

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE STRUCTURES OF DOMESTIC
POLITICAL NEWS STORIES IN THE *BANGKOK POST* AND *THE NATION***

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

KARNRAWEE CHUAINU

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Master of Arts Degree in English

at Srinakharinwirot University

May 2009

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AN ABSTRACT

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Karnrawee Chuainu (2009). *A Comparative Study of the Structures of Domestic Political News Stories in the Bangkok Post and The Nation*. Master's Project, M.A. (English). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University. Project Advisor: Assistant Professor. Dr.Nitaya Suksaeresup.

This study aimed to investigate the most frequently used news story structures in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. It also aimed to compare the similarities and differences of news story structures that appeared in both newspapers. The political news reports were taken from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* from November 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008. The analytical framework of this study was based on Rich (2005). The results revealed that there were some differences in organizing the political news reports between the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. In the *Bangkok Post*, the inverted pyramid was used 86.67%, while the list technique and hourglass structure were used 10% and 3.33% respectively. In *The Nation*, the inverted pyramid was used 86.67%, followed by the hourglass structure 6.66%, and list techniques 3.33%; additionally a mixture of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure was used 3.33%.

การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบโครงการเขียนข่าวการเมืองในประเทศในหนังสือพิมพ์บางกอกโพสต์
และเดอะเนชั่น

บทคัดย่อ
ของ
กานต์วี ช่วยหนู

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ
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Mr. Martin Grose.

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาเปรียบเทียบ โครงสร้างการเขียนข่าวการเมืองใน
หนังสือพิมพ์บางกอกโพสต์และ เดอะเนชั่น โดยศึกษาการใช้โครงสร้างการเขียนข่าวที่ปรากฏมากที่สุด
ในหนังสือพิมพ์บางกอกโพสต์และ เดอะเนชั่น และนำผลการวิเคราะห์มาเปรียบเทียบความเหมือนและ
ความต่างของการใช้โครงสร้างการเขียนข่าว ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ในหนังสือพิมพ์บางกอกโพสต์ ใช้
รูปแบบการเขียนข่าว 3 รูปแบบคือ inverted pyramid เป็นรูปแบบที่พบมากที่สุด คิดเป็น 86.67 %
ลำดับต่อมาคือ list technique คิดเป็น 10 % และ hourglass structure คิดเป็น 3.33 % ใน
หนังสือพิมพ์ เดอะเนชั่น ใช้รูปแบบการเขียนข่าว 4 รูปแบบ inverted pyramid พบมากที่สุด คิดเป็น
86.67 % ลำดับต่อมาคือ hourglass structure คิดเป็น 6.66 % list technique คิดเป็น 3.33 % และ
แบบผสมระหว่าง inverted pyramid และ hourglass structure คิดเป็น 3.33 %

The Master's Project Committee and Oral Defense Committee have approved this master's project as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University.

Master's Project Advisor

.....

(Assistant Professor Dr. Nitaya Suksaeresup)

Chair of the Master of Arts Degree in English

.....

(Dr. Walaiporn Chaya)

Oral Defense Committee

..... Chair

(Assistant Professor Dr. Nitaya Suksaeresup)

..... Reader

(Associate Professor Dr. Tipa Thep-Ackrapong)

..... Reader

(Dr. Walaiporn Chaya)

..... Reader

(Mr. Martin Grose)

The Graduate School has approved this master's project as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in English of Srinakharinwirot University.

..... Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

(Associate Professor Chaleosri Pibulchol)

May.....2009

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

In Thailand, the English newspaper is one of the mass media that people use to obtain the information. The *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* are two notable English newspapers that present news in general.

The *Bangkok Post* is a well known English newspaper in Thailand as Lent (1982, p. 322) states that “*Bangkok Post* was considered the most credible and dependable for national and international news.” Additionally, Lent (1982, p. 351) also states that *The Nation*, founded in 1971, has been well-respected by intellectuals and continued to follow their commitments to print objective news reports and responsible commentaries.

Generally news can be classified into many categories. One of those that many people are interested in is political news because politics affects their lives, Iamsupanimit (1986, p.159) says, “Politics has a strong impact on human life in such a time that transportation has become more convenient and, in effect has brought people in the world closer.”

Additionally, Keeble (1994, p.202) states, “Any democratic system depends on people being well informed and educated about politics by media which give a full and accurate account of news.”

Since the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* are the main sources of English newspapers in Thailand, and the political news is important in a democratic society because it informs and educates people it is interesting to see how political news is structured to capture the readers' interest in both newspapers.

In Thailand, there are some studies involving the analysis of language in English newspapers, such as the following two examples:

Nualpin (2005) conducted a study on soccer news. The researcher studied the typical characteristics of soccer news, the use of actives and the passive voice, the omission of the verb "to be" in the present and past participle, sentence complexity, and soccer terminology conveying specific meaning. It was found that sports news accounts occurred frequently; the active voice was frequently used; the omission of the verb "to be" in the past participle appeared frequently, and there were fourteen words that conveyed specific meaning appearing in soccer news.

Dejtisak (2006) analyzed academic vocabulary in English sports news. The rate of the Academic Words List and the 50 most frequently used words were investigated. The researcher found that academic words covered 1.79% of the total words, and the 50 most frequently used in the corpus obviously related to sport news.

However, news structures in domestic political news had not been studied. In this research, the domestic political news structures in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* are analyzed. Domestic political news structure analysis should be beneficial to news readers, linguists and writers.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives were as follows:

1. To investigate which news structure appears most frequently in domestic political news in the *Bangkok Post*.
2. To investigate which news structure appears most frequently in domestic political news in *The Nation*.
3. To investigate the similarities and the differences of the news structures appearing in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*.

Scope of the Study

1. 50 domestic political reports from the *Bangkok Post* and 50 from *The Nation* covering the same topics were used as the samples for the study.
2. The samples were collected monthly from November 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008; the samples were taken from hard copy newspapers.
3. This study did not attempt to decide which news structure is the most effective.

Significance of the Study

The research results will be beneficial in the following aspects:

1. The research results will be a guideline for teachers of writing to design lessons as teaching materials.
2. The research results could be beneficial to students in the field of mass communication in developing effective writing and presentation.
3. This study could benefit researchers as a source for further research that is related to news structures.

