state had backfired, creating a new sense of solidarity and a heightened feeling of struggle on the part of southern Muslim communities. (Ibid)

All mentioned studies mainly focus on historical and political aspects of overall southern conflict in Thailand. They are part of the attempt to understand the root cause of the conflict; however, more research is still needed on reconciliation effort of all parties concerned.

2.2.2 Media’s role in peace building processes

Media as a social institution is expected to take part in reconciliation process. In answering the question of how the media can contribute to peace building processes and the media role in reporting violent and conflict issues, several researches have been carried out in different cases. The issue of media role in the world’s changing conflict settings has been seriously discussed and analyzed since the form of conflict and wars have become more complicate, getting involved with more parties and factors.

Two major turning points that raise awareness of the media’s role are the Post-Cold War military conflicts, the other one is the 9/11 terrorist attack. As pointed out by Kempf (2002:59-72), the Journalism of Attachment was proposed with the idea that the journalists have to take side with the victims and demand that something must be done. (Bell,1997 cited in Kempf, 2002:59). This idea appears similar to Peace Journalism but rather relies on one side (the victims) that may result in imbalance and lack of other context in conflict reporting. Hence, this notion is criticized as it replaces the rules of journalism with the rule of propaganda (ibid).

More points of view in this issue are made by Tehranian (2002). He argues that ethically responsible journalism is essential to achieving peace journalism. His study calls for a pluralism of media structures at the local, national, and global levels. The study concludes with a proposal to promote peace journalism through greater freedom,

balance, and diversity in media representations (Tehrani, 2002: 58). Focus of the study is on the commercialization of global media system during the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. Peace journalism is criticized in terms of its difficulty to enact the ten commandments in media practice (ibid).

The issue of how exactly the media can contribute to peace-building was further discussed in May 2003. In conflict situations, media is usually seen as a threat, being keen to pounce on any indiscreet or conciliatory remarks by the negotiators and publish them without any thought of the consequences (Adam and Holguin, 2003). Examples of best practices include a participative process initiated by Radio Douentza in Mali and the Award for Journalistic Excellence in Conflict Analysis created by the Conflict Resolution Network in Canada. Furthermore, alternative media also contribute to peace-building in terms of empowering marginalized people in different parts of the world by providing them channels to access unseen information.

Taking the same view of media role in peace building, Wolfsfeld (2004) offers three case studies of the media role in the Oslo peace process that deals with conflict between Palestine and Israel, between Israel and Jordan, and the Good Friday peace agreement for Northern Ireland. Among these cases, the media play a constructive role in the Good Friday peace agreement, while the rest of the cases found destructive role of the media in peace process.

2.2.3 War and Peace Journalism in media practices

While the media can help in opening up such complexities to a wider view, peace journalists do not occupy a position of omniscience in respect of the 'truth' or how we can best arrive at it. Much will depend on the interests, vantage points and perspectives of all the parties involved (Cottle, 2006:103). In conflict-ridden area in Asia, newspapers have shown inclination toward war journalism. Two competing frames of Asian newspapers in covering regional conflicts are examined by Lee and Maslog (2005). They investigated news coverage of four conflicts in five newspaper of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines and found that the news coverage of these conflicts is dominated by a war journalism frame.

Another attempt to promote peace journalism is found in a study by Peleg (2006). He demonstrates how several insights from conflict theory can advance the lucidity of peace journalism and render it a powerful tool in the hands of reporters and

their readers to realize the futility of conflict and to bring about its resolution. More specifically, the article introduces the notion of the media as a third party to a conflict. Peace Journalism as a third side can best enhance prospects for resolution and reconciliation by changing the norms and habits of reporting conflicts. This is briefly illustrated in three case studies of protracted conflicts, which are described through the lenses of conflict theory. By contrasting regular newspaper coverage with peace journalism coverage, the merits of the latter are revealed. Cases of conflict in these countries are studied; Northern Island, Palestine/ Israel, and the Basque country.

As the implication of peace journalism in Thai media is a new field, only a few related studies are found. The concept has gain more attention since the outbreak of the southern unrest in 2004. Focusing on Thailand's English newspaper (the Nation) and its peace efforts in the south, Yee (2005) found that the newspaper illustrates more pro-peace than pro-violent reporting style in its text. The study employs qualitative textual analysis and Galtung's peace journalism conceptual framework. It concludes that the journalistic style of the newspaper in reporting the overall conflict in the south of Thailand is peace-oriented. More cases need to be studied to promote the peace journalistic style in Thai media.

In an effort to apply peace journalism concept in Thai media practice, the Thai Journalists Association launched Issara News Centre, aimed at joining hands among reporters in Bangkok offices and local news centers to create peaceful transformation of the southern conflict. The Study of Isara News Center is conducted to investigate the performance of this newly established news center. The study focuses on coverage of two hostage incidents, Tanyonglimao³ in September 2005 and Gujinlupah⁴ in May 2006. The findings show that INC encounters problems of human resource, unclear strategies and lack of commitment to peace journalism (Kanwerayothin, 2006: 52-57).

2.2.4 Newspapers' coverage on Thailand's southern conflict

The ways that the mainstream media originally operates remain the same in recent days. Coverage on the southern Conflict in foreign media has been studied to identify journalistic representations of this conflict and analyze the ways in which the

³ Name of a village where two marines were taken hostage and beaten to death during negotiations between the authority and the insurgent

⁴ Name of a village where two Buddhist teachers were brutally beaten to death by a group of villagers

conflict is constructed by journalists. The study found that very few of the articles in the three leading US newspapers gave an objective picture and fell back on labeling the case as another Muslim terrorist conflict as found in other parts of the world (Smedley, 2006: 65). The qualitative study comes up with the assumption that the ways in which journalists construct knowledge is to interpret the events that they either witness themselves or research based on primary and/ or secondary sources. In terms of social construction of reality, the researcher concludes that 'reality' depicted by the media in America is a constructed rather than a true and objective representation.

Dominant of authority voices is clearly manifested in the output of the mainstream Thai newspapers. A closer look at the linguistic dimension in media text has been taken in a qualitative analysis of textual evidences in the coverage of Thai newspapers on the southern conflict. Busayakul et al. (2006) apply CDA to analyze media discourse and its implication in social reality. Choices of representation are found to express bias and negative perception toward Muslim insurgents, while the authority agencies are represented in more positive tones (Busayakul et al, 2006:63).

2.3 Gaps to be filled

Having reviewed related literatures in the implication of peace journalism, the researcher has found that scholars pay more attention to international war and conflict events, while only few examined the ongoing events in the south of Thailand. In addition, those who conduct studies on Thailand's southern insurgency do not fully take into account the peace journalism framework. The only one research found on a newly set up news center to conform to PJ concept focuses on the cases in 2005. The study on Tak Bai incident in 2004 can fill the gap in terms of media practice before they applied the PJ concept in reporting conflict in the area.

Moreover, studies that apply CDA to examine the implication of peace journalism in media practice and how media language represents identity, social power, and ideology have not yet been found. For this reason, it seems worthwhile for the researcher to conduct a study on the way media texts and context link to the implication of peace journalism in a specific conflict in the south of Thailand.

In conclusion, theoretical approaches in this study cover those concerning social responsibility of the media, peace journalism, and critical discourse analysis. The researcher has found that critical theories explore reality in different aspects. Political economy emphasises the economic forces that resulted in the media industries and the ideological content they produce. Primary concerns of this theory are the concentration of media ownership, commercialisation of content, the commodification of audiences, and the levels of information available to the various social classes. The critical theory of the Birmingham school focuses on the meaning interpretation in the media text. It believes that the ideological construction will be achieved only when the audiences accept the preferred codes or the meaning that is preferred by the dominant class.

The other critical theory relates to discourse analysis, which focuses on the connection between language and social aspects such as power, inequality and ideology in language. Critical discourse analysis aims to incorporate social theoretical insights into discourse and analysis. What this theory investigates are features that link to social reality such as the orders of discourse, intertextuality, representation, identity and mediation.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The study employs qualitative methods to examine media practice and representation in their text. The starting point is searching for relevant theories and literature based on the concept of language and power, and society. Literatures related to media discourse, critical discourse analysis, political economy, hegemony, cultural studies, and pragmatics from several sources will be reviewed to find gaps that can be answered by my study. The scope of the research covers the output and performance of the Nation and the Bangkok Post newspapers, which are mainstream Thailand English print media. The emphasis is on their coverage of one major incident at Tak Bai district in October 2004.

To investigate an angle of frame in the media text and look into insight of the conflict as well as detect manipulation, the study employs the critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework at the macro level. At the micro level of analysis, linguistic elements in the text will be examined. This is based on the concept that media practitioners socially reconstruct reality based on professional and personal ideology, corporate interests, organizational norms and values, and news schema formats (van Dijk, 1988: 91; Fiske, 1994). In addition, media discourse represents one of the most important vehicles for reproducing the collective belief system of the dominant society and the core values of society (Hall, 1975; van Dijk, 1988). The methodology of my study comprises procedures of library and Internet websites search, data collecting and scope, field study, validity and limitation of the study.

3.1 Library and Internet search

In exploring the relationship between media text and social reality, text books related to critical theories of media, critical discourse analysis and pragmatics are examined. Apart from that, previous studies on the conflict in the south of Thailand from libraries of education institutions are searched. In looking for related information from international sources, data gathering is based on the Internet websites and web portals in the following list: www.oru.se, www.hio.no, www.morguelfile.com, www.milesfilms.com/gie, www.tjanews.org, www.sxc.hu, www.rmit.edu.au,

www.nationmultimedia.com, www.bangkokpost.net, www.mcot.net, www.nida.ac.th, www.gened.arizona.edu, www.discourses.org, etc.

Apart from the Internet search, news monitoring tools of search engine such as Google and Yahoo alert are set up to keep the researcher informed about the update of the situation.

3.2 Data collecting and scope

News on TAK BAI incident in the southernmost area of Thailand produced by both Thai al media have been monitored and gathered to see the feasibility of the study. The coverage of two mainstream English Newspapers, the Nation and the Bangkok Post online version are selected because they cover every aspect of the conflict providing details that can answer my research questions. The reasons behind this choice of data are that, both newspapers are among major channels that foreigners and international community retrieved information about the Tak Bai incident. *The Nation* newspaper has reputations as liberal-minded press, while *the Bangkok Post* generally takes a more conservative approach. The data from their archive contains sufficient information to answer my research questions.

In its news coverage, the two English newspapers reported and followed up all aspects of the confrontation and reconciliation efforts since the beginning until the fact finding reports. The scope of my data is limited to 12 articles of news coverage (online archive) published during October – November 2004. In order to gain an understanding of how news production on the confrontation in Thailand's southern conflict is processed and what kind of difficulties or limitations occurred in covering this incidence, a series of in depth interviews are undertaken during a field study in Thailand. The researcher's journalistic background in approaching the news sources and collecting data is applied in data collecting steps of the study to get insight information and understanding about the media production processes on the incident.

The selected news items are defined as hard news stories at the main section or among top stories of each newspaper. The period represented the most peak episode of the conflict when both broadsheets framed their news of this specific event in a comprehensive context. Of interest is the actualization of PJ frames in the news coverage of the two newspapers. The coverage to be analyzed does not include images

and pictures because of several reasons. The Tak Bai incident broke out in 2004, digital news archives store news content mostly in textual form. Moreover, linguistic elements inhibited in the media text provide adequate and precise understanding of the way the meaning of media text are created, thereby excluding visual aspects of the coverage. As text is an important tool for achieving success in constructing ideology or reality, it is embedded with lexical choices and linguistic features to transfer dominant meanings.

In examining this point, pragmatic perspective is utilised to display representation of the conflict that result in ideology building of the media. Four main features of Peace Journalism model are used to elicit the aspects from the headlines and text bodies of the incident, how the two newspapers conform to peace journalism practice. Grammatical aspects and word choices interwoven in the text are also analyzed. Findings are discussed and recommendations on weakness and contributing factors for Peace Journalism in this specific conflict setting (the Tak Bai incident) are given.

3.2.1 Field study

The researcher took a field trip to Thailand to get insight information about the incident and conduct interviews with editors and reporters of the two mainstream newspapers. Also, more related literatures and studies on this issue are searched and gathered from universities and institutes in and outside Bangkok. Chulalongkorn University, Thammasart University (Bangkok and Rungsit campus in Pathumthani province), Mahidol University (Salaya Campus Nakornpathom province), the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) and Kasetsard University.

3.2.2 Interviews

Face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interview and telephone interviews are conducted with the editorial staff and correspondents of the media. In case that those interviewees are not available for face-to-face meeting, telephone interviews were conducted. The researcher made an individual appointment, requiring 30 – 45 minutes in each case. The interviewees were informed about the purpose and questions before hand. The main themes cover policy of the media in covering conflict issues, news values, news gathering and reporting, and attitudes and understanding about the coverage of the conflict.

The interview applies a combination of different questioning styles in a free format. Mostly open-ended questions were asked to promote an active conversation and create friendly atmosphere between the interviewer and the sources. By this way the researcher can gain more details and explanation about complicated processes in news gathering and production processes. However, it requires high communication skills to control the theme and it is time-consuming. Adequate time is needed to elaborate on interviewees' opinion and thought regarding the distant past event.

Sample of interviewees is limited to 4-5 persons in each newspaper, comprising those who have responsibilities for news production including editors and reporters. The interviewees are involved in the media practices, which is part of the CDA analytical framework. The information gained from this field study will be analyzed to find inter-relation with text and media practices.