Definitions of Terms

Below are the terms used in the study.

News Story Structure

News story structure refers to typical characteristics of news writing styles used in domestic political news. In this research, there are five news story structures based on Rich (2005)'s classification: inverted pyramid, wall street journal formula, hourglass structure, list technique, and sections technique. The news story structure is the organization of domestic political news in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*.

Domestic Political News

Domestic political news refers to stories relating to the government, parliamentary affairs, Thai politicians, political party affairs and public affairs of the country. The domestic political news in this research was from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* from November 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008.

Summary

In short, 100 pieces of domestic political news from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* from November 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008 have been studied to achieve three main objectives: to investigate which news structure appears most frequently in political news in the *Bangkok Post*, and in *The Nation*, and finally to investigate the similarities and the differences of the news structures appearing in both newspapers.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The review of the related literature discusses some concepts of news writing and some previous studies pertaining to English use in newspapers. There are three main sections in this chapter: characteristics of news, news structures, and previous studies related to English use in newspapers.

Types of News Stories

Generally news reports can be classified into three broad categories: hard news, breaking news, and soft news.

Hard News

Hard news or straight news is a strictly factual news report. It presents a current and important event. A hard news event is timely and reported almost automatically by most newspapers, radio stations, and televisions (Itule & Anderson, 1987, p.28).

Examples of this news type are stories concerning the government, social conditions, economics, politics, science, environment, international affairs, and education (Metzler 1979, p.34).

Breaking News

Breaking news or spot news is the news that is reported immediately. Breaking news often refers to an unexpected situation. Good examples of breaking news include an accident, a fire, a robbery, a plane crash, a hijacking, and an election result (Nel, 2005, p. 58 ; Metzler, 1979, p.34).

Soft News

Soft news or feature news provides readers both entertainment as well as information. Compared to hard news, soft news concerns “lighter, less urgent, less somber topics” (Harrower, 2007, p.113). Reports such as a lunch to honor a retiring school custodian, a movie review, cookery recipes, how to buy a puppy, and a survey on holiday places are soft news.

In brief, each newspaper genre presents news to readers depending on its importance and also readers’ preferences. Generally, hard news has the highest status in newspapers and tends to be on the front page (Keeble, 1998. p.109). However, there is room for all types of news in newspapers and other media.

The Structure of a News Story

There are different ways to present information that a reporter has gathered in a newspaper article. Generally news stories are organized by a common form: the

beginning of the story or the lead, the middle of the story, and the ending (Rich, 2005, pp. 182-186). The lead or the beginning of the story has several tasks: first it must capture the reader's interest, set the tone for the story, and bring the reader to the body of the story in a logical manner (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p. 192). Similarly, according to Keeble (1998, p.111), the introduction "is the most important part since it has to draw the readers into the story by creating a sense of urgency and exciting their interest." The lead should guide the readers to the theme and tone of the story.

Lead

The lead has to provide important information that the readers need to know about the story. Therefore, it is generally brought to the readers by the five Ws (who, what, where, when, and why) for the purpose of helping readers grab the information easily. The lead can be categorized in the same manner as news feature stories. Friendlander and Lee (1993, pp. 193-208) divide the lead into twelve categories: delayed, descriptive, direct address, expression, first-person, freak, prediction, question, quotation, relationship, surprise, and summary lead accordingly.

Delayed Lead

The identification of the person, group, place, and event are withheld in the delayed lead. The most important details are normally delayed for only few paragraphs (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p.193).

The following is an example of the delayed lead:

TOWANDA, Pa (AP) —In the hills above the Susquehanna River, the hunting season never ends for Dick Wilson, even in summer and even in the pockets of population along the dusty roads that wind past the hamlets and dairy farms.

Once in a while, an unwary woodchuck pops up its head as Wilson passes in his government -issue sedan, or a deer feeding at night on the edge of Route 6 stands transfixed by the headlights.

But Wilson is searching for more elusive game. In the words of the competition, he's "looking for a few good men and women," and it isn't easy. (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p.193).

Descriptive Lead

This lead is normally a word portrait of a person, group, place, or event.

The following is an example of the descriptive lead:

First, the eyes: They are large and blue, a light, opaque blue, the color of a robin's egg. And if, on a sunny spring day, you look straight into these eyes—eyes that cannot look back at you—the sharp, April light turns them pale, like the thin blue of a high cloudless sky (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p.194).

Direct Address Lead

The personal pronoun *you* is used to involve the reader immediately.

The following is an example of the direct address lead:

You wouldn't expect to be held up by a snake-toting robber, would you?

That's exactly what happened to a convenience store clerk who was confronted by the two teen-agers carrying a three-foot-long snake.

Their "take" was one six-pack of beer. They left the snake. (Newsome & Wollert, 1988, p.101).

Expression Lead

The expression lead can be presented in various forms. It can begin with a traditional expression, a practical rule, a proverb or a motto.

The following is an example of the expression lead:

Benjamin Franklin said a penny saved is a penny earned. But for Jim Penny, collector of rare 1 cent pieces, that saved coin may mean thousands of dollars earned (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p.198).

First - Person Lead

The first-person lead is normally more acceptable to magazine editors rather than newspaper editors. This lead can be found in newspaper articles when a reporter experiences something personally.

The following is an example of the first-person lead:

I went dancing the night before in a black velvet Paris gown, on one of those evenings that was the glamour of New York epitomized. I was blissfully asleep at 3 A.M.

Twenty-four hours later, I lay dying, my fingers and legs darkening with gangrene. I was in shock, had no pulse and my blood pressure was lethally low. The doctors in the Rockford, Ill., emergency room where I had been taken did not know what was wrong with me. They thought at first that I might have consumed some poison that had formed in my food. My sister and brother-in-law, whom I had been visiting, could see them through the open emergency-room door: "They were scurrying around and telephoning, calling for help, because they knew they had something they couldn't handle, that they weren't familiar with," was the instinctive reaction of my brother-in-law, Warren Paetz (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p.198-199).

Freak Lead

The freak lead begins with the lyric of a song, a poem or something unusual.

The following is an example of the freak lead:

Mash the Ash

Can the Trash

City park superintendent Marilyn Abbott penned this couplet and proposed that it be stenciled on park garbage cans (Newsome & Wollert, 1988, p.101).

Prediction Lead

The prediction lead starts with a prediction obtained from a trustworthy source.

The following is an example of the prediction lead:

The first people to feel the wrath of the giant are driving south of Blytheville, Arkansas, on Interstate 55.

Near the Burdette, Arkansas, Interchange, about seven miles south of the city, the highway pavement begins to shake and roll. Drivers, already straining to see in the twilight of an early December afternoon, struggle to keep their cars on the heaving, buckling road.

At Mississippi Country Community College, south of Blytheville's main business district, students walking to class lose their balance and fall to the ground while glass shatters around them.

In the Blytheville business district, the shaking lasts for a full two minutes.

When the earth finally stops moving, downtown is burning rubble. The giant has turned multistory buildings into piles of masonry and wood. The giant has wrenched and partially collapsed single-story buildings. Live wires dance across the torn, buckled pavement of highway 61 south of downtown.

Throughout the city, fires fed by broken gas mains send flames 40 feet into the air. Water from smashed mains spurts skyward, then cascades down the sides of broken buildings and across the city's cracked streets.

In residential areas, the giant has torn many homes from foundations. Walls are cracked, ceiling fans are pitched to the floor, and bookcases and furniture are overturned.

In some parts of town, structures sink into the now-jellied earth, and the ground, in turn, forces some objects, including septic tanks, to the surface.

The giant, of course, is an earthquake, long awaited and long dreaded by area residents, and long predicted by geologists. The quake is of an intensity geologists would call "moderate," measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale (Frienderline & Lee, 1993, p.201).

Question Lead

The question lead is a way to get readers involved in the news.

The following is an example of the question lead:

Will the student vote affect state elections? Not if students are not registered to cast their ballots.

Representatives from the Wisconsin attorney General's office will be in the Student Center on Thursday and Friday to register all students who claim Wisconsin as a legal residence (Newsome & Wallert, 1988, p.101).

Quotation Lead

The quotation lead begins with a direct, indirect or partial quotation. It's normally a speech story lead.

The following is an example of the question lead:

"My plane is taking off without me," shouted a student pilot to his instructor as he dashed down the runway after the runaway Cessna 140 (Newsom & Wollert, 1988, p.101).

Relationship Lead

This lead has several variations but the most common way is to describe the cause and effect that explain the situation from one to another.

The following is an example of the relationship lead:

"As the characteristic rattle and squeak of the convenience store door broke the early-morning silence, Dan Eifert looked up from behind the counter to see two men entering the store. Moments later, Eifert would be lying on the floor with blood oozing from a bullet wound in his chest. His nighttime job at the neighborhood Majit Market would be over (Friendlander & Lee, 1993, p. 203).

Surprise Lead

It quickly shocks the reader with something of interest.

The following is an example of the surprise lead:

In the restaurant business, it's called the Vat of Death.

Every day restaurants churn out bucketfuls of old grease that, because of health standards, cannot be thrown out with the garbage or poured into the sewer system.

Instead, the grease is stored in 55-gallon drums and is usually kept somewhere out back (Newsome & Wollert, 1988, p.101).

Summary Lead

The lead sums up the essence of the event in a few sentences. It's usually used with straight news stories.

The following is an example of the summary lead:

Five TCU geology students and two faculty members were injured Sunday night when their van slid out of control on icy roads in the Texas Panhandle (Newsome & Wollert, 1998, p.100).

In short, the lead is the important part of the story because it sets the tone for the reader to follow. It contains an essential gist of the story that normally comes with the five Ws. Lead is also useful for subeditor who has to design a suitable headline to the report.

Body

The story details come next after the lead. They should be worked into the story in order to elaborate on the lead. The way to organize the information depends on its importance. The most important details are brought to the reader first after the lead and followed by less important ones (Newsom & Wollert, 1998, p.124).

Rich (2005) said that "writers should organize the information in a sequence that helps readers understand how one item leads to another." Based on Rich (2005)'s and

others' classification, news can be presented in different forms: inverted pyramid, wall street journal formula, hourglass structure, list technique, and sections technique.

Inverted Pyramid

This basic story form is normally used with hard news. The structure is organized from the most important to the least important information. The lead basically provides the readers with the basics: who, what, where, when, and why. Therefore, readers are given the major information first and then the supporting details (Rich, 2005, p.194; Itule & Anderson, 1987, p. 100)

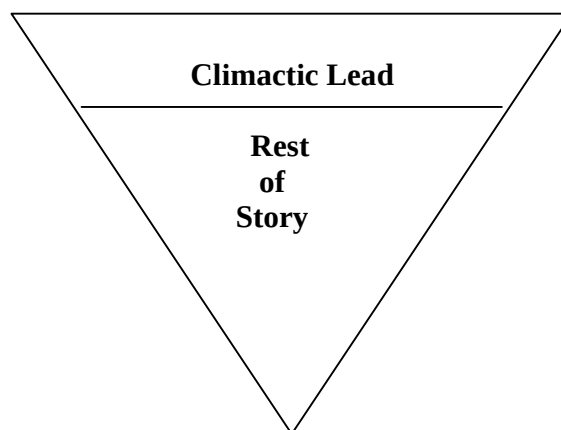


Figure 1 Inverted Pyramid (Bond, 1961, p. 100)

The major information of the event is presented in the summary lead first and followed by supporting details in order of decreasing significance (Itule & Anderson, 1987, p.58).

The following is an example of a basic inverted pyramid story:

2 IN GYPSY GARB

**TRICK PAY-ROLL
CLERK OF \$196
WOMEN DISTRACT VICTIM WITH
THEIR BEGGING PATTERN,
SPIRIT MONEY OFF DESK**

Two women in Gypsy costume, out on a begging tour in the garment section yesterday, snatched \$196 from a desk in the office of Glamour Togs., Inc 520 Eight Ave., and escaped, police reported.