Target interviewees from the two newspapers are:

The Nation

- Don Pathan, Regional Desk Editor, South East Asia. He was in the northern part of Thailand during the incident but followed up the case and run a special section "Fire on South" on *the Nation's* website, focusing on the situations and violence in the south.
- Supalak Ganjanakhundee, Senior Reporter with over 15 years experience in covering national security issues including the conflict in the south.
- Sophon Pechthae, Regional editor (Had Yai southern news bureau). He supervises southern local news in five provinces namely, Had Yai, Songkla, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat.
- Rungrawee Chalernsripinyorat, Reporter (resigned). She worked as a journalist at *the Nation* Newspaper for five years during which she extensively covered the resurgence of the Muslim insurgency in Thailand's deep south. She is now an analyst, South East Asia Project of International Crisis Group

The Bangkok Post

- Nawarat Suksamran, Deputy Editor, supervising national news at *the Bangkok Post* headquarters.
- Sermsuk Kasitipradit, Editor (fired). He was chief reporter during the Tak Bai incident. He supervised national security issues and worked in Bangkok. At present, he is an editor of Isara News Center, an independent news agency set up to investigate the truth in southern unrest.
- Anucha Charernphothi, Reporter. He went to cover and follow up the incident at Tak Bai district. He took a training course on Peace Journalism and has applied some ideas to his coverage.
- Thawatchai Kemkamnerd, Correspondent. He was at the protest site and has direct experience in Tak Bak case

All interviews were recorded and transcribed into manuscript. Then the data is interpreted and analyzed in part of discourse practice. All interviewees are Thai journalists, only few of them gave the interview in English, therefore, translation method was required to explain the information provided in Thai language.

3.3 Analytical frameworks

The three dimensions of the Fairclough's CDA analysis comprise text, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice are outlined, in addition to ways on analyzing them. In each dimension, the researcher applies the theoretical approaches mentioned in Chapter II. The focus of the analysis in this study is at discourse practice, comprising text and media practice. At text level, pragmatics in language use will be applied to identify linguistic features displayed in the selected media text.

As the premise of this study concerns the relations between discourse practice of the media and its context, the analysis is mainly based on media discourse as proposed by Fairclough (1995). His critical discourse analysis (CDA) which examines power and control manifested in language embedded in a media text is employed to analyse the news coverage on the southern violence (Tak Bai) reported by *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post* English newspapers (online versions). Fairclough (1992) drafts three dimensions for analysing discourse: text, discourse practice, and social practice.

The first dimension includes linguistic features in the text such as lexical choices and grammatical structures. The discourse practice covers processes of discourse production and consumption such as how meaning is produced, circulated, distributed, and consumed in a society. The last dimension sketched out by Fairclough is discourse as social practice – the way in which discourse is represented, which entail reproductions of society. For instance, analysing how the media discourse shapes social reality or constructs ideology in a society; what institution or group in societies the media are serving; and how voices are selected and arranged in a communicative event (Fairclough, 1995b).

In each dimension of the analysis, the researcher systematically applies media discourse as well as critical theories. The starting point is the discourse practice that links the media output and socio-cultural practice. At this step, the production and to a certain extent the consumption of the media text will be examined by monitoring and interviewing those involved in the production processes. The aim is to find out more about the media practice and how the content, which in this case is the violence in the south of Thailand, may shape readers' perception of social reality. The analysis in this part is based on the researcher's perception as a reader. For this reason, certain concepts concerning critical cultural theory of the Birmingham School initiated by Stuart Hall (1982) is utilised.

In the case of the Tak Bai incidence, news about the protest was mainly reported by local correspondents and independent stringers in the area. Readers were informed about the recent update and recommendations or predictions, and then the media transferred some ideologies indirectly as part of it. It is possible that the readers can interpret it as a presupposition and tacitly accept it as the reality. According to Fairclough's perspective on media discourse, a text selects particular options from the systems of options – the potential – available. These selections amongst available language forms, form the lexical and grammatical potential: one word rather than another, or one grammatical construction rather than another. But these formal choices constitute choices for meaning.

By examining how each perception of the specific incident is presented, it is possible to know something about what the dominant idea is and how hegemony is constructed in the media text. In line with the notion of ideology but placing more emphasis on the audience side, the critical cultural theory of Birmingham School

initiated by Hall (1982) raises the question of how an ideology relates to the impact of the media in modern societies: how the media create mental productions on the audience's mind, and how the audience themselves interpret what they have heard or seen. This theory considers the media a major channel of information containing encoded meanings with the potential to convey the dominant ideology to the audience (Hall, 1982).

The selected data, which in this case is the media output of two English dailies in Thailand, will be examined to find characters that may serve any specific social group. By looking at the way that the coverage on the Tak Bai incidence is presented, how voices are selected and arranged, as well as how the topics are set could tell us something about the dependence of the newspapers, their connections with other economic determinations, and whom they are serving.

At text level, the meaning construction process in the media text will be examined in accordance with a model of three basic codes, namely, *preferred codes* (dominant meanings), *negotiated codes*, and *oppositional codes*. There are always competing interpretations among these three codes in audiences' minds. This study looks at *preferred codes* articulated in the media text and naturally accepted by readers. However, although the text encodes a "*preferred meaning*" or official definitions of an issue, the readers may interpret it differently. This is because readers' decoding depends on many factors, such as social conditions and contexts, as well as their own perception of reality. For this reason, they may not decode the language in a certain media text in the same way as it had been encoded (Hall, 1974; Morley, 1974).

Grammatical features, linguistic transformation and lexical choices that link to the meaning construction process in the media text are investigated. The analysis is based on the functional linguistics of Halliday (1994). In addition, Van Dijk (1998:81) mentioned that lexical items express value judgement in discourse structures for example, terrorist, separatist, freedom fighter, insurgent may be referred to the same individual. In his statement van Dijk ((1998:81) explains:

The choice of specific words may signal the degree of formality, the relationship between the speech partners, the group-based or institutional embedding of discourse, and especially attitudes and hence ideologies of the speaker. Other lexical choices are part of professional registers used to denote specific even characteristic (ibid.

In the second dimension of Fairclough's framework (media practice), the concept of Peace Journalism (henceforth PJ), a relatively new approach initiated by Johan Galtung (1996) to report on wars and conflicts in more creative and ethical ways will be applied to examine discourse practices of the online media. The peace journalism model (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005) originally formulated by Johan Galtung, points out some differences between PJ and regular, or war-oriented journalism. According to Cottle, PJ is not based on hopelessly idealist desires for a conflict-free future. It recognizes the endemic and structural nature of many conflicts in the world but nonetheless seeks to identify and promote constructive responses: 'conflict + creativity', not 'conflict + violence' (Cottle, 2006: 101).

These points help prove the value of peace journalism to conflict solution processes. In their peace journalism concept, Lynch and McGoldrick claim that reports of conflict can be assessed for their accuracy. Their findings and interpretations have a strong claim to delineate things known, as distinct from the knower, under which they have been gathered and compiled. It is therefore, suggested to examine criteria inscribed in journalistic conventions – conventions which incline reports of conflict towards dominant readings of war propaganda and a preponderance of War Journalism. For these reasons, Peace Journalism can offer a basis for assessing news about conflict for its accuracy, as well as a fund of practical options for editors and reporters to equip readers and audiences to decode propaganda and produce their own *negotiated* readings (Hall, 1980), thereby holding power to account.

Cottle (2006) argues that what is needed for PJ is a broadening and deepening of war and conflict reporting, not its universal replacement by an idealized view of the world as it should be, nor one that that is representationally engineered to conform to a particular view of the 'peaceful society' (ibid).

Another important feature of PJ is reporting on peace processes and negotiations as part of a media effort in creating peace. Since journalism engages with different conditions and mediums, these possibly affect potential and performance of media in involving or creating peace efforts. Wolfsfeld (2004) points out:

The key to understanding such variations is to look at the nature of the political and media environments in which the media are operating. Some environments are more likely to produce positive news about peace because they fundamentally alter journalists' working assumptions. The nature of the political

environment is important because journalists reflect and reinforce the existing climate of opinion. The nature of the media environment is significant because it helps define the norms and routines for producing news about peace. (Wolfsfeld, 2004:44 quoted in Allen & Seaton, 1999: 105).

This implies that the media's involvement in peace processes can be both practical and impractical at different stages, depending on their political and economic conditions. At this level, the researcher employs the concepts of critical political economy theory to examine socio-cultural practice of the selected media.

The political economy of media theories point out connections among three major social factors: economic structure, media industry, and media content. As stated by Garnham (1979), the media produce content under economic conditions such as market expansion, profit making, and control of the owners. For this reason, the media output has to rely heavily on economic determination, particularly the interest of their owners. From this perspective, Golding and Murdock (1997) indicate that there is a new form of ownership – conglomerate – which has more economic power. Also, commercial strategies such as reader-maximising products, saving cost by reducing content and construction of ideology or “false consciousness” are applied to make the most profit from media industry.

To investigate journalistic practice of the two newspapers, *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post*, the researcher hence applies PJ analytical model of Lynch and McGoldrick (2005). For example, by looking at their points in the direction of a peaceful solution, a broader perspective in a given conflict, applying concept of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005: 5). Then the researcher will examine the connections between journalists, their sources, and their way of collecting information to explain whether their practices conform to the PJ model.

3.4 Data and text analyzing

Manuscript of the interview will be examined as part of media practices in the second dimension of Critical Discourse Analysis framework of Fairclough (1995b). Then four main features of Peace Journalism (henceforth PJ) model developed by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:6) will be applied.

In text analysis, this study looks at headlines and content features. Twelve News articles from the two newspapers are examined to find representation of actions, actors, events by using passive voice without and with agent. By using passive voice without an agent, the focus is only on action and the victim (Johnstone, 2002). Agent of action is omitted because it is obvious. The media assume that the readers know who took the action and create emotional involvement with the topic in a negative way. In active voice with an agent, the focus is on an agent of the action, portraying the agent to be obvious (ibid). This enables reader to interpret context to text.

At lexical level, linguistic transformation is a way to obscure negative action of the elite or powerful group (Deacon et al, 2007: 155). It is one of popular linguistic tactics the newspaper employ to represent action in passive form. In addition, word choices refereeing to the conflict and participants involved are also investigated. This will be further discussed in detail in chapter VI.

3.5 Validity and reliability of the study

In analysing text, the researcher is an audience, interpreting meaning of language using her own knowledge and applying related theories. Analysis and interpretation will be based on the researcher's own perspectives that may be different from others, according to their attitudes and values.

The data is obtained from digital news archives, which is considered 'proxy data'. Major validity implications for this study include the use of keywords and textual form of individual text (Deacon et al, 2007: 133-134). The data collected in news archives is depended on specific key words, therefore, this study is valid only on the Tak Bai incident and does not cover other insurgencies in the southern conflict. News content is in individual textual form and does not include images and position of the story in the page.

In terms of reliability, although the choice of articles is made by the researcher who may have her own possible biases depending on individual values and beliefs, CDA is an inclusive framework covering all factors that interrelate to the media text in my study so it has reliability. Results of the study are consistent over time and accurate representation of the conflict incidence in this study. Apart from that, the media text in

my study derived from two newspaper's archives can not be considered as representative of all online media texts produced in Thailand.

This chapter has outlined the methodology of the study starting from library and Internet websites search, data collecting and scope, field study, validity and limitation of the study.

CHAPTER 4

Data analysis

In this part, interview data compiled from the field study in Thailand during the period of 12 January - 8 February, 2008 and 12 news articles on the Tak Bai incidence accumulated from archives of *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post* during the period of 25 October – November, 2004 are analyzed by applying the analytical framework presented in the previous chapter.

4.1 Discourse practice

The discourse practices of the two newspapers are analysed by looking at both text production, its content and to a certain extent possible consumption because these involve the role of the mass media as a crucial source of beliefs and values from which they develop their pictures of their social world. Since the production process is an important step of ideology assertion, what is interwoven in the media text constitutes the audience as the subject (Althusser, 1965). In so doing, texts guide readers by some mechanisms, whether it is obvious or not. This includes how the selected voices are organized and the way in which the content is presented.

The Peace Journalism model set out by Johan Galtung will be employed to test its implication under this Tak Bai incident. The four major features of the PJ model comprise peace-oriented, truth-oriented, people-oriented, and solution-oriented journalism. The aim is to explore practical ways for Thai media to implement the model in its coverage of different specific conflicts.

4.1.1 The production of the media text

The two newspapers are both English daily broadsheets, providing their news contents through paper and online versions. The contents of the two versions are the same but different in the font size and positions of the news on the front page. The two news institutions have their own correspondents and local stringers. Immediately, when there was a demonstration at the Tak Bai police station on 25 October, 2004, both newspapers followed up the situation and continually reported about the rally since the beginning.

The Bangkok Post

According to an interview with Deputy News Editor of *the Bangkok Post*, Nawarat Suksamran, the newspaper's head office in Bangkok got a report from a local correspondent that there was a protest in a violent prone area in the southern part of Thailand on 25 October, 2004. After that the newspaper followed up the situation closely and continually kept contact with local stringers, correspondents and photographers in the area.