The money was part of a \$950 payroll being sorted by Sarah Grossbard, clerk-receptionist, on the nineteenth floor of the building between 36th and 37th St.

Miss Grossbard reported the women kept pestering her for "a handout" and so distracted her with constant chatter that she did not know anything was missing until fifteen minutes after they had disappeared. To cap it all, she added, she had given the pair a ten-cent donation for some unexplained charity.

The women came into the office at 1:45 P.M., Miss Grossbard told police. One of them peered through the glass panel while the other entered through the shipping department and tiptoed into the reception room, where Miss Grossbard was seated alone. The second woman said that "they told me in the back you should give me money."

Miss Grossbard said she gave the woman a dime but could not get rid of her. "She kept fussing with my hands and with articles on the desk and chattering like a squirrel," she said. "All I can remember of her words were: 'Do you believe?' 'Do you have faith?'"

"Then," Miss Grossbard continued, "Lou Grau, owner of the place, came out of the back room and shouted: 'Get out of here!' Then he noticed that the one woman had a dollar bill in her hand and he yelled: 'Put that down!' She did and then ran out."

Miss Grossbard told police that the women were "thirtyish" and dressed in vivid Gypsy skirts and blouses (Bond, 1984, pp 99-100).

Wall Street Journal Formula

This news formula begins the report with specific and goes on to general. The information is organized with a soft lead, usually focusing on a person, scene, or event. A nut graph follows after the lead. It provides the main point of the story, and it should tell the readers "what the story is about and why it is important" (Rich, 2005, p.196). Then

the backup is presented as supporting points. Finally, the ending comes with a circle kicker that summarizes the whole story, referring back to the beginning of the story.

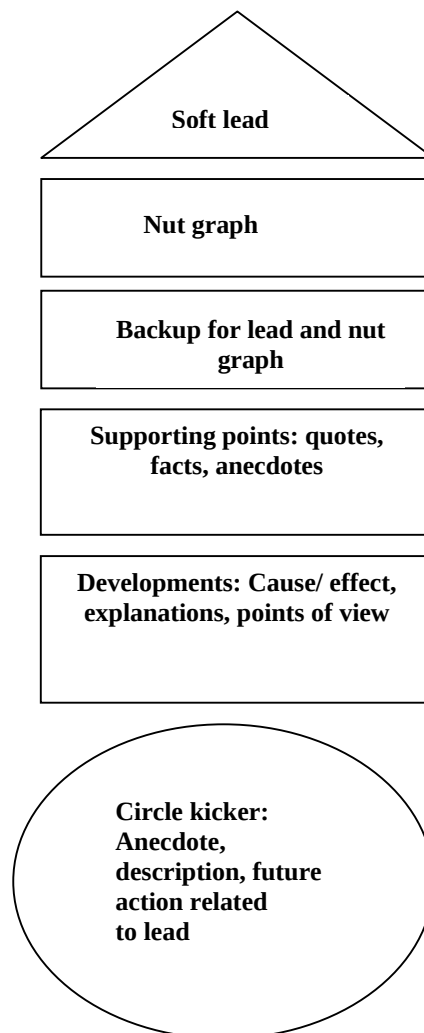


Figure 2 Wall Street Journal Formula (Rich, 2005, p.195)

The following story is an example:

Casinos sinking college dreams

College students who live close to Casinos may be more prone to gambling addiction. Numbers have

been increasing in recent years.

By Kia Shante Breaux
Associated Press Writing

KANSAS CITY, Mo.-Michael Hudspeth started gambling when he was in junior high, shooting craps for lunch money on the cafeteria floor. When he went off to college, he played dice aboard Missouri's riverboat casinos.

His losses grew from the \$2 a day his mother gave him for lunch to \$2,000 he once borrowed as a student loan-and he lost that in one night.

"I would go to the boat every day," said Hudspeth, 24, who often skipped his classes at Missouri Western College in St. Joseph to gamble five minutes away at the St. Jo Frontier Casino. "I don't know, it's just something about all the people and excitement that keeps me going back."

The spread of casinos around the country may be contributing to problem gambling among college students.

Students who live close to casinos are more prone to gambling addiction, said Michael Frank, a professor of psychology at Richard Stockton College in New Jersey, which has a dozen casinos in Atlantic City. "It seems to be increasing in recent years."

According to a study by Harvard Medical School's Division on Addictions, about half of the college students surveyed in the United States and Canada said they had gambled at a casino during the previous year.

At Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, with two riverboats less than two miles from campus, a student was accused recently of bilking the school out of about \$3,000 in a payroll scheme to support his gambling.

In New Jersey, "gambling is festering in every high school and college in New Jersey," said Edward Looney, director of the New Jersey Council on Compulsive Gambling. "It's absolutely epidemic. Just about any college in the country has students who gamble at racetracks and casinos."

At Kansas University, which is within an hour's drive of six casinos, students formed a Gamblers Anonymous chapter last year.

"Given that statistics show there's tendency for younger people to develop gambling problems, it is of particular concern having casinos so close to college campuses," said Steve Taylor, spokesman for the Missouri-based Casino Watch, an anti-gambling organization.

The legal age to gamble is 21 in most states, and casino operators can face big fines if a minor is caught gambling. But underage students have found ways to get in, just as they've managed to buy alcohol or get into bars.

Many use fake or borrowed ID or get through the door without being asked for proof of age. Many college students have easy access to cash either from a parent or from a student loan. Students are also flooded with credit card offers, and a parent usually is not required to co-sign.

All 11 of Missouri's riverboat casinos have adopted a program called project 21 to remind minors that it is illegal for them to gamble and to teach staff members how to spot underage gamblers.

Jeff Hook, director of marketing at Harrah's North Kansas City Casino & Hotel, said Harrah's staff checks identification before a patron gets on the boat and again afterward if there are questions about the person's age.

Hudspeth was raised in Kansas City, Mo., and gambling had been around him all his life. He would borrow a driver's license from his best friend to get into the casinos, and also bet on sports, sometimes with money his mother sent him for rent. He maxed out his credit cards and took out student loans to support his addiction. He did not finish college, and instead went to work full time to pay off his debts (Rich, 2005, p.196-197).

At the beginning, the lead focuses on a person that portrays the gist of the story, then comes the supporting information, and the ending returns to the person that was mentioned in the lead.

Hourglass Structure

The hourglass style, or the martini glass, is normally used with hard news covering crimes, disasters, police, fire or other dramatic stories. The news begins with the most important information in the first paragraph and is followed by a chronological narrative for the rest of the story (Harrower, 2007, p.48; Itule & Anderson, 1987, pp.110-111). This technique is used when the story has a dramatic action.

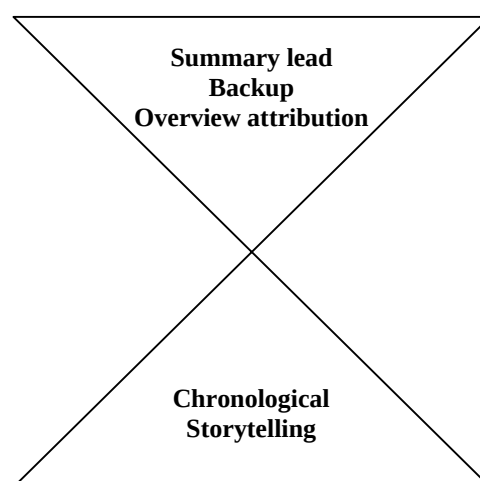


Figure 3 Hourglass structure (Rich, 2005, p.197)

The following story is an example:

A Delaware County businessman died yesterday morning after a tractor trailer careened into busy Chester Country intersection and slammed through the office where he was sitting at his desk.

The truck driver was seriously injured in the 8:09 a.m. accident at Route 202 and Brinton's Bridge Road in Bermingham Township. There were no other injuries, officials said.

Police said the brakes of the tractor-trailer, a flatbed loaded with coiled steel, apparently had failed. The truck veered across lanes of oncoming traffic, hitting a van, plowing through the office building and into a parked van before coming to a stop, according to Birmingham Police Chief Wade L. Anderson.

The businessman, James E. Dever, 50, of Stonebridge Road, Thornton, died during emergency surgery at Chester Country Hospital in West Chester about 10:30 a.m., hospital spokeswoman Donna Pennington said. She described Dever's injuries as "multiple trauma."

The truck driver, Steven Rowe, 26, of Chesapeake, Ohio, was taken to Chester Country Hospital with multiple injuries. He was listed in satisfactory condition last night.

Dever was a salesman for the Logan Co., a conveyer manufacturer, according to his son, Thomas Dever, of West Chester.

Anderson gave the following account of the accident:

Rowe's tractor-trailer was north-bound in Route 202. At Brinton's Bridge Road, the truck, apparently unable to stop for a red light, crossed the southbound lanes and struck the front end of a van making a left turn onto the road. The driver of the van, Joseph A. Koskoszka of New Castle, Del., was not injured.

The truck continued past the cross street and up a grade into the parking lot of the Birmingham Professional Building on the northwest corner of the intersection. Dever was the only person in the two-story building at the time. He was at his desk in a first-floor corner office when Rowe's truck crashed through the office and into a parked van owned by Anderson. The impact demolished two walls of Dever's office and pinned him under the debris.

The van rolled onto its side and smashed the front window of the neighboring building, the Patterson Schwartz real estate office.

Anderson said he had just left his office in the basement of the Birmingham Professional Building and was sitting in a petrol car when Rowe's truck skidded by.

"I could see it was out of control, and the driver was making every attempt to miss anything," he said. "He did a fantastic job. He thought the lesser of the evils would be hitting the building, but, of course, it didn't work out that way."

Anderson estimated damages of \$75,000. No charges have been filed, but the accident remains under investigation, Anderson said.

Besides his son Thomas, Dever is survived by his wife, Barbara; two daughters; and two other sons (Itule & Anderson, 1987, p.112).

The first six paragraphs provide the most important points, and the details come next in a narrative style.

List Technique

This form is helpful when the story has many important points to emphasize. It is suitable for studies or government affairs that have several key points to list.

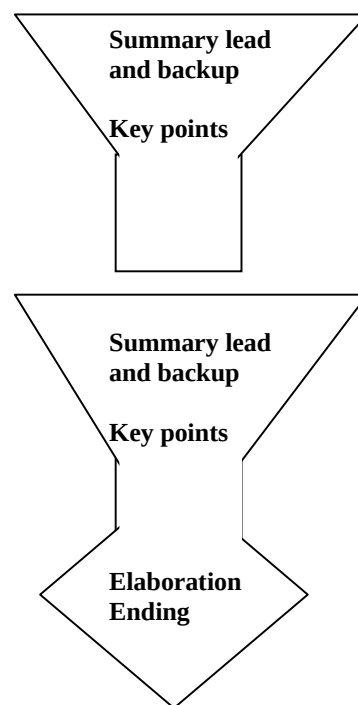


Figure 4 List Technique (Rich, 2005, p.199)

The following story is an example:

Campus crime records must be open to the public, a judge in Springfield, Mo., ruled Wednesday in a case with far-reaching implications.

“The gentlemen who wrote the Constitution would be proud,” says Traci Bauer, 22, editor of the Southwest Missouri State University newspaper.

Bauer sued the school, saying it concealed crime reports to protect its image. Federal Judge Russel Clark ruled:

- Withholding crime investigation and incident reports is unconstitutional.
- Campus crime records aren’t exempt from Missouri’s open-records law or protected as educational records.

Media-law experts say the ruling could set a precedent.

Testimony showed:

- A rape allegedly committed by a star athlete was not disclosed and no charges were filed.
- Springfield police were not told of several crimes.
- Drugs were seized and destroyed without disclosure.

University spokesman Paul Kincaid says regents will meet Friday to consider an appeal (Rich, 2005, p.199).

The story starts with a summary lead, then comes the background information followed by the points that are itemized until the end.

Sections Technique.

This technique divides the story into sections. Each section can present a different point of view or a different time element. It is useful for an in-depth story such as an investigation.