The Tak Bai incident was quite complicated. After closing the daily stories on that day (25 October, 2004) with a report on the protest in front of the Tak Bai police station, another report was received late that night, informing the Deputy News Editor of *the Bangkok Post* about the death of protesters during detention. The details on how they had died were unclear. *The Bangkok Post's* Deputy News Editor further explained that nobody knew what was happening until the Fourth Army Chief admitted that there were more casualties as the protesters were being transported from the police station to an army camp. At that time the government officials did not want to disclose any details. Later on, a forensic team investigated all bodies and found that they died of suffocation and some were brutally injured. This is in line with what former chief reporter of the newspaper, Sermasuk Kasitipradit mentioned on the same event:

“We didn't know exactly on that day what's happening.... doctor Porntip came out to take forensic proof. She was the one who made pressure on the Military to accept the fact that people had died. She pointed out that the victims had died from suffocation. There was some kind of brutality.” (interview, 21 January 2007)

Nawarat said after getting the report about the mysterious deaths, the issue was submitted urgently to the editor's meeting next morning to discuss about details that were further needed and what angles were going to be presented. As soon as they received reports from local stringers or correspondents in the area, rewriters revised and translated a story into English before sending it to editors to recheck and approve. At this step, the rewriters play an important role in interpreting from Thai into English. Some reporters are bilingual and send their reports in English and this makes the process run faster. However, the information from local stringers is not always clear. As such, there is a need for the news to be put in a more understandable way for the readers and to be translated into English. The final step is printing the paper version and posted the news on *the Bangkok Post's* website.

The Nation

The different aspect of news process of *the Nation* is that *the Nation's* Group is a big media conglomerate. Media outlets under the same umbrella have a pool database where they can share news and information. Regional Editor of *the Nation Group's* Southern news bureau, Had Yai office, Sophon Phetae told the researcher that news information in the southern region covering 14 provinces is pooled in this bureau. It was sent by local reporters and stringers in the area. All media outlets under the same business umbrella of *the Nation's Group* have access to the database from its 'in house agency' and produce or reproduce the information for their type of media (interview, 12 January, 2008).

Senior reporter of *the Nation*, Supalak Knjanakundee briefed the researcher that all news sent to each regional bureau is sent to the pool at the in-house agency in Bangkok's headquarters. In the three southernmost provinces, Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat, *the Nation* has its correspondents to follow up the situation in the areas. There is one in Yala and Pattani and three in Narathiwat. There is one photographer, covering the three provinces. Apart from that, local stringers post their daily reports through email. Those who work in the head office will screen and rewrite the information sent by local stringers. If unclear points or controversial information is found, they ask the local correspondents to investigate further. Then rewriters rewrite the whole stories into English and recheck several times, particularly, with stories of the Tak Bai incident which carried sensitive conflict evidences. Before printing all reports must be approved by Sub-editors.

In covering the Tak Bai incident, both *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post* found themselves in the same situation; they encountered a concealed situation. On the day of the protest, *The Nation* ended its daily report with the stories of the crackdown and stated that six people were shot dead on the spot. However, *the Nation's* senior reporter considered it as a mistake that the journalists left the spot so soon. He explained that although this was a difficult situation for the journalists who covered the protest, they should have been aware of the following situation. They were rushed to send their report through email in a nearby town because the mobile phone signal in the area was blocked-up and there was no Internet access. Nobody was aware of the aftermath of the crackdown. In addition, the number of journalists covering the conflict was quite limited and the incident was a new experience for them (interview, 25 January, 2008).

A reporter of the newspaper Runrawee C. Phinyorat, who was appointed to follow up the incident said:

“I didn’t really think that what we knew about the protest on that day was serious, just a big protest in front of the police station. Then in the afternoon we started hearing that the security force might crackdown on the protest because they didn’t want it to continue overnight. They were afraid that the situation would go beyond control. Things did unfold. [...] We kept contact with our photographer and stringers in the area. Later, there was a report that the military crackdown the protesters and at first we heard six people were killed [...] They died on the spot by gun shot [...] On that night, we were informed that more people were died on the way during transportation 78 were died of suffocation. (interview, 6 February, 2008)”

4.1.2 Text analysis

In this part, four main features of the PJ model will be applied to analyze headlines and content of articles to identify their journalistic style in covering the Tak Bai incident.

4.1.2.1 Headlines

The tables below match headlines of the selected articles with four features of PJ model, namely peace/ conflict-oriented, truth-oriented, people-oriented, and solution-oriented. The features are classified by meanings of language conveyed in the headlines, as follows:

- Peace/ conflict-oriented: conflict formation, open space and time, making conflict transparent, giving voices to all parties, seeing conflict as problem, focusing on conflict creativity, and prevention.
- Truth-oriented: exposing untruths on all sides/ uncover all cover-up
- People-oriented: focusing on suffering all over, giving voices to voiceless, given name to all evil-doers and focus on peace-makers
- Solution-oriented: highlighting peace initiatives, resolution, reconstruction, and reconciliation

Table 2 *The Bangkok Post's* headlines

Headlines	Peace/ Conflict- Oriented	Truth- Oriented	People- Oriented	Solution- Oriented
1) Bloodshed, mayhem in South	√ Conflict			
2) Tak Bai probe: Troops say they fired into the air		√		
3) 81 more dead: riot toll hits 87		√		
4) Warnings of bloodbath in wake of mass deaths	√ Conflict			
5) Hopes of peace 'went up in smoke' at Tak Bai	√ Conflict			
6) Death toll secrecy deplored, govt credibility gone..			√	
7) Detainees tell senators of stompings, beatings	√ Conflict		√	
8) Foreign Ministry defends 'decisive action' at Tak Bai ...		√		
9) NHRC begins probe into Tak Bai crackdown		√		
10) Army frees most detainees, lifts curfew		√		
11) Chirmsak's report decries 'gross neglect'		√		
12) Demands intensify for a full, unbiased probe into Tak Bai		√	√	√

Table 3 *The Nation's* headlines

Headlines	Peace/ Conflict- Oriented	Truth- Oriented	People- Oriented	Solution- Oriented
1) Muslim anger spills over: Religious leaders urge govt restrain	Peace √		√	√
2) Tak Bai Bloodbath: PM: Deaths due to religious fasting	√ Conflict	√		
3) Courage under fire: snapshot of crisis		√		
4) Tak Bai Protes; 78 perished in custody		√	√	
5) Narathiwat deaths: Troubled South at 'point of no return'	√ Conflict			
6) Same gang incited Krue Se stand-off		√		
7) Relatives besiege army camp		√	√	
8) Tak Bai Crisis: PM orders internal inquiry		√	√	√
9) Bodies of 22 victims numbered, laid to rest		√	√	
10) Tak Bai: 'Dozens of bodies put on truck'		√	√	
11) Ex-convicts among detainees		√		

12) In Custody: Survivor tells of his ordeal			√	
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The two English daily newspapers' headlines reflect different approaches to the Tak Bai coverage. The headlines of *the Bangkok Post* coverage mostly illustrated two main features of PJ model: truth-oriented and people oriented, while *the Nation's* headlines show two more aspects than the former; peace-oriented and solution oriented.

4.1.2.2 Content features

Words, as we know, are not put together randomly but they make sense in a particular arrangement. The meanings of words are also interdependent; they are located in a network of relationships with other words and are only intelligible in that context. From Fairclough's perspective on media discourse, a text selects a particular option from the systems of options – the potential – available. These are selections amongst available language forms, from the lexical and grammatical potential: one word rather than another, or one grammatical construction rather than another (ibid). But these formal choices constitute choices for meaning. The selection of options form within the meaning potential how to represent a particular event or state of affair and not to relate to whoever the text is directed at or what identities it projects (Fairclough, 1995a: 18). Based on this perspective the analysis of this study utilizes language pragmatics and the PJ model. Hence, language pragmatics may be useful when we want to study meaning making processes in conflict coverage.

Passive voice without agent

Non-violent and creative ways of language use in news coverage are considered main features in the PJ model. In the sample text, passive form without agent was one of prominent features found in the analyzed contents of both newspapers. According to Johnstone (2002), the passive form without agent often focuses on action and the victim. The agent is assumed as apparent so there is no need to mention it in the sentence. The writer is certain that the reader can make a deduction from the text. This indirectly avoids blaming the action doer or lessens emotional involvement of the reader. The following table shows samples of passive voice without agent in the coverage of the two newspapers.

Table 4 Comparison of passive voice without agent in news contents of *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
<p><u>26 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...protesters were killed • ...five soldiers and seven policemen were injured • Police were tasked with identifying the mob • The unrest was clearly provoked.. <p><u>27 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The figure was broken down into 78 who died with being transported • three bodies were plucked from the Tak Bai river • More than 1300 protesters were being held in military custody... <p><u>28 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ..their deaths are recorded as being caused by suffocation • the victims were worn out from the protest <p><u>30 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the information obtained will be brought back to Bkk • The findings and the NHRC's suggestions will be presented to the government <p><u>2 November, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The targets were identified from photos and video • The leaders were scattered among the crowd 	<p><u>27 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1300 protesters were detained ... • A large number of weapons were seized from the protesters • 600 government officials and innocent bystanders have already been killed • The six were detained under police custody.. • Water cannon and tear-gas grenades were directed into the mob, but the police station was thrown into chaos • the protesters were subdued .. • Six protesters were killed and 17 others were injured • the protesters were crushed to death • The arrested protesters were put into the military trucks ... and they were not thrown into the vehicles. <p><u>28 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The detainees would be interrogated...the detainees were moved to the Songkla camp • Foreign ambassadors based in Thailand have been invited to attend a bridging.. <p><u>29 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dead were afforded little dignity.. <p><u>31 October, 2004</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1300 protesters were confined in

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dead body was found on the first truck • The detainees were maltreated... 	<p>camps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the captives had been ordered to take their shirts off
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The above table indicates that all the passive voice without agent structures found in *the Nation's* coverage are at the similar level as in *the Bangkok Post*. The findings from qualitative comparative analysis signify two major victims; first, the protesters are victims, second, the innocent bystanders or families of the protesters are victims. The protesters are more narrated about them as those who suffered the effect of the crackdown. The passive voice without agent was applied because readers are assumed to be able to know who did the actions. In this case, the anonymous actors are the security force and military soldiers.

Despite the fact that the grammatical structure of the media text seems to obscure the agent, it can lessen a sense of blaming on one of two opposite sides, a blaming that may result in worsening the conflict. The researcher views this tactic as a creative way of media language to avoid escalating the dispute. This point may be seen as an attempt to lessen the role of the security forces or make them less responsible. It touches upon one of the core challenges of the PJ bearing witness as the main objective of professional journalism on the one hand, the aim of the PJ to lessen the degree of conflict on the other.

Words in passive form

Another interesting linguistic feature found in the selected data is a linguistic transformation that contributes to a direct effect on the meaning to be interpreted from the media text (Deacon et al, 2007:155). Passivisation or the use of words in passive form is frequently found in the analyzed data. It is used to eliminate participants and prioritizes certain themes in the media text (Ibid). According to van Dijk (1988a), agency of action changed into the passive form possibly serves 'to dissimulate the negative actions of elite or powerful groups' (van Dijk, 1988a: 177). Samples of this linguistic transformation found in the media text of the two newspapers are displayed as follows:

Table 5: Comparison of passive form in news contents of *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
<p>...a 2,000-strong crowd demanding the release of six <u>suspected</u> gun thieves....the men, <u>accused</u> of stealing guns ... A <u>prolonged</u> rally would have degenerated into violence (26 Oct. 04)</p> <p>The troops accounts <u>contradicted</u> statements <u>given</u> by relatives.....the military trucks that transported <u>arrested</u> protesters (26 Oct. 04)</p> <p>Most <u>suffocated</u> in crowded army trucks...there were no wounds <u>inflicted</u> by sharp objects... (27 Oct. 04)</p> <p>Death toll secrecy <u>deplored</u>...the <u>cramped</u> interior of the military trucks (28 Oct. 04)</p> <p>...people in the troubled south... the 32 <u>killed</u> at Kru Se stood out ... (28 Oct. 04)</p> <p>The <u>captured</u> protesters (29 Oct. 04)</p> <p>..the <u>deceased</u> and <u>injured</u> (30 Oct. 04)</p> <p>..a curfew <u>imposed</u> in Bacho..(31 Oct. 04)</p>	<p>78 <u>perished</u> in custody, the <u>arrested</u> protesters, the influence of <u>unidentified</u> drugs...<u>troubled</u> south, <u>Muslim-dominated</u> province ...volunteers <u>arrested</u> on suspicion ..(27 Oct.04)</p> <p>Monday's unruly crowd appeared well <u>orchestrated</u>.... The 78 deaths <u>disclosed</u> by Pornthip ... (27 Oct.04) .</p> <p>78 Muslim protesters <u>rounded up</u> and <u>piled onto</u> military trucks....Several of those <u>arrested</u>... (28 Oct. 04)</p> <p>50 <u>armed</u> police and soldiers...the presence of armed authorities ... (29 Oct. 04)</p> <p>...1,324 <u>detained</u> Tak Bai protesters ...an <u>undisclosed</u> number of bystanders...(30 Oct. 04)</p>

As illustrated in the table above, all words in passive form found in the media text are generally found more often in the articles of the *Bangkok Post* than in *the Nation's*. Agencies of the negative actions in the Tak Bai incident are the military soldiers and the government officials. Their actions are tactically hidden by linguistic transformation in the media text. This implies the side the two newspapers were taking

during the conflict; the omitted agents of negative actions were mostly on the authority side. However, this linguistic tactic can be interpreted as that the media tone down the degree of blaming, resulting in lessened emotion of the reader.