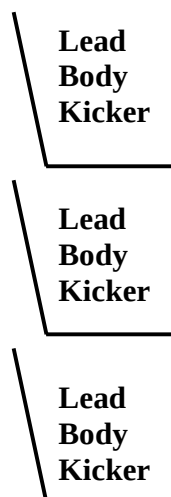


Figure 5 Sections Technique (Rich, 2005, p.200)

The following story is an example:

**They got out alive,
but no one was spared**

BOULDER, Colo.—For weeks after the crash, David Hooker found the love notes his fiancée had hidden around the house.

In the medicine cabinet: “David, I love you this much.”

In the sock drawer: “Poo—Here’s a hug for you! Susan.”

In the silverware tray: “I’ll miss you! Take care.”

Five months have passed since Susan Fyler boarded United Airlines Flight 282. Hooker carefully stacks the yellow slips of paper into a neat pile on the corner of his dresser, next to the framed photographs of Fyler and the mahogany box that holds her ashes.

•

Less than a half-hour away in Denver, Garry Priest can’t sleep.

He watched a movie—he doesn’t even remember what it was about—and one scene stuck. A woman is thrown from a car and the pavement scrapes her skin raw.

Suddenly it was July 19 again and Priest was back in Sioux City, Ia., escaping from the plane, racing along the runway, seeing the debris, the charred metal, the boy’s body. Then he thinks of Christmas. And his eyes will not close.

•

Five months ago, they were strangers, bound only by an airplane flight. Susan Fyler was headed to Ohio to surprise her parents with news of her engagement. Garry Priest was going to Chicago on business.

Both boarded Flight 232 in Denver. She sat in seat 31K, he in seat 15G. Fyler was one of 112 people killed in the crash. She was 32. Priest was one of 184 survivors. He is 23.

For those most directly affected—the family and friends of the victims, the survivors and their families—the holidays are proving that time has not healed all wounds.

Five months later, they are strangers, but David Hooker and Garry Priest share a common grief.

•

Every night, David Hooker walks into his bedroom, lights a candle and shares his day with Susan Fyler. Shortly after the crash, a friend admonished Hooker to stop feeling sorry for himself and to ask Fyler for guidance.

‘I asked Susan to come live with me inside my body and to stay alive inside my body,’ he says, “and right after I did that, I felt a very dramatic change going on in me. I just felt all this energy coming over me.”

After he lights the candle, Hooker may read the Lord’s Prayer or flip through the love notes Fyler left him or look at the five photographs on his dresser.

•

It didn't make sense.

Why, Garry Priest wondered were people acting this way? He had survived one of the worst airplane disasters in U.S. history. He had seen horrible things, scenes that made his legs shake, pictures he will remember the rest of his life.

So why was everyone calling him lucky?

"People want to pinch you," he says. "They say, 'Let's play bingo,' or 'Let's buy a lottery ticket.' They pat your head.

I don't feel lucky at all. If I was lucky, I wouldn't have been on that plane. Nobody would have been on the plane."

•

They are strangers, but Garry Priest would like David Hooker to know that he, too, mourns Susan Fyler.

"Could you do me a favor?" Priest asks. "Could you tell all the people who lost loved ones and all the people who survived that I wish them a merry Christmas and that my thoughts and prayers and love are with them?" (Rich, 2005, p.201-202).

The information is separated into sections with a lead that forces the reader to follow up.

Each point of view is presented in a section accordingly.

In summary, news reports are normally organized with the headline that presents the important gist of the story, the lead that contains important information and provides readers with the five W's, then the body that gives all the information to support the lead or the headline.

Related Research

Politics has a strong impact on human life. Politics is undoubtedly involved everybody's life even if one is not interested in it. Humans are social animals and have to interact with others. Following political news will help people know about public affairs in general.

Iaumsupanimit (1986, p.157) said that "the political news covers a variety of topics". Foreign relationships, state visits, political negotiations, elections, party conventions, political personalities, and political campaigns are topics that show different types of political news.

There are some previous studies which are related to different kinds of news and different aspects of English usage. The topics such as front-page headlines, English language style, and academic words have been studied. Some significant studies are as follows:

Kawprapan (2003) conducted research on the syntactic structures of front-page headlines in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* from September to November 2002. The analysis of headline writing styles was based on Reah's theory (1998). There were four types of headlines: verbal headline, nominal headline, adverbial headline, and a headline with more than one free structure. The results revealed that the verbal headline occurred most frequently in both the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. Additionally, alliteration and

headline words were the most popular styles used in composing front-page headlines in both newspapers.

Charuchinda (2003) examined the characteristics of noun phrases used in front-page headlines. There were 292 front-page headlines with noun phrases from the *Bangkok Post* during March 1 to May 31, 2003. The findings revealed that “Noun + Post-modifier” was the most commonly used in the front-page headline. Moreover, the result showed that the front-page headlines had a special style of grammar that was different from general standard English.

Meksujit (2002) examined the grammatical structures used in the business section of the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. The samples for this study were 40 pieces of business news stories of both English newspapers. They were taken from November to December, 2001. The samples were analyzed based on five aspects: the sentence structures most frequently used, four sentence types, the relative clauses, the omission of verb to be in the present and past participles, and the active and passive voices. She found that both newspapers used the structure of clause + clause most frequently, and the sentence structure with post-modification occurred most. The complex sentence was used the most among the four types. The omission of the verb to be in the past participle was found mostly. The active voice was used more than the passive voice. The results also revealed that each grammatical structure in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* occurred at similar percentage levels.

Phanpanich (1999) studied English usage in political news in the *Bangkok Post*. 40 political news reports were taken from the *Bangkok Post* during January to December,

1998. The study analyzed the sentence complexity, the omission of the verb to be in the present and past participles, the use of active and passive voices, and the level of formality in conveying the political meaning. The results showed that the complex sentence was appropriate for telling a long story and it occurred most. The active voice was used more than the passive voice because it expressed the ideas more directly. The verb to be was omitted for conciseness.

Not only grammatical structures have been studied but also academic vocabulary. Nakphakhon (2005) conducted a study on academic vocabulary in political reports. The Coxhead's Academic Words in political news was used to analyze a corpus of 122,811 words. The words were taken from www.nationmultimedia.com from January to December, 2003. The results showed that academic words covered 5.7% of all the words and the top 50 words in the academic word list were related to political meaning.

In summary, related studies have investigated English news in front-page headlines, grammatical structures used, and academic words. The results of those studies reflected the style of news writing that it was simple and easy to understand. The conciseness of news through, for example, the omission of the verb to be was also clearly revealed, helping to save space in the newspaper.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of the data collection, procedures, and data analysis used in the study.

Data collection

Domestic political news reports from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* covering the same topic were collected. The news was issued from November 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008. There were 100 domestic political news reports: fifty domestic political news reports from the *Bangkok Post* and fifty from *The Nation*. Then, thirty reports from each newspaper were selected by using a simple random sampling method to be studied. There were a total of 60 copies of domestic political news in this study.

Procedures

The study was conducted according to the following procedures:

1. Sixty copies of political news were classified into five categories based on Rich's theory (2005): inverted pyramid, wall street journal formula, hourglass, list, and sections
2. The frequency count of each structure was calculated as a percentage.

3. The number of the most frequent occurrence of political news in each structure was calculated as a percentage.

4. The results were compared to see the similarities and the differences of each news structure that appears most in each newspaper.

Data Analysis

In order to achieve the objectives, the data were analyzed and calculated to find the frequency of occurrences in percentages as in the following formula:

$$\text{The percentage of each structure model} = \frac{\text{Total report of each structure} \times 100}{\text{Total structure models of all the data}}$$

In summary, 100 political news reports were collected from which 60 pieces were chosen, and then the structures were analyzed based on Rich's theory (2005). Finally the frequencies of the news structures were calculated in percentages.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the study, which were organized according to the objectives of the study stated in chapter one:

1. To investigate which news structure appears most frequently in domestic political news in the *Bangkok Post*.
2. To investigate which news structure appears most frequently in domestic political news in *The Nation*.
3. To investigate the similarities and the differences of the news structures appearing in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*.

The results of the data are presented in tables. The raw data of the news structures together with the percentage of occurrence in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Table 3 presents the similarities and differences of the news structures between the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*.

Table1 The Frequency of Occurrences of News Structures in the *Bangkok Post*

Types of News Structure	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
1. The Inverted Pyramid	26	86.67
2. Wall Street Journal Formula	0	0
3. Hourglass Structure	1	3.33
4. List Technique	3	10
5. Section Technique	0	0
Total	30	100

The results revealed that the inverted pyramid structure was found at the highest level (86.67%), followed by the list technique (10%). The wall street journal formula and section technique were not found in domestic political news reports.

From the results, it can be concluded that the most frequently used domestic political news structure in the *Bangkok Post* was the inverted pyramid.

The results support the idea of some scholars that the inverted pyramid is one of the most basic forms and is used most often for hard news stories (Rich, 2005, p.193). Bond (1961, p.100) also affirms that the inverted pyramid is used typically for news reports. It can be assumed that during the time the data were collected, the *Bangkok Post* writers preferred using the inverted pyramid form to organize domestic political news stories.

Table 2 The Frequency of Occurrences of News Structure in *The Nation*

Types of News Structure	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
1. The Inverted Pyramid	26	86.67
2. Wall Street Journal Formula	0	0
3. Hourglass Structure	2	6.67
4. List Technique	1	3.33
5. Section Technique	0	0
* Hybrid: Inverted Pyramid and Hourglass Structure	1	3.33
Total	30	100

The results revealed that the inverted pyramid was found most (86.67%), followed by the hourglass structure (6.67%) and the list technique (3.33%). The result also showed a hybrid structure between inverted pyramid and hourglass structure (3.33%).

The results support the idea of Rich (2005, p.194) and Bond 1961, p.100) who state that the inverted pyramid is the most common form for news writing.

The most frequently occurring news structure *The Nation* was the inverted pyramid, which was similar to the *Bangkok Post*. The writers from both newspapers preferred using the inverted pyramid for domestic political reports.

Table 3 The Similarities and Differences of Domestic Political News Structures between the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*

Types of News Structure	Percentage	
	the <i>Bangkok Post</i>	<i>The Nation</i>
1. The Inverted Pyramid	86.67	86.67
2. Wall Street Journal Formula	0	0
3. Hourglass Structure	3.33	6.67
4. List Technique	10	3.33
5. Section Technique	0	0
* Hybrid: Inverted Pyramid and Hourglass Structure	0	3.33
Total	100	100

Table 3 shows the similarities and differences between political news structures in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. The data reveal that the most frequently used news structure in both newspapers, with equal percentage, was the inverted pyramid, followed by the list technique, hourglass structure, and a mixed type of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure.

The *Bangkok Post*'s domestic political news writers preferred organizing the news in the inverted pyramid form (86.67%), followed by list technique (10%), and hourglass structure (3.33%).

Similarly, *The Nation*'s writers used the inverted pyramid structure most (86.67%), followed by the hourglass structure 6.66%. The list technique was rarely used at 3.33% and in one case a mixed type of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure was used (3.33%).

The frequency of occurrence can be ranked as follows: the highest frequency of occurrences in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* was the inverted pyramid (86.67%). The second highest of occurrence in the *Bangkok Post* was the list technique (10%), while in *The Nation* it was the hourglass structure (6.67%). The third highest rate of occurrence in the *Bangkok Post* was the hourglass structure (3.33%) and in *The Nation* the list technique (3.33%). A mixed type of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure was found in *The Nation* (3.33%).

Summary

In summary, the findings revealed the news structures found in political news reports in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* were the inverted pyramid, list technique, hourglass structure, and a hybrid structure of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure. The wall street journal formula and section technique were not used with political reports in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a summary of the analysis, discussion of the news structures used in political news, and recommendations for further research. In this study, 60 reports of political news from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* were analyzed by using the models of news story structures proposed by Rich (2005).

Conclusions

The results of this study can be summarized as follows:

1. Regarding the first objective, to investigate which news structure appears most frequently in political news in the *Bangkok Post*, the results from 30 domestic political news samples revealed that the news structure that appeared most frequently was the inverted pyramid (86.67%), followed by list technique (10%), and hourglass structure (3.33%).
2. Regarding the second objective, to investigate which news structure appears most frequently in domestic political news in *The Nation*, the results from 30 domestic political news reports revealed that the news structure that appeared most frequently was the inverted pyramid (86.67%), followed by the hourglass structure (6.66%), list technique (3.33%), and a hybrid structure of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure (3.33%).