Lexical choice

In the analyzed data, the researcher finds examples of how the two newspapers create their lexical choices. These lexical choices connote the conflict in different forms by using terms such as ‘bloodshed protest’, ‘the bloody clash’, etc. The analysis has also yielded selective ways of using language that may influence readers’ thoughts or perceptions.

Table 6 Comparison on lexical choices in news contents of *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
<p><u>Words referring to the Tak Bai incident :</u> Mayhem, bloodshed, the Tak Bai bloodshed, the second Black May massacre, bloody twist, the Tak Bai carnage, the Tak Bai episode, the bloody riot, bloody clash, , the clash, the unrest, the Tak Bai standoff, the scene of bloodshed, the riot scene, the tragedy</p>	<p><u>Words referring to the Tak Bai incident :</u> The use of violence, the deadly attack, yesterday’s drama, the incident, anti-riot operation, Tak Bai protest, the crackdown, the inhumane and heavy-handed tactics, the violence, the situation, the unrest, bloody protest, the confrontation, Monday’s clash, Tak Bai tragedy, Tak Bai crisis, the riot, the violent suppression, the scene, a disturbance</p>
<p><u>Words referring to protesters:</u> Protesters, the crowd, Muslim protesters,</p>	<p><u>Words referring to the protesters:</u> The protesters, the crowd, Muslim protesters, unruly crowd, the victims, demonstrators, the mob</p>
<p><u>Words referring to those behind the scene:</u> A group of men, a third hand, agitators, core protesters, the wrongdoers,</p>	<p><u>Words referring to those behind the scene:</u> The masterminds, the slain men, Muslim militants, network leaders, ex-convicts,</p>

	repeat offenders
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The findings show that the media creates varieties of words to serve its purpose of reality construction in reporting the conflict. More sensational terms such as ‘the Tak Bai bloodshed’ and ‘the Tak Bai episode’ were found in *the Bangkok Post* coverage than in *the Nation*’s. In contrast, more variety of lexical choice referring to the Tak Bai incident in a more neutral way such as ‘the situation’, ‘the unrest’ and ‘the crackdown’ were presented in *the Nation*’s coverage. These are language tactics that reflect how the meanings to events, placing events in a referential context are encoded. The production of any media text cannot achieve its aim in constructing ideology without the effective use of language through the system of signs which signify meaning (Hall, 1974).

Nevertheless, the media output is chosen to be received and interpreted by different groups of audience. Hence, meaning in the text may not be interpreted in the same way as it is encoded because it depends on audience’s background, attitude, value and social class (Hall, 1974). The audience brings its own interpretation to the text that may not necessarily coincide with that which was intended by the media. A given text has no fixed meaning but is open to several levels of analysis. This is what it meant by negotiated or oppositional reading.

Voices of others

The voices of others are often employed to create reliability and credibility of the news coverage; particularly those prevalent authority voices which could fit the purpose of the presented news discourse. Some parts of interview or speech were quoted to share the emotion with the readers (Johnstone 2002). Fairclough (1995) defines this aspect as intertextuality, referring to a piece of other discourse, which is drawn upon within a text. This may be part of transforming the conflict to be more transparent, expose untruth on all sides and even initiating reconciliation effort. In the data, voices from four main groups of voices are present in the news articles of both newspapers as sources: first, state officials, second, protesters, witnesses or victims, third, religious leaders and finally, human rights activists and Muslim academics.

Table 7 Comparison of voices of authority in news content of *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
<p><u>State officials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister (3) - Fourth Army Commander (3) - Deputy Fourth Army Commander (1) - The Defense Ministry deputy spokesman (1) - The commissioner of Provincial Police Bureau 9 (1) - Chief of the Southern Border Provinces Peace-keeping Command (SBPPC) (2) - A police source (anonymous) (1) - Chairman of inquiry panel (1) - The Deputy Permanent Secretary of Justice (2) - The Deputy Director of the Forensic Science Institute (2) - Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1) - Spokesman of Foreign Ministry (1) - Senators (6) - Military truck driver officer (1) 	<p><u>State officials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister (3) - Fourth Army Commander (2) - Deputy Fourth Army Commander (1) - The Defense Ministry deputy spokesman (1) - The commissioner of Provincial Police Bureau 9 (1) - Chief of the Southern Border Provinces Peace-keeping Command (SBPPC) (2) - A military source (anonymous) (1) - Interior Minister (1) - Spokesman of Foreign Ministry (2) - The Deputy Permanent Secretary of Justice (1) - The Deputy Director of the Forensic Science Institute (1) - Government Spokesman (1) - Chief of the National Police Bureau (1) - Malaysia Foreign Minister - Senator (1)

Voices of authorities and officials were apparently perceived by the two newspapers as credible sources that deserved to voice their opinions and disclose

information from their side in the similar amount of space. The comparison above shows voices of authorities and number of times they were used as a source. *The Bangkok Post* provided its whole first article on 26 October, 2004 for voices from the authority side, explaining reasons behind the crackdown. In the following two articles, most of the space was also given to quotes from state officials. *The Nation* firstly quoted the Prime Minister's comments on the high death toll of the detainees on 27 October, 2004. In the article, the Prime Minister blamed religious fasting as a major cause of the death and defended the anti-riot operation, claiming that the security forces did their best in maintaining peace in the area.

The interesting point is that not all voices of the authority side supported the government action, some opposed or criticized the crackdown, and some gave useful information and facts for the reporters. For example, the senators disagreed with the mishandling of the protester and proposed a more peaceful way to deal with the protesters. This is considered a set of voices which are potentially relevant, and potentially incorporated in the text as stated by Fairclough (2003:47). This set of voices is explicitly included in the selected media text.

Table 8: Comparison of voices of protesters, relatives, witnesses and victims between *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
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<p><u>Protesters, relatives, witnesses and victims:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paosee Jaemama (victim) - Usen Uma (victim) - Alee Ah-wae (protester) - Doromae Chema (victim) 	<p><u>Protesters, relatives, witnesses and victims:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thiwarat Awae (widow) - Jeh Sainung (relative) - Adinan Toh Lae (relative) - Anonymous witnesses - Kori (not real name witness) - A local fisherman (witness) - Mayaki (detained protester) - Ismail (survivor) - The Nation Group senior photographer (witness) - A source at Pattani Hospital (anonymous)
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The Nation employs more voices of the protestors and those affected by the crackdown than *the Bangkok Post*, signifying an effort to keep balance between two opposite sides, the authority and the protestors. According to the PJ model, this can be considered as a more truth-oriented approach, in a way that the newspaper uncovers all cover-ups. It is definitely also people-oriented, focusing on suffering all over; on women, the elderly, children, thereby giving voice to the voiceless.

Table 9 Comparison of voices of other participants between *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation*

<i>The Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
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<p><u>Religious leaders:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairman of the Islamic Committee of Narathiwat - Chairman of a private religious schools association - Chairman of the Islamic Committee of Yala - Chairman of the Pattani Islamic Committee <p><u>Human Right activists & Islamic academics:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Human Rights Commissioner - Deputy rector of Prince of Songkla University - Muslim academic of Thammasat University - Secretary-general of Forum Asia 	<p><u>Religious leaders:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A religious leader (anonymous) - Assistant secretary of the Islamic Committee of Narathiwat - President of the Association of Thai Muslim Youth <p><u>Human Right activists & Islamic academics:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairman of Law Society of Thailand, human-rights committee - Co-ordinator of the Committee of Human Rights Organisations in Thailand - Asian Forum for Human rights - The National Human Right Commissioner - An academic from Srinakaringwirot U. Pattani Campus - An independent academic
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In the case of *the Bangkok Post*, more than half of all selected voices derived from interviewing state officials. It also covered a wider specter of religious leaders than *the Nation*. On the contrary, voices of local people, victims and human right activists and Islamic academics constituted the main sources in the news stories of *the Nation*.

4.2 Remarkable theme and representations of Tak Bai incident presented in the data

The analysis of the reports covering the Tak Bai incident show that the incident was likely to be presented as a bloody battlefield in the *Bangkok Post*, while it is rather presented as a conflict, resulting from misunderstanding and mistrust between two sides, by *the Nation*. However, two major opposite roles emerge in both newspapers'

coverage; the good side versus a bad side. While one is articulated as the protector of the peace-maker of the nation, the other is inevitably projected as the opponent of benevolent or evil-doer. This is similar to the conventional way of black and white situation, and functions ideologically to reconstruct the incident in the traditional perception distributed by a dominant culture. Information from the authority side presented in the news articles tends to present that the officers did their best to bring peace to the nation, while the protesters were unruly and controlled by the Muslim insurgents. They deserved to be suppressed.

Furthermore, each newspaper is different in terms of identity representation. As seen in the data, five major participants are used as sources in the Tak Bai incident, namely, the State authority agencies, protesters or perpetrators, religious organizations, Human Right NGOs and members academic group. The state officers mostly appear to be the most credible source for the newsmakers. More than half of the voices selected by both newspapers were of those high-ranking positions ranging from the Prime Minister, the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Military Commanders. Whereas the tone of most voices presented a degree of certainty in their claims or opinions, it seems that these voices had their own legitimacy to express striking words. The following excerpts are comments on the situation delivered by Prime Minister Taksin Shinawatra.

“the unrest was clearly provoked [...] Security authority would not be allowed to bully people but they must be allowed to do their job. It would not be right to assume that every suspect was innocent until proven guilty[...] (the Bangkok Post, October 26, 2004) [...] If we’re soft, they’ll think we’re caving in. I won’t have it[...] they (security forces) did a great job. They have my praise.” (the Bangkok Post, 27 October, 2004)

“In dispersing the demonstration, the anti-riot forces strictly observed crowd control measures and gave sufficient warnings, [...]” (The Nation, 27 October, 2004)

In contrast, the perpetrators or protesters, which were negatively labeled as disturbances and so forth, are typically narrated as the harmful characters of the incident.

“The government cannot allow militants to continue instigating violent incidents as 600 government officials and innocent bystanders have already been killed since the beginning of the year[...] Monday’s unruly crowd appeared well orchestrated and protesters were bent on creating a disturbance” (the Nation, October 27, 2004)

Another interesting point is that the description of the victims or those suffering. *The Bangkok Post* and *the Nation* provided evidences that the heavy-handed crackdown had brought about serious consequences in terms of both economic and social situation. However, *The Nation* focused more in detail of the impact of the incident on the people as reflected in its interviews with widows, survivors, teachers and religious leaders. For example, *the Nation's* report on relatives of the victims quoted an interview given by a house wife. Her husband was missing during the crackdown and later found dead. She was left with five daughters and a son. (The Nation's news articles on 28 October, 2004)

4.3 Socio-cultural practice

According to the CDA framework, the socio-cultural aspect of the media production refers to the factors in society that influence the production of media text, for example, economics and the politics of the media. This acclamation relates to the notion of political economy theory, which views media as a social organization supervised and controlled by their owner and by economic conditions. Consequently, media practitioners have to produce the content under some constraints to serve the interests of their owner as well as to satisfy economic determinants. Throughout the Tak Bai conflict, the newspapers acted as a social reflection of the incident.

Although the newspapers, and perhaps especially English language newspapers enjoy more freedom from state control than other media in Thailand, they are privately owned and operated to make profit. Their revenues mainly come from the advertisements, part of it is derived from sponsorship of government agencies and state enterprises. It is possible that the government sector can be able to influence the newspapers to present the news story in a positive way. In addition, the media text accumulated in this study were chosen from the most two popular English newspapers. They are operated under intense competitive conditions; therefore, they have to distribute the norms and values of the majority of the dominant class of people. Especially, Tak Bai becomes one of the major incidents of the so-called Southern unrests, which was a socio-cultural collision between the dominant majority and a Muslim minority group.

The incident also drew global condemnation from Islamic groups, human rights organizations, the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, and considerable wrath from the important neighboring countries like Malaysia. The two English newspapers are considered to be among reliable sources that the international community seeks the information about this domestic conflict. Therefore, the newspapers need to provide some specific contexts for foreign readers to understand the situation.

4.4 PJ implication and contexts of the Tak Bai incident

The two English dailies play a supportive role to facilitate readers' understanding of the Tak Bai incident as articulated by editors and reporters of both papers. *The Nation* in general adopted more aspects of PJ models in its reports on the Tak Bai incident than *the Bangkok Post*. PJ characteristic found in *the Nation* are its peace-oriented, truth-oriented and people oriented styles. While following up the situation, the reports on *the Nation* tended to be proactive in calling on peaceful methods from the government side. At the same time, *the Nation* took a preventive style of reporting on opinions and reactions of religious leaders, requiring justice for the victims (27 October, 2004, please see appendix 5). The newspaper put more effort in covering unheard voices of local people and those affected by the crackdown.

Realizing that peace cannot be maintained if the right social order and well-being of people are not in place, the two English dailies tried to put their efforts into creating justice and asking for more developments on the living conditions of the local people in the violent prone provinces. Relying heavily on the authority sources, both newspapers provided space and time for different parties in the articles such as voices of local people and victims were also found in the articles.

The Nation is usually more critical of the government than *the Bangkok Post*. The analyzed material shows how it provides more insight information about Tak Bai incidence. *The Nation*, for instance, disclosed a controversial footage that the soldiers were not shooting into the air as stated by a high ranking police officer (Supaluck & Rugnrawee, interviews on 28 Jan. and 6 Feb., 2008). In its website, a special section is provided for news and analysis of the conflicts. Readers can search for previous news in the newspaper's archive.