3. Regarding the third objective, to investigate the similarities and the differences of the news structures appearing in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*, three structures were found in each newspaper: the inverted pyramid, hourglass structure, and list technique. The inverted pyramid was most used in both newspapers and at the same percentage level (86.67%). The hourglass structure was found in the *Bangkok Post* 6.66%, and in *The Nation* 3.33%. The list technique was found in the *Bangkok Post* 10%, *The Nation* 3.33%. There was a hybrid structure of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure found only in *The Nation* (3.33%).

In a nutshell, the results of this study revealed that the news structure that appeared most frequently in the *Bangkok Post* was the inverted pyramid(86.67%), followed by the list technique (10%) and hourglass structure(3.33%). In *The Nation*, the news structure that appeared the most frequently was the inverted pyramid (86.67%), followed by the hourglass structure (6.67%), list technique (3.33%), and a mixed structure of the inverted pyramid and hourglass structure (3.33%).

Discussion

This section discusses the results of the study based on the objectives of the study and other significant differences.

Regarding the frequency of news structures in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*, it can be concluded that the typical form of news structure, the inverted pyramid, was the major structure used in political news writing. Therefore, the results supported the ideas from some scholars; for example, Bond (1961) and Rich (2005) who state that the inverted pyramid is the typical form of a news story. Similarly, Friendlander and Lee (1993, p.2) state that the inverted pyramid style of news writing makes more sense today because readers can quickly scan the story by reading the lead and perhaps a few paragraphs and also it can be easy to editors that they can cut news stories lengths by removing less important information from the bottom of the story.

Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations in this study because the data were obtained from two sources only, the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. The results might not be representative of political news writing when compared to other sources worldwide, for example, *The Sun* or *Times*.

Moreover, the results of this study might not be the same as those of similar research in the future because the data in Thai politics depend on the situations occurring at a certain time. Therefore, the data were unique to the political reports from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* during November 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008 only.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future studies should carry on from this study as follows: this study focused only on domestic political news in English in the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. There should be further studies on foreign political news and also from other channels like websites or magazines. It should be conducted with other kinds of news, such as sport, education, or entertainment news.

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Focal Press.

APPENDIX

Other Significant Findings from the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*

There were also some significant differences between the two newspapers in such things as style of language used, quoted information and references to interviewees.

Formal language was preferred in the *Bangkok Post*, while *The Nation* was more likely to use colloquialism. The following examples show the differences of formal and informal language from each newspaper.

Example

Mr Jakrapob's troubles came from a speech at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand on August 29 last year, where he spoke about the patronage system and democracy in Thailand (*Bangkok Post*, May 30, 2008).

Jakrapob has been in the hot seat and at risk of losing his cabinet job following a translation of the text of his speech from English to Thai that was widely circulated on the Internet (*The Nation*, May 30, 2008).

The *Bangkok Post*'s writer presented the story with formal language, such as *Mr Jakrapob's troubles*. In contrast, in *The Nation*'s report, the writer used a colloquialism to present the same information: *Mr Jakrapob has been in the hot seat*.

Regarding quoted information, the *Bangkok Post* reporters used more quoted information from the source, while *The Nation* news writers preferred to rewrite the information that they gathered. The following examples show the differences between the two newspapers.

“I don't know what the government is basing this 3.5% inflation figure on,” said Mr Apisit.

“If it includes petrol, how much is it on the global market?” Mr Apisit challenged Finance Minister Surapong Suewonglee to clarify the matter and give public assurances as to how the government intend to make inflation drop to 3.5% next year. (*Bangkok Post*, June 28, 2008).

When the government prepared the budget early this year, it wanted to encourage the economic growth. Apisit, however, argued that economic conditions had changed, because the threat of inflationary pressure, caused by high oil prices, had emerged.

He did not think the government would achieve an inflation rate of 3.5 per cent next fiscal year, as inflation was now higher than 6 per cent (*The Nation*, June 28, 2008).

The examples show the *Bangkok Post*'s writer preferred to quote the information, for instance “*I don't know what the government is basing this 3.5% inflation figure on,*” said Mr Apisit, while *The Nation* paraphrased the information as in, “*He did not think the government would achieve an inflation rate of 3.5 per cent fiscal year, as inflation was now higher than 6 per cent*”.

The news story from the *Bangkok Post* contained more quoted information, whereas *The Nation* preferred to paraphrase the information.

Regarding the references to interviewees, the differences between the *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* can be seen in the following examples:

Mr Suthep told parliament Mr Pokin was an outsider and should not have been in the meeting. The meeting should have been attended by only the prime minister, the finance minister and the central bank governor, because they were the decision makers, he said.

The democrats also accused Mr Pokin of leaking the planned float to Thaksin Shinawatra before its announcement.

Gen Chavalit denied Mr Suthep's remark during the debate, prompting Mr Pokin to file a lawsuit against Mr Suthep (Bangkok Post April 2, 2008)

Suthep claimed Chavalit had wrongfully allowed Bhokin to attend a crucial meeting before cutting the baht loose and that Bhokin had leaked the information to then telecom tycoon Thaksin Shinawatar, who made huge gains from speculative currency trading.

Chavalit issued a public statement denying Bhokin's presence at the meeting which was confined to himself and two officials (*The Nation*, April 2, 2008).

The *Bangkok Post* normally referred to the person with a title, such as *Mr Suthep*, *Mr Pokin*, and *Gen Chavalit*, while *The Nation* usually omitted the title.

VITAE

VITAE

Name: Miss Karnrawee Chuainu
Date of Birth: January 22, 1982
Place of Birth: Nakhon si thammarat Province
Address: 129/38 Dreamplace Village, Mahasawas, Bangkrui,
Nonthaburi 11130

Educational Background

2009 Master of Arts (English) from Srinakharin University
2004 Bachelor of Educations (English) from Rajabhat
Suansunadha Institute