The reporters of both newspapers position themselves as the observers of the incident, assuming they have the right to observe and tell the stories about the clash (interviews, 2008). They strategically avoided committing themselves to what they reported by quoting other sources. Some reporters tried to avoid taking sides with the authority to gain trust from the local sources and keep balance of the story they reported. Senior reporter of *the Nation*'s head office, Supalak Knjanakundee said:

I do not think the media should intervene in the conflict or play another role. Just reporting the facts of all sides can create balance and peace in our society. Now the media are on the government's side, nobody wants to investigate more facts in local area. At the same time, local people are also setting their own agenda and construct another reality on their side. Therefore, the media should not take action just keep balance in their reports is enough and it's not easy to do that." (an interview on 25 Jan. 08)

This reflects the traditional journalistic professional consciousness, being used as an argument against peace journalism or any other journalism with an agenda. A similar opinion was expressed by the Bangkok Post's reporter, Anucha Chareonpho. He stated that the journalists should present actual facts without distorting it, cover all parties involved in a limit of time (interview, 7 Feb. 2008). Added to this issue, a reporter of *the Nation*, Rungrawee insisted that journalist should be aware of this point and be ready to deal with many difficulties.

As a journalist, the job is to try to get all the parties involved, expressing their side of the story. When you cover any incident you don't really be able to tell the whole truth because each side has its own story. It's better to keep balance and don't make any judgment. Then let the truth be told[...] let your readers make their decision themselves[...]. At that time, I reported untold story from the villagers. What actually happened on their own perspectives? Other media tend to rely on the official side because it's easy to access.(interview, 6 February, 2008)

However, PJ requires a journalistic practice towards the mission of resolving or transforming conflict in a non-confrontational manner. The distinguishing features of PJ is not only providing analysis of the issue but seeking to constructively transform the conflict towards a path of peace. The comments from the journalists show that this should be balanced and suited to the journalistic professional consciousness.

The Nation and *the Bangkok Post* also uncovered evil doers by reporting about a group of men that took part in the protest. In its headline 'Same gang incited Krue Se stand-off' on 27 October, 2004, the Nation reported about another party behind the

incident. The masterminds of the Tak Bai protest belonged to the same group behind the Krue Se mosque incident in April 2004 in Pattani province. The report quoted Southern Police Chief Lt-Gen Manote Kraiwonse, saying that there were almost 10 men covered their faces incited protestors' anger over the detention of six Thai Muslims suspects.

In a news article on 26 October, 2004, *the Bangkok Post* referred to a high ranking official, disclosing information about core protesters who took part in the protest. These people were suspected as a 'third hand' behind the riot. This point matches the PJ model in terms of making conflict transparent, by trying to disclose all evil-doers. However, the newspaper did not provide as much detail as *the Nation* did. The researcher found that this fact is the same as what a correspondent of the *Bangkok Post* who witnessed the situation described. Thawatchai Khemkamnerd (interview on 1 February, 2008) told the researcher that there were many young men who covered their face with cloth standing among the protesters. They were very aggressive and tried to mastermind the crowd, pushing them abuse and threaten media workers. The protest turned to be uncontrollable and intense. Thawatchai thought the security forces did their good job in terms of cracking down but the serious mistake was the way they treated the protesters.

4.5 The particular contexts of the Tak Bai incident

The Thai journalists have learned a lot about the specific context of Tak Bai incident that differed from other conflicts. These include the limits of freedom of expression and information distortion of the government, lack of journalistic professionalism, local identities and limit of telecommunication infrastructure.

Limiting freedom of expression and access to the information was among major restrictions for the Thai media at that time. Most radio and TV stations were under the state control. The process of media control and interference has been continuous and systematic, with a clear political motive to limit freedom of information and expression and make sure that the information publicized is what the government wants to be disclosed. This happened because the government wanted to make sure that whatever journalists reported was along the government's line.

Although the newspapers were free from the government intimidation and censorship, they encountered to some extent lack of transparency and access to information. Information and facts at that time were contradictory and confusing. The official side refused to release the important facts such as anti-riot actions taken on the scene and actual figures of the deaths. State official claimed legitimate authority to conceal the information for the sake of national security. High ranking officials tried to distort or conceal the truth. At the beginning, the Prime Minister insisted that the anti-riot forces had done their best and did not kill any protesters. The high death toll was resulted from Ramadan⁵ fast and the turmoil. His speech quoted by *the Nation* on 27 October, 2004 defended the operations of the security forces:

“I can vouch for the anti-riot forces that they did not kill any protesters. The deaths were triggered by the commotion [...]the unruly crowd included repeat offenders who had instigated many past protests in the three southernmost provinces [...]The government cannot allow militants to continue instigating violent incidents..”

Later the Prime Minister gave an interview to *the Bangkok Post* on the same issue that the deaths were an accident that occurred during transportation. He was confident that most people understood the government’s action (*the Bangkok Post’s* news article, 28 October, 2004). When the autopsies on victims were performed and they found that the protesters died of suffocation during the custody of military forces and bullet holes were found in some of the dead bodies. Furthermore, a controversial photo was published in *the Nation’s* newspaper, showing a soldier was pointing his gun machine to the people. This raised question in society “What really happened?” There were not announcements of official figures on the casualties, but only the Prime Minister’s statement to dismiss the reported on numbers of the deaths.

“[...]some deaths were possible” due to weakness as a result of religious fasting. The victims shot on the riot were not killed by the security forces, they had been hit by stray bullets”. (the Nation, 27 Oct. 04)

The government spokesman made another official statement, informing the public that the soldiers fired warning shots into the air and mentioned the three main causes of the deaths: over-exhaustion due to fasting, the influence of unidentified drugs,

⁵ A Muslim religious observance that takes place during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, believed to be the month in which the Qur'an began to be revealed. The name "Ramadan" is taken from the name of this month. It is considered the most venerated and blessed month of the Islamic year. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramadan>)

and accidents during the crackdown (*the Nation* news article on 27 October, 2004). Still, he did not disclose the exact number of the deaths but blamed the inaccurate reports that could lead to misunderstanding and ruin the country's image.

The incident at Narathiwat's Tak Bai police station was considered a limitation in freedom of expression and dissemination of information. Some journalists were threatened verbally and denounced by high ranking officers (interview with *the Nation's* reporter on 6 Feb.08). After the controversial photo was publicized, a group of journalists were entrapped in "a press conference" in Bangkok for over four hours. They were asked by the Crime Suppression Division about the 25 October incident. The police also demanded them to give video footage of the carnage to the officials. The press conference was also to identify *the Nation's* photographer who took the controversial snapshot of a soldier firing his gun into the protesters. It was a complete opposite version of what the premier and senior officials had earlier insisted on that the soldiers fired a warning shot into the air. (*The Nation's* Regional Perspective, 8 Nov, 2004)

In this situation, the government expected that the Thai media's duty was to take sides with the officials to help maintain peace in the society, especially those working in the violent prone areas. At the same time, the media were caught in a dilemma: they could not refuse the social responsibility role in maintaining peace and they had to inform the facts and truths to the public. Don Patan and Rungrawee of *the Nation* pointed out that the government assumed that the press had to be constructive and devoted to the national security. This was an efficient tool that the government used to control the media during the crisis (interviews on 28 Jan. and 6 Feb. 08).

The difference between government explanations and eyewitness accounts of the October 25 massacre was obvious. As part of the crisis-management strategy, the government tried to brand the media's reporting as unpatriotic or as a threat to national security position. Prime Minister Thaksin blamed Thailand's two English daily newspapers, *The Nation* and *the Bangkok Post*, for "inaccurate reports" that portrayed the country in a bad light. Deputy News Editor of *the Bangkok Post* pointed out that during the crisis the authorities did not disclose important facts or confirm the figures of the deaths toll. Only high ranking officials were allowed to give an interview to the press not persons directly in charge to the issues. Therefore, sometimes the information I found in the analysis was contradictory to what was stated by the officials.

Distorting the information and limiting access of the media has become a normal practice for the Thai authorities, particularly, during conflicts like the Tak Bai incident. They have power to restrict media access to the scene and reduce the ability to make visual records that could be used by civic organizations to counter claims by the authorities in future. The media were criticized for focusing on the plight of Malay Muslim people in the areas without sufficient coverage of the suffering that Thai Buddhist communities affected by the incidents had to endure. A distinction must be made here between a news event itself and the news coverage thereafter. Subsequent reports then need to be even more balanced and comprehensive in nature.

It is interesting to note that improper practices of the Thai media created mistrust between them and the Muslim people in the conflict area. This resulted in lacking of cooperation from local sources. The journalists were too close to the official sources, most of them had chosen to stick to the official version of events without using their journalistic skills just because of the security reason and easy access to official sources (interview, 6 February, 2008). As a result, most Thai media were perceived as a mouthpiece of the state. In addition, the lack of transparency and accountability was very apparent in the ever-changing official explanations. There was no message from the insurgents nor from the local people. This practice brings about imbalance in reporting among voices of parties involved in the conflict.

The other practice is bias and prejudice over Muslim people presented through most media, particularly in Thai language. It alienated the Malay Muslims, who constitute majority of the population in the three southernmost provinces. Rungrawee, a reporter of *the Nation* said at the incident, local people took video footage but instead of giving to Thai media, they handed on to Malaysian or international media.

“That tells something [...] local people didn’t trust Thai media because they had often seen negative narration on Muslim in the south. I think it is about prejudice that the media usually produced through their channels (the interview on 6 Feb. 08).”

Access to the scene, unfamiliarity to the area and telecommunication facility made the journalist work harder at that time. The Tak Bai district is a remote area where transportation and telecommunication technology are not efficient. Reporters had to travel almost one hour to downtown of Pattani and sent their reports to the office in

Bangkok. During the protest mobile phone signal was terminated to prevent remote control bombs. The reporters could not contact their office for a while until the crackdown was over. After that they rushed to leave the scene to write and send their stories from a local office in Pattani as soon as possible. (interview with Supaluk, *the Nation*, 25 Feb. 08)

The Bangkok Post also encountered these similar difficulties. Tawatchai of *the Bangkok Post* explained that on that day he followed up the situation by listening to the police walkie talkie radio. It was difficult to contact the office through his mobile phone. The demonstration place is a small area but was crowded with aggressive protesters, serious security forces and authorities. When the situation became more intense, he and his friends had to find a safe place to protect themselves. After that he had to leave the spot to send his report to the office as soon as possible (interview on 1 February, 2008). Then the rest of the journalists rushed to find available technology in another town. They were busy sending their stories, and hence nobody followed up how the military soldiers treated the protestors during transportation. The journalists in the area were not aware that there would be more deaths. The need to follow up was a new lesson the Thai journalists learned from the Tak Bai incident (Supaluk, *the Nation*, 25 February, 2008). This reflects that reporting teams at the time were unprepared and inexperienced in relation to how to handle such a crisis.

Another context is that local people have their own culture and language. They do not speak Thai and do not trust strangers or people from other cultures. The media had to rely heavily on local sources and stringers who could speak Yawi language. At this point senior reporter of *the Nation*, Supalak Ganjanakhundee said journalists had to put their own effort to gain access to local sources:

“We had to get acquainted with local people and asked them to interpret what the local people said. Local people don’t trust any strangers we had to create a connection through community leader, local politicians or those who were respected among people. Sometime we even had to dress like them to join activities in the area (interview on 25 January, 2008).”

In case of the reports from local stringers, Supaluk further explained that news and information from local stringers needed rewriting into the news format that is more understandable for readers (ibid). Sometimes the journalists in the Bangkok Office and local stringers have different perceptions about the event. The local stringers had more insight in terms of the context but they often lack of journalistic skills in reporting.

Those who lived in Bangkok have limited experience from the field that may have an impact on the story they reported. Stories sent to the head office in Bangkok were then interpreted into English (Rungrawee, *the Nation*, 6 February, 2008). This means that before the story was reported, it was translated from Yawi to Thai and then to English. Some important points may get lost in translation.

To sum up, this chapter has sketched out the analytical framework of critical discourse analysis initiated by Fairclough (1992). The framework comprises three dimensions: discourse practice, text and socio-cultural practice. In the analysis of discourse practice that links the media output and socio-cultural practice, the assumptions and the production of media text are analysed by utilizing the concept of hegemony theory of media, the critical cultural theory of the Birmingham School. Then the media discourse and the Peace Journalism model are employed.

As media text is an important tool for achieving success in constructing ideology or reality, it is embedded with lexical choices and linguistic features to transfer dominant meanings. In examining this point, discourse studies in choice of words and grammatical characters are utilised to display dominant ideology and representation in the media text. Features in headlines and news contents are analysed to study the possible 'conflict + creativity' aspect of the media text as part of a peace effort to keep balance, fairness, and accuracy in reporting the Tak Bai incident. Factors which have been discussed are the passive voice without agent, linguistic transformation in passive form, lexical choices, and voices of others.

Features of PJ implications have been found in both two newspapers on different levels. Both newspapers facilitate readers to understand the incident by providing contexts and following up the story simultaneously. However, the Tak Bai incident has its own specific contexts that the media have to handle. The most prominent ones are the limits of freedom of expression and access to the information. Without freedom of access to information, the media can not play efficient responsibility role in society; newspapers would be nothing but ink- marked pages, while broadcast journalism would be full of worthless programs that would pollute the minds of viewers and audience.

The socio-cultural practices are analysed from the perspectives of the theory of the political economy of the media. The theory is employed to examine performance of

a media institution in order to see whether it is under control of a power holder in society or under which economic conditions it operates. Media practitioners and journalists of the two newspapers take part in the production process while the readers' interpretations play a role in the assumption process.

Also, the lack of this freedom disdains the people's right to access factual information and a free exchange of views. Despite the less direct censorship of the press, the information gained from the interview showed how media intervention through business interests in some way pressured editors and media operators to impose self-censorship. During the conflict situation, the Thai journalists were expected to be on the authority side to maintain national unity. At the same time, the public require the journalists to inform them about the facts and reality of the event. In addition, transparency and a wide range of angles are also considered crucial if the media are to play a constructive role in promoting democracy and peace.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This study has uncovered discursive systems of two Thai daily newspapers in English, *the Nation* and *the Bangkok Post*, in the coverage of the Tak Bai incident, a protest which took place in the Tak Bai district, Narathiwat province on 25th October, 2004. The event precipitated international condemnation, in terms of human rights violation and served here as a case of manger in which the Thai media response to the conflict was central. Selected passages from the articles of the two newspapers were analyzed within the conceptual framework of social responsibility of the media theories. The analysis was conducted with special reference to the Peace Journalism model.

In examining the selected data, the researcher applies critical discourse analysis formulated by Fairclough (1995b) as the main framework. Three dimensions under the framework: discourse practice, text, and socio-cultural practice are examined by employing both media and peace journalism theories. The focus here is on discourse practice of the media. The research questions have been answered as follows:

- 1.) How do the coverage of *the Bangkok Post* and *the Nation* on the Tak Bai incident conform to the Peace Journalism model developed by Lynch and McGoldrik (2005)?

Based on the four major criteria of the PJ model, some characters have been found in both newspapers at different levels. Notable features are people-oriented reports and truth-oriented. The two English Dailies might facilitate readers to understand the incident by providing contexts and following up the story simultaneously. However, the Tak Bai incident has its own specific contexts that the media have to handle. In general, response of the media to the Tak Bai incident is in the same line as that of other previous conflicts in Thailand, focusing on the deaths and violence.

The analysis of the selected articles also reveals a strong tendency towards putting the blame for the death of the protesters on the military and the government. Although several articles bordered on providing a deeper understanding of the protest, almost all ended up in the same place; the authority bears primary responsibility for the continuing conflict. The analysis has shown, how, reflecting the PJ model, *the Nation's* coverage on the incident was presented in a more nuanced way than *the Bangkok Post*. *The Nation* avoids sensitive language, and provides greater depth and long-term perspectives than merely 'here and now' points.

- 2.) What kinds of representations of the conflict are presented in the media text?

After analyzing sentences, phrases and words in the selected data, several **discursive features** including passive voice without agent, linguistic transformation (passivisation), and word choices that convey dominant meaning were found in the two newspapers. The conflict is represented in a more serious tone by *the Bangkok Post* than by *the Nation*. The incident tends to be presented as a 'bloody battlefield' in the

Bangkok Post, while it is presented as a ‘conflict, resulting from misunderstanding and mistrust between two sides’, by *the Nation*.

Interestingly, two major opposite roles emerge conversely in both newspapers’ coverage; the good side versus the bad side. The first aspect is that the authority side is articulated as the protector of the peace-maker or good-doer, the Muslim protesters are inevitably projected as the opponent of benevolent or evil-doer. The other converse opposite roles puts the security forces as wrong-doer in case of violence crackdown and mistreated the protesters whereas the protesters were presented as victims. The first aspect is similar to the conventional way of reporting black and white situation, and functions ideologically to reconstruct the incident in the traditional perception distributed by a dominant culture.

Among other things, the findings demonstrate several language tactics exploited in the media text to deliberately accentuate or to unconsciously form self-understandings on the Tak Bai incident. Language is seen as the medium through which the world obtains meaning, it signifies the meanings of events, placing the happenings in an encoded referential context. With the effective use of language, the media text can achieve its purpose in constructing reality about the conflict. The assumption underlying this investigation is that those who write or publish news coverage will always support a specific viewpoint, also when covering the Tak Bai incident. Five major parties are presented as different sources, namely, state officials, protesters, religious groups, Human Rights NGOs and academics.

The analysis discovered a selective way of presenting the voices of others. Although both newspapers are mainly based on authority voices as their sources, *the Nation* places more emphasis on voices of leading intellectuals and academic who have a potential to guide people’s belief by conveying new perspectives on the conflict to the audience. This is in line with Gramsci’s hegemonic ideology in the sense that mass communication is considered a site of ideological struggle and the leading intellectuals of a given period may win consent by attracting and guiding the mass with their ideas through the mass media. They do not explicitly send out the ideology; it is modified to meet the interest of the society.

- 3.) What are the limitations to the PJ model in this context-specific Tak Bai incident?

The most prominent limitations to the PJ practice are the limit of freedom of expression and access to the information in relation to the analysed case. Most information on the Tak Bai incident reported in the Thai media came from public officials themselves. The Prime Minister at that time painted himself into a corner by accusing the media of inaccurate reporting. The social pressure on journalists is strongest in societies directly involved in the conflict (Kempf, 2003: 3). International community and readers expected to obtain facts and information about the Tak Bai incident from the English language media in Thailand while the government and Thai people to a large degree want the media to maintain positive image of the country.

The next limitation is that inexperienced Bangkok-based reporters and rewriters are not yet capable of producing the kind of the PJ style reports. Despite their best effort under the circumstances, the coverage of the Tak Bai incident requires more insight information and context to create understanding among the target readers of the two English daily newspapers. In performing its duties, the press follows the principle of presenting stories by facts. However, in circumstance like Tak Bai crisis, it was hard to obtain information or facts that could match the truth because information was very limited.

The local context is another factor that affected the possibility of the PJ practice during the conflict. Muslim people in the area have their own identity and language. They do not trust any stranger who speak another language or have a different appearance from them. The root cause of this protest was the fact that the local Muslim people have long been treated as ‘second-class citizens’ in their homeland, compared to the Buddhist people in the country (interview, 22 January, 2008). They feel that their situation is unfair and that they have been mistreated by the authority for a long time. Moreover, the response of the Thai mainstream media to Muslim people created a strong sense of discrimination and condemnation by bias in their traditional way of reporting. This resulted in the lack of cooperation from local sources, which affected the final outcome in the newspaper articles.

5.1 Lessons learned from the Tak Bai incident and recommendations for future coverage

Based on this analysis of the coverage of the Tak Bai incident in two daily Thai newspapers in English, a few lessons could be learnt and perhaps serve as recommendations for covering other conflicts in the future from a more peace journalism oriented perspective.

The selected English language newspapers share their projected readership of educated Thai people, foreign expats in the country and international community. Their online versions are also major news channels for international organizations, NGOs, Thai students abroad and those who want to get an update about the situations in Thailand. Since 2004, when the insurgency in the south reemerged, the two newspapers have improved their in-depth coverage of the conflicts and beefed up their online coverage to meet the demand of readers and web visitors from different part of the world.

The media operate differently across countries depending on their economic and political conditions. For covering conflicts in Thailand, media players should more consciously seek to uphold their responsibility to society and further to the broader national interest. Despite peace efforts in a few quality newspapers, most mainstream media still report and publish stories based on profits, or push particular ideological views. They tend to package their news products to meet the requirements and expectations of their targeted readers.

The present study's findings indicate a need for local media's sense of responsibility to be boosted. The findings show how the two analyzed newspapers rely on public figures, and official sources to a large degree. When matters of conflict are at stake, the media should play their role with sense of responsibility to bring back peace to the society. By providing facts of all sides and keeping balance of news coverage, the public can make their own deliberate judgment, resulting in better understanding about the conflict.

The Peace Journalism model is a well-intentioned practice initiated in Western cultures and circumstances. It can be promoted and adopted among the Thai media at two levels, at the level of the media organizations and news consumers. Journalistic practices are based on professional routines and judgments including during conflicts (Tveiten & Nohstedt, 2002:143). The media must be created to increase their standard and credibility and gain trust from local people. On the one hand, media organizations

in Thailand should join hands to exert media regulations and influence a sense of social responsibility among Thai journalists. On the other hand, news consumers must voice their concerns over unethical reports or inaccurate fact about the conflict. They can also monitor practices of journalists and disapprove when they find improper way of practice such as asking for benefit or money from news sources and politicians. From the perspective of peace journalism, the society as a whole should make a requirement for journalists to play a more important role in conflict de-escalating.

Although, in reality, it is difficult to be objective or neutral in presenting the facts due to some restrictions such as political or social conditions, the researcher believes that awareness of media practitioners can be raised through education and collaboration among the agencies concerned. Improving journalistic skills by education is the best way to help the media to be free from being dependent. At the same time, a given society should give morale support by recognizing those who have high sense of responsibility, who are making a difference by putting peace effort in their journalistic works. Journalists who have to report the truth of facts and find correct information during an incident such as the analyzed Tak Bai conflict bear a very heavy burden. All professional journalists encounter more complex intervention and limitation to the access of information. Although Peace Journalism is not well known among Thai media, the two selected newspapers show that some efforts in creating peace in the Tak Bai incident were present in some ways as earlier mentioned. By their nature, Thai journalists are quite aware of the different cultures in the southern region and easily adjust themselves to local people in Muslim communities. However, they need to learn more about constructive journalism. The media should strive to foster understanding, not to provoke violence or escalate a conflict.

Awareness among the journalists themselves is another important point. In Thai society, people read little and generally believe in what the media inform them without deliberate judgment. The people still lack knowledge to understand the complicate issues, which requires context specific perspectives. With a sense of social responsibility, the media can promote peace efforts by providing unbiased reports without blaming any side and correct information for more understanding about the incident. If the journalists keep this in their mind, their work might be a great contribution to the conflict reconciliation in the southern Thailand.

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Appendix 1

Ownership of radio frequencies

Agencies	Number of frequencies under ownership
Defence Ministry	211
PM's Office (Public Relations Department)	149
Mass Communication Organization of Thailand (MCOT Plc)	62
Interior Ministry	44
Parliament	16
Commission on Higher Education Office	12

Post and Telegraph Department	12
Transport Ministry	7
Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry	5
Education Ministry	3
Royal Household Bureau	2
Foreign Affairs Ministry	1
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	1

Source: Wangdeesirikul (2003: 116) “*Economy of New Institutions and Frequencies Distributions in Thailand*”

Appendix 2

Details of ownership of TV frequencies and concession of each station (as of 2004)

Stations	Owners	Operators	Concession period	Concession fee (million baht)	Profit sharing
Channel 3	MCOT Plc	Bangkok Entertainment under a concession	50 years (1970-2020)	17.6 to 244 a year Total: 3,207	None
Channel 5	Royal Thai Army	Royal Thai Army by leasing airtime for programs and commercial advertisements	none	none	None

Channel 7	Royal Thai Army	BKK Television and Radio Co Ltd under a concession	56 years (1967-2023)	Total: 4,670	None
Channel 9	MCOT Plc	MCOT Plc by leasing airtime for program and commercial advertisement	none	none	None
Channel 11	Government Public Relations Department	Government Public Relations Department which leases airtime for corporate advertisement and for programs	none	none	None
UBC (subscription TV)	MCOT Plc	United Broadcasting Corp and UBC Cable Network Plc under a concession	25 years (1990-2014)	1.5 to 30 a year Total: 240	6.5% of revenue
TTV	Government Public Relations Department	Nation Group (three channel)/World Star TV (Thailand) under a concession	(1996-2021)	5 to 27 Total: 400	5.5% of revenue

Source: Pongphaijit in “*Media and Democracy*” (2005: 25-29)

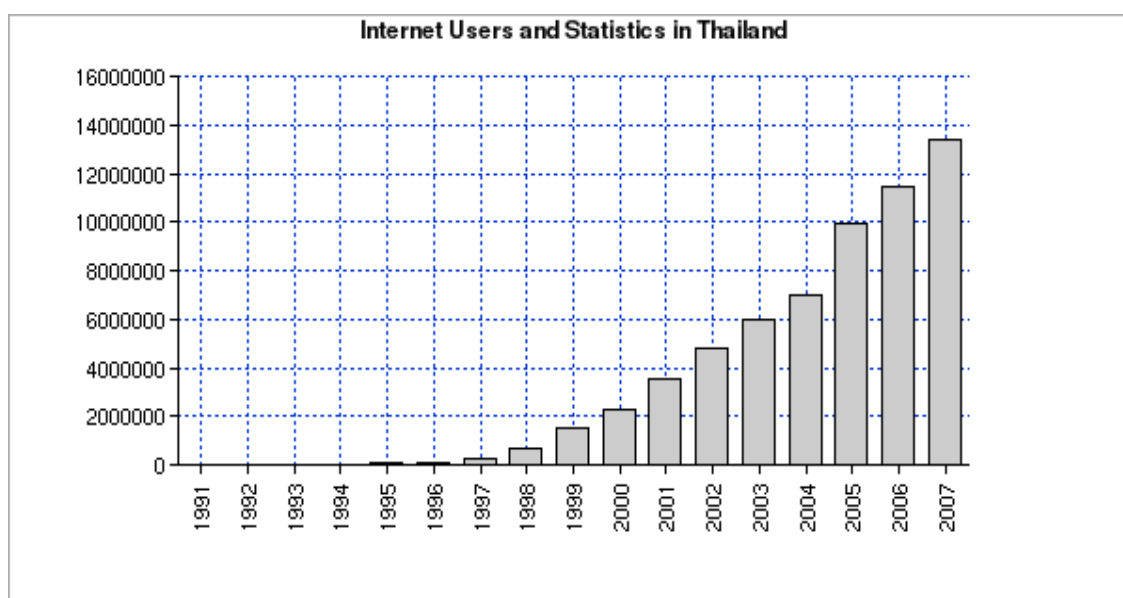
Appendix 3: Defamation lawsuits filed against Thai journalists during 2003-2005

Year	Details about each case				
	Plaintiff	Defendant	Charge	Damage sought (baht)	Verdict
2003	Thaksin	Prasong Soonsiri and Naewna newspaper	Criticism in a newspaper article about the PM's excuses for his assets concealment case and the silent threats he has been using to the journalistic community	600 million	Acquitted
2003	Shin Corporation	Supinya Klangnarong and Thai Post newspaper	Published interview about what appeared to be a conflict of interest between the Thaksin administration and his family business	400 million (Civil and criminal damage combined)	Acquitted

2005	Thai Rak Thai party	Thai Post newspaper	Published interview in which another politician, Sananoh Tiantong criticize Thaksin	400 million	Thai Rak Thai party
2005	Airport Organization of Thailand (AOT)	Post Publishing Group and Kovit Sanandang editor of the BKK Post	Published report about the cracks in the runway of Suwannapoom airport	1 billion	Settled out of court
2005	Thaksin	Sonti Limthongkul and Sarocha Pornudomsak Thai Day.com Co.	Muang thai raisabda TV program accusing the PM of lease majeste in the case of the appointment of the news supreme patriarch	500 million	Case dropped
2005	Thaksin	Manager Media Group	Publication of the sermon by the famous monk which criticized the PM	500 million	Case dropped
2005	Thaksin	Sonti Limthongkul and Manager newspaper	Accusation of the PM about privileged tax evasion in the Thaicom satellite concession	1 billion	Case dropped

Source : Siriyuvasak, in a presentation on “*Crisis of freedom under business politics*” (2005)

Appendix 4: Internet users in Thailand



Source: <http://internet.nectec.or.th/webstats/internetuser.php?Sec=internetuser>

**Appendix 5: The Bangkok Post's headlines on Tak Bai incident during 26 October
– 2 November, 2004**

(1) Bloodshed, mayhem in South 26 October, 2004

* Gunshots as security forces tear-gas protesters

* Three, possibly six, slain, hundreds arrested; curfew

(2) Tak Bai probe: Troops say they fired into air 26 October, 2004

(3) 81 more dead; riot toll hits 87, most suffocated in crowded army trucks 27 October, 2004

(4) Warnings of bloodbath in wake of mass deaths 27 October, 2004

(5) Hopes of peace 'went up in smoke' at Tak Bai 28 October, 2004

(6) Death toll secrecy deplored, Govt credibility gone, says Islamic leader 28 October, 2004

(7) Detainees tell senators of stompings, beatings 29 October, 2004

(8) Foreign Ministry defends 'decisive action' at Tak Bai, foreign diplomats briefed on riot, deaths 29 October, 2004

(9) NHRC begins probe into Tak Bai crackdown 30 October, 2004

(11) Chirmsak's report decries 'gross neglect' 2 November, 2004

(12) Demands intensify for a full, unbiased probe into Tak Bai 02 November, 2004

* These articles were purchased from the newspapers' archive through <http://archives.mybangkokpost.com/bkkarchives/frontstore/>

Appendix 6: The Nation's news articles on the Tak Bai incident during 26 October – 2 November 2004

(1) Muslim anger spills over: Religious leaders urge govt restraint 26 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108045&date=2004-10-26> retrieved 21 Feb 2008

(2) TAK BAI BLOODBATH: PM: Deaths due to religious fasting 27 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108080&date=2004-10-27> retrieved 21 February 2008

(3) COURAGE UNDER FIRE: snapshot of a crisis 27 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108084&date=2004-10-27> retrieved 21 February 2008

(4) TAK BAI PROTEST: 78 perished in custody 27 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/specials/south2years/oct2704.php> retrieved 21 February 2008

- (5) NARATHIWAT DEATHS: Troubled South at 'point of no return' 27 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108082&date=2004-10-27> (retrieved 5 Dec. 2007)
- (6) 'Same gang incited Krue Se stand-off' 27 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108080&date=2004-10-27> retrieved 21 February 2008
- (7) Relatives besiege army camp 28 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108144&date=2004-10-28> (retrieved 5 Dec. 2007)
- (8) TAK BAI CRISIS: PM orders internal inquiry 28 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108134&date=2004-10-28> retrieved 21 February 2008
- (9) Bodies of 22 victims numbered, laid to rest 29 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108190&date=2004-10-29> (retrieved 5 Dec. 2007)
- (10) TAK BAI: 'Dozens of bodies put on truck' 30 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108234&date=2004-10-30> (retrieved 5 Dec. 2007)
- (11) Ex-convicts among detainees 30 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108235&date=2004-10-30> retrieved 22 Feb. 08
- (12) IN CUSTODY: Survivor tells of his ordeal 31 October, 2004
<http://www.nationmultimedia.com/search/page.arcview.php?clid=3&id=108270&date=2004-10-31> (retrieved 5 Dec.2007)

Appendix 7: List of interview questions

* Editors, deputy editors, chief

Policy of the media in covering conflict issues

Q1 Stance of the newspaper in this conflict (Do you state clearly in the policy?)

Q2 What role could the media play in this conflict setting?

Q3 The main target reader of this issue (online)

Follow up questions ...

News values

Q1 How do you select news events to be covered?

O2 How would you describe criteria for conflict issue? Is there any significant difference on the selecting process between other ordinary stories and conflict topic?

Q3 How do you prioritise and follow up the incident?

Follow up questions ...

* Correspondents and reporters

News gathering and reporting

Q1 How do you research? How do you respond to the incident? Where is your starting point?

Q2 Who are your major news sources? Official or non-official? How to approach them?

Q3 How fast do you produce the news and through which channel or technology?

Q4 What is the most effective way for citizens to support you in reporting the conflict?

Q3 What is the most important means in gathering news stories?

Follow up questions ...

Attitudes and understanding about the coverage of the conflict

Q1 Do you think what is the major course of this conflict? Why?

Q2 How do you see the seriousness of the Tak Bai conflict?

Q3 What was going through your mind when you heard about the crackdown?

Q4 How do you position yourself in the situation?

Q4 Have you seen the possibility to reconcile the evidence?

Q5 What are the most important things you have learnt from reporting this conflict? Following up questions....

Appendix 8 : List of interviewees

The Nation

- Don Pathan, Regional Desk Editor, South East Asia. He was in the northern part of Thailand during the incident but followed up the case and run a special section “Fire on South” on *the Nation*’s website, focusing on the situations and violence in the south.
- Supalak Ganjanakhundee, Senior Reporter with over 15 years experience in covering national security issues including the conflict in the south.

- Sophon Pechthae, Regional editor (Had Yai southern news bureau). He supervises southern local news in five provinces namely, Had Yai, Songkla, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat.
- Rungrawee Chalermripinyorat, Reporter (resigned). She worked as a journalist at *the Nation* Newspaper for five years during which she extensively covered the resurgence of the Muslim insurgency in Thailand's deep south. She is now an analyst, South East Asia Project of International Crisis Group

The Bangkok Post

- Nawarat Suksamran, Deputy Editor, supervising national news at *the Bangkok Post* headquarters.
- Sermsuk Kasitipradit, Editor (fired). He was chief reporter during the Tak Bai incident. He supervised national security issues and worked in Bangkok. At present, he is an editor of Isara News Center, an independent news agency set up to investigate the truth in southern unrest.
- Anucha Charernphothi, Reporter. He went to cover and follow up the incident at Tak Bai district. He took a training course on Peace Journalism and has applied some ideas to his coverage.
- Thawatchai Kemkamnerd, Correspondent. He was at the protest site and has direct experience in Tak Bak case

Appendix 9: Tak Bai fact findings report

Tak Bai and Krue Se Report

An official report by a government-appointed investigative team released by the National Reconciliation Commission on Sunday has confirmed a number of suspicions and allegations regarding the crackdown on protesters outside Narathiwat's Tak Bai police station last October

Army Chiefs Deemed Responsible

An official report by a government-appointed investigative team released by the National Reconciliation Commission on Sunday has confirmed a number of suspicions and allegations regarding the crackdown on protesters outside Narathiwat's Tak Bai police station last October.

The report also points the finger at certain senior military officers, including the Fourth Army Region commander General Pisarn Wattanawongkiri. The fact-finding committee and its four sub-committees have compiled a report with four sections: the introduction, the facts regarding the Tak Bai demonstration, the points of consideration by the fact-finding committee and the suggestions by the fact-finding committee.

The facts section is divided into 10 parts as follows:

- 1 Demonstration at the Tak Bai district police station in Narathiwat
- 2 Intelligence work by the authorities and preparations to deal with demonstrations, and negotiations with demonstrators
- 3 Use of force to break up the demonstration
- 4 Loading of arrested protesters on to military trucks
- 5 Transportation of arrested protesters from Tak Bai to the Ingkayuth military camp in Pattani's Nong Chik district
- 6 Unloading protesters from the military trucks at the camp
- 7 Discovery of dead protesters inside the trucks, the filing of death reports and taking care of detainees
- 8 Results of the post-mortems on seven people killed during the dispersal of demonstrators, and on 78 detainees who died on the trucks. 9 Legal proceedings against detainees
- 10 Remedy process: Government's dealing with the injured and killed as well as detainees' belongings.

Demonstration

People gathered in front of Tak Bai district police station on October 25, 2004 to demand the release of six suspects who were defence volunteers of a village and were charged with giving state guns to militants. Security forces' attempt to have the demonstrators disperse failed.

It was later discovered from detained protesters that some of them could not leave the rally's location because they were blocked by the demonstration leaders as well as being surrounded by security forces.

Moreover, many demonstrators did not hear the security forces, religious leaders or their relatives who came to the rally's location to ask them to disperse. This was because when the authorities, religious leaders and relatives spoke through a loudspeaker, organisers of the protest would boo and jeer.

At 3:10pm, some demonstrators tried to break through the barrier to go inside the district police station's compound. As a result, the Fourth Army region commander ordered the dispersal of the demonstrators. At that time, gunfire was heard to the side of the demonstrators and a policeman was injured. A videotape

recording by a reporter from the Mass Communication Organisation of Thailand revealed that a soldier fired a warning shot, but his gun was not aimed at the sky but horizontally. Several military officers later explained that firing horizontally was a tactic to force the demonstrators to lie down

Transportation of detained demonstrators from Tak Bai district police station to the Ingkayuth military camp in Pattani's Nong Chik district

The Southern Border Provinces Peace-building Command testified that there were two convoys of military trucks. The first convoy departed Tak Bai at 4.15pm and reached the military camp at 7.30pm.

The second convoy left Tak Bai at 7pm and reached the destination at 10pm. But a driver [name withheld] of a truck, on which 23 dead bodies were found, testified that his truck left Tak Bai at 5pm and reached the military camp at 10pm. Another driver [name withheld] of a truck, on which

21 dead bodies were found, said he left Tak Bai and reached the camp at nearly the same time.

A sub-committee in charge of determining the facts and evidence learned from detained protesters that the first truck left the Tak Bai police station at 3.40pm and reached the camp at 5.40pm. The detainees said some trucks left the police station at 6pm and reached the camp at 9pm and some left the police station at 9pm and reached the camp at 2am the following day.

The detainees also testified that during the journey when detainees called for help, they were assaulted by guards who used either a rifle butt or a baton. Some soldiers also kicked or stomped on the detainees. Detainees also said some soldiers treated detainees very well during the journey.

The sub-committee interviewed 92 detainees and nearly all of them testified that they were ordered to lie face down on top of one another during transportation. They reached the camp in the same face-down, prone position. But one of them was allowed to sit during the trip.

Lt-Col Watchara Sukwong, who was among officers unloading the detainees, found about 20 dead in a truck carrying about 70 detainees. The detainees were lying face down with hands tied behind their back. Col Noppanan Chunpradab found that detainees were lying face down inside the first truck but they did not lie on top of one another. The first truck had one fatality, killed by being hit by a hard object.

Discovery of the dead inside the military trucks

1 Death toll

A total of 78 detained protesters died during transportation. The military report revealed details of the deaths in each truck as follows:

Truck with Army Licence Plate No 19338, 21 detainees killed
 Truck with Army Licence Plate No 19232, 5 detainees killed
 Truck with Army Licence Plate No 19263, 6 detainees killed
 Truck with Army Licence Plate No 13164, 23 detainees killed
 Truck with Marine Licence Plate No 531, 5 detainees killed
 Truck with Marine Licence Plate No 5256, one detainee killed
 Truck with Marine Licence Plate No 530, six detainees killed.

Eleven other detainees died in trucks whose licence numbers could not be identified. The fact-finding committee tried but failed to determine the order of departure and arrival of the trucks in order to determine travel time.

2 Number of detainees transferred on each truck

The committee did not get details on how many detainees each truck carried but obtained the following information:

Col Noppanan Chunpra-dab, who took part in unloading detainees at the camp until 9.30pm, found that the first truck was not too crowded and there was only one death. The dead person appeared to have been hit by a hard object. Lt-Col Watchara Suk-wong testified that a truck carrying about 70 detainees had about 20 deaths.

The Southern Border Provinces Peace-building Command reported to the prime minister that each truck transported about 50, 70 or 90 detainees. The 21st truck carried 90 detainees and there were 23 deaths in the truck.

Information found by a sub-committee of the fact-finding committee found that each truck carried about 60 detainees, 70 detainees or 80 detainees.

3 People who discovered the deaths

When soldiers unloaded detainees from each truck, they found that some detainees were lying face down and not moving. Soldiers shook the bodies, which did not move, and then asked a military doctor, Lieutenant Jirasak, who was treating the injured, to check them. Jirasak found that the motionless detainees were dead

after checking their pulse and retinas.

4 Times of death

The exact times of the detainees' deaths are not known. But it was learnt from testimonies that the detainees died during transportation from the Tak Bai police station to the Ingkayuth military camp.

5 Time when the dead were discovered

Col Noppanan Chunpradab testified that the first death was discovered in the first truck. Later at 11pm, word spread among the soldiers that 20 more dead were found. Between 1am and 2am, it was reported among the military officers that the death toll had climbed to about 70.

6 Handling of transported detainees after the deaths were discovered

The fact-finding committee asked military officers in charge of transporting detainees why they did not remove detainees from the other trucks after the deaths in earlier trucks had been discovered. The officers replied that although the trucks had reached the camp, they had to gradually unload one truck at a time for fear that they would not be able to control so many detainees when they were on the ground at the same time.

7 Handling of the bodies

Bodies of the dead detainees were sent to a building for post-mortems.

Reporting the deaths

1 Reporting inside the Ingkayuth military camp

Verbal reports were made irregularly inside the military camp about the deaths. Col Noppanan Chunpradab, who left the military prison for his residence inside the camp at 9.30pm, heard that the number of deaths had increased by 20. Between 1am and 2am on October 26, it was reported among military officers that the death toll had climbed to about 70.

2 Reporting to higher authorities

Higher authorities received reports as follows:

The deputy commander of the Southern Border Provinces Peace-building Command, Siwa Saengmanee received a report at 10am on October 26 that a total of 78 detainees had died.

The southern Army commander testified that he received a report at 7.45am on October 26 that 78 people had died. He said he left the Tak Bai police station at 7pm on October 25 to meet the prime minister at the Royal Princess Hotel in Narathiwat and was granted an audience with Her Majesty the Queen. He left the Southern Palace at 4am on October 26. He did not receive any report between 7pm on October 25 and 7.45am the following day.

But General Wiset Konguthaikul, deputy chief royal guard of the Queen, testified that the southern Army commander and several other military and civilian officers were granted an audience at 00.30am and left

at 1.30am on October 26. During the audience, it was already heard that the death toll of detainees had climbed to 70. Wiset said the southern Army chief could have used a mobile phone during the audience in case of an emergency.

Treatment and registration of detainees

Detainees received Halal food and water inside the Ingkayuth camp. Detainees from the first truck received the food and water at 8.30pm and the rest were gradually given food and water. The last group received food and water at 3.30am on October 26.

Detainees, who received minor injuries, received medical treatment at the hospital inside the military prison.

Those with more severe injuries were sent to the camp's military hospital. Those with conditions considered to be too severe to be treated at the camp's hospital were sent to the provincial hospital and the Prince of Songkhla University Hospital.

The post-mortem examinations of victims (seven people who were killed when security forces dispersed crowds at Tak Bai police station, and 78 others found dead on arrival at Ingkhayuth military camp), and drug tests on detainees:

1 Post-mortem examinations

On the post-mortem examinations of 85 people killed as a result of the demonstration at Tak Bai police station, an independent committee has reviewed the following:

- Post-mortem examination results by Tak Bai police station's investigators and the Central Institute of Forensic Science
- Investigation report by a fact-finding subcommittee on medical aspects
- Investigation report by a fact-finding subcommittee as well as clarifications by the Central Institute of Forensic Science's deputy director Khunying Pornthip Rojanasunand, who conducted the post-mortem examinations, and Ingkayuth Military Camp Hospital's acting director Lieutenant Dr Jirasak Intasorn in his capacity as a doctor who found many detainees dead at the military camp.

Results of the post-mortem examinations:

1.1 The post-mortem examinations of 85 victims by Tak Bai police station, Nong Chik police station and m Central Institute of Forensic Science.

1.1.1 Report by investigators at Tak Bai police station, Narathiwat, which looked into the deaths of the seven demonstrators. Six victims died at the protest site, while the seventh died at Narathiwat Ratchanakarin Hospital. Police officers, administrative officers (an assistant district officer of Tak Bai District Office and an assistant district officer of Muang Narathiwat District Office), and public prosecutors conducted the autopsies between 4pm and 5pm on October 25, 2004. Their autopsy report said the seven protesters died of gunshot wounds.

1.1.2 A: The post-mortem examinations on the 78 people who died while being transferred from Tak Bai police station in Narathiwat to the Ingkayuth military camp in Pattani's Nong Chik district. A medical team from the Central Institute of Forensic Science, Pattani Hospital doctors, police officers, administrative officers and public prosecutors conducted the post-mortem examinations (without dissection of the dead bodies) between 9am and 5pm on October 26, 2004. The post-mortem examinations found that:

1 Thirty-three people died of asphyxiation and pressure on their chests.

2 Four people died of asphyxiation as a result of pressure on their chests and also had injuries caused by blunt objects.

3 Ten people died of asphyxiation as a result of pressure on their chests. They had also suffered seizures as a result of a chemical imbalance in the blood and had injuries caused by blunt objects.

4 people died of asphyxiation.

B: Khunying Pornthip also clarified to the independent committee that:

- There was no trace of asphyxiation caused by strangulation, or by having plastic wrapped tightly around the victims' heads. Most bodies had sclera haemorrhage, and had venous congestion.
- Fasting was not the cause of any of the deaths, which was rather to do with the standard of health of the detainees.
- The physical pressure exerted on detainees from being laid upon was insufficient to cause death.

1.2 Investigation report by a fact-finding subcommittee on medical aspects

1.2.1 Regarding the seven people killed at Tak Bai police station and the one who sustained serious injuries and later died in hospital, the report concluded that it was clear the victims died of gunshot wounds caused by bullets shot from distance.

1.2.2 Regarding the deaths of the 78 people at the Inkayuth military camp in Pattani, The fact-finding subcommittee on medical aspects inferred their causes of death from physical examinations conducted on

injured survivors.

Of the injured victims, most suffered crush injuries and four also had compartment syndrome that meant they required urgent operations. Medical specialists said the fact that the protesting Thai Muslims had been fasting without food or liquids for more than 12 hours; that they had been exposed to the scorching sun; and that they had experienced violent treatment during the demonstration, dispersal and transfers on overcrowded vehicles had led to their injuries.

The transfers took more than three hours, in some cases on overcrowded vehicles, causing rhabdomyolysis as well as a chemical imbalance in the blood and blood cells. The imbalance was so severe that muscles involved with breathing could hardly function. In the most severe cases the victims died. It was concluded that the above factors caused the deaths of the detainees. Furthermore, the autopsies on the 78 detainees who died on their way from Tak Bai police station in Narathiwat's Tak Bai district to Ingkayuth military camp in Pattani's Nong Chik district showed that most deaths were caused by asphyxiation and pressure on the chest and breathing muscles.

There were also some signs of seizures and chemical imbalances in the blood, which could have resulted in death. Therefore, the subcommittee concluded that all 78 detainees died of the same cause - rhabdomyolysis, which causes abnormal breathing. When coupled with the shortage of food and water and long exposure to sweltering heat, the condition can result in death.

2 Drug test results

The fact-finding subcommittee on medical aspects reported the results of drug tests carried out on detainees at Ingkayuth military camp, injured victims from the Tak Bai incident and those who died while in detention as follows:

2.1 Of 1,093 subjects from detainees at the military camp, 13 tested positive for drugs. Details are:

2.1.1 Eight subjects tested positive for methamphetamines

2.1.2 One subject tested positive for ephedrine

2.1.3 One subject tested positive for Benzo

2.1.4 Two subjects tested positive for THC (marijuana)

2.2 Of the 13 injured subjects tested at Pattani Hospital, one tested positive for morphine.

2.3 Of the 78 detainees found dead at Ingkayuth military camp, only 40 were selected for drug tests. Of those, two tested positive for drugs: one for ephedrine and one for morphine. The results of the drug tests are limited, however, as not all the detainees who died were tested.

The independent committee's findings

Was the protest outside Tak Bai District Police Station in Narathiwat on October 25 systematically organised?

Yes. There were two reasons the protest was organised: to call for the release of six village defence volunteers and to pray for them.

The committee analysed the behaviour of the protesters before and after the crack down and found that the protest was systematically organised in the same way as earlier protests in Pattani and Narathiwat.

The protest leaders intentionally organised the protest during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and planned to instigate police anger. About 30 protest leaders were in front of the crowd, the rest of the protesters were persuaded to gather to give morale support to the defence volunteers and to pray for them. Some joined the protest out of curiosity.

Did the protesters carry arms?

Reports from the South-ern Border Provinces Peace-building Command and Lt-General Pisarn Wattanawong-kiri, commander of the Fourth Army Region at the time of the protest, concluded that some protesters carried arms. Police reported that they found bullets and arms hidden in the river.

The committee's analysis of reports and questioning of witnesses led it to believe that some protest leaders carried arms, although the number was not great. A policeman was wounded after a shot was fired from where protesters were gathered. If there had been a large number of arms, more police would have been wounded or

killed when they tried to disperse protesters.

Were the measures used to disperse protesters appropriate?

They were appropriate. There were roadblocks preventing people from going into Tak Bai District Police Station and six separate negotiations were undertaken to try to get the crowd to disperse. Those negotiations involved police, religious leaders and the parents of the six detained defence volunteers.

The committee, however, noted that had the roadblocks been erected earlier or more effectively, there would have been fewer protesters. Loudspeakers used by state officials to ask protesters to disperse were not loud enough.

Were the reasons given for dispersing protesters or the methods used for removing them appropriate?

The committee believes state officials had grounds to disperse the protesters, because the protest involved a large number of people. The protest was planned and organised. The protesters carried sticks, stones and may have had hidden arms. State officials were also placed under pressure because of the length of the protest.

However, the committee did not agree with the use of military Rangers or conscripted military or the firing of real bullets to crack down on protesters. Seven protesters were killed [five were shot in the head] and 15 police officers were injured during the crack down.

About 1,370 protesters were detained. Since police and protesters were injured or killed in the crackdown, their cases should be allowed to go through the justice system. Autopsies refuted reports that protesters were shot at point-blank range.

Was the detention of protesters appropriate and legal?

There were mistakes and flaws in the detention, because state officials had wanted to detain only protest leaders. But after protesters removed their shirts, officials could not identify the leaders. They then decided to detain all the protesters. Only four trucks were sent to transport protesters because authorities initially intended to arrest just the leaders. According to martial law, protesters can be detained no longer than a week.

Was the decision to use a military camp in Pattani to detain protesters appropriate?

It was appropriate, because the military camp in Narathiwat would not have been large enough to house them all, and the Pattani camp also had facilities to treat any injured protesters.

Was the transport of protesters from Tak Bai to the camp in Pattani up to scratch?

The transport operation was rushed and carried out in a state of confusion. A total of 28 trucks were provided without knowing how many protesters needed to be transported.

The trucks that left first carried only 50 protesters each, while the rest were heavily packed. The committee found that protesters were laid out on top of each other facing down in layers of three to four on the trucks.

High-ranking officials who oversaw the transport of protesters were guilty of dereliction of duty, as they failed to ensure it was carried out sensibly. Seventy-eight protesters died while being transported.

Was the time it took to transport protesters acceptable?

The trucks in which 77 of the protesters died took some five hours to travel to the camp - an acceptable time given that it rained and was dark. There were also nails and a blockade left by militants on the roads. The trucks were forced to stop frequently because of shift changes for security personnel and rumours that militants were planning an operation to free the protesters. However, it was irresponsible for security officials not to act sensibly when they found out that protesters had died on the trucks.

Were protesters treated well at the military camp in Pattani?

Yes. Doctors and nurses were on hand to treat injured protesters.

Are any protesters missing?

Seven people from Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala are missing. Local officials must speed up investigations to find their whereabouts. They must also provide moral support to relatives of the missing.

Who must take responsibility for the crackdown and the transportation of protesters?

The committee found that Maj-General Chalermchai Wiroonphet, then commander of the Fifth Infantry Division, is responsible for both incidents.

He was not at the scene to oversee the operation to the end. Instead, he left the scene at 7.30pm without an acceptable excuse, to meet the prime minister in Narathiwat.

Maj-General Sinchai Nutsatit, the then deputy commander of the Fourth Army Region, was assigned to prepare water, food and accommodation for protesters once they arrived at the camp in Pattani.

He failed to take any action against officials who were in control of the transport of protesters when he found that some had died on the trucks. He also did not act in any way to help protesters detained on the trucks. If he did act, he could have reduced the number of casualties.

Lt-General Pisarn was the highest authority after martial law was imposed. Although he assigned subordinates to oversee the operation, it was his responsibility to make sure they succeeded in carrying out their tasks. When he was informed 70 protesters had died on the trucks, he failed to act.

The committee concluded the tragedy that led to 78 deaths was beyond expectations and was not intentional. State officials carried out their work under limitations that led to flaws and mistakes, but there was no deliberate act to cause death and injury.