

The Discursive Construction of Identities of Mia Farangin the Movie : E-Nang Oie Koie Farang (White Buffalo)

Thinnawat Sroikudrua¹

Piyaporn Punkasiriku²

Abstract

Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), this study investigates how identities of Mia Farang are discursively constructed through the linguistic features in the Thai film: E-Nang Oie Koie Farang or White Buffalo. Linguistic features employed to construct the identities of Mia Farang in this movie are language choices, the use of nonverbal language, lexical choices, claiming, rhetorical questions, and metaphors. Nine identities of Mia Farang are constructed from these linguistic features: 1. being originally from the Northeast of Thailand and working in the field, 2. being materialistic, 3. being uneducated, 4. having a happy married life with a western spouse, 5. having an unsuccessful married life with a western spouse, 6. having an unpleasant physical appearance, 7. being a gambler, 8. taking a good care of a Western husband and his family, and 9. being reserved.

¹ Lecturer at Thai Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University

² Lecturer at English Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างกลวิธีทางภาษากับ
 อุตลักษณ์เมียฝรั่งใน ภาพยนตร์เรื่อง “อินางะเอียเซย์ฝรั่ง ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ภาพยนตร์เรื่อง
 นี้ใช้กลวิธีทางภาษาต่างๆ เช่น การเลือกใช้ภาษา การใช้วาทะภาษา การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์
 การกล่าวอ้าง การใช้คำถามเชิง วาทศิลป์ และอุปลักษณ์ เพื่อประกอบสร้างอุตลักษณ์
 เมียฝรั่งทั้งสิ้น 9 อุตลักษณ์ ได้แก่ 1) มีพื้นเพ เป็นคนชนบทในภาคอีสานและทำมาหา
 เลี้ยงชีพด้วยการเป็นเกษตรกร 2) มีความหลงใหลในวัตถุ เงินทองจนกลายเป็นพฤติกรรม
 การเอาอย่าง 3) มีความรู้น้อยพูดภาษาอังกฤษไม่เก่ง 4) การมีชีวิต สมรส (กับฝรั่ง)
 ที่ประสบความสำเร็จ 5) การมีชีวิตสมรส (กับฝรั่ง) ที่ไม่ประสบความสำเร็จ 6) มีลักษณะ
 กายภาพ ผิวดำตัวเล็ก 7) เป็นผู้หญิงที่เล่นห่วย 8) เมียฝรั่งเป็นผู้หญิงที่เอาใจเก่ง และยัง
 ช่วยดูแลพ่อแม่ของฝรั่งด้วย และ 9) เมียฝรั่งเป็นผู้หญิงที่รักนวลสงวนตัว

1. Introduction

The movie *E-Nang Oie Koie Farang* or *White Buffalo* portrays the increasing number of Isaan women getting married with Western men. The film, released in Thai cinemas in 2011, was produced by Sahamongkolfilm International and directed by Shinoret Khamwadee. *E-Nang Oie Koie Farang (White Buffalo)* was an award winning movie from the Thailand Script Project. This 97- minute movie set in a village in the Northeast Region of Thailand. Each scene depicts Isaan people's life: the White Buffalo Club, a shelter on the paddy field that belongs to Boonmark, the main character; the Banana Salad Club, a small beauty salon where Isaan women who would like to be Mia Farang get together; the house of Waewdao whose sister is Mia Farang; a sugar cane field; a paddy field; a river bank; a market; and Ramkamhang University where Boonmark spent 6 years for his study.

E-Nang Oie Koie Farang (White Buffalo) was released in Thai cinemas in 2011. The movie preview was distributed via such media as TV program, newspaper, radio, and internet (www.youtube.com). Moreover, the movie was also distributed to audiences in the forms of CD and DVD for home entertainment.

Like other forms of public discourse, movies has potential to produce and reproduce "knowledge" (Foucault, 1972 as cited in Feder, 2010), social realities, including identities of people. Due to the fact that the movie *E-Nang Oie Koie Farang (White Buffalo)* is distributed widely in society, it can shape public opinions on the identities of Mia Farang (Sroikudrua, 2013).

According to De Fina et al., 2006 (as cited in Hatoss, 2012), identity is not a 'given', 'monolithic or 'static' characteristic of individual; rather it is constructed in social settings and it can be explored through discursive practice. Identities are

complex personal and social construct, consisting in parts of who we think ourselves to be, how we wish others to perceive us, and how they actually perceive us. (Wood and Smith, 2005 and Ellison, 2013). Personal identity is related to the concept that each person is unique such as self-definition or personality traits. Social identity comes from our group memberships and the social categories to which we belong such as one's personal values or moral beliefs. Personal identity and social identity have an influence on each other and in particular on our sense of selves. According to George Herbert Mead (cited in Ellis, 2010), the self is constructed through communication. An individual is a product of society, of social interaction.

The objective of this study is to investigate linguistic features utilized to construct identities of Mia Farang in the movie E-Nang Oie Koie Farang or White Buffalo using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis.

2. Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework used in this study is critical discourse analysis (CDA). Critical discourse analysis or CDA is a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods and agenda. What unites them is a shared interest in the semiotic dimensions of power, injustice, abuse, and political-economic or cultural change in society (Fairclough, Mulderrig, and Wodak , 2011, p. 357). The process of doing CDA involves looking at choices of words and grammar in texts in order to discover the underlying discourse(s) and ideologies. A text's linguistic structure functions, as discourse, to highlight certain ideologies, while downplaying or concealing others (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 20).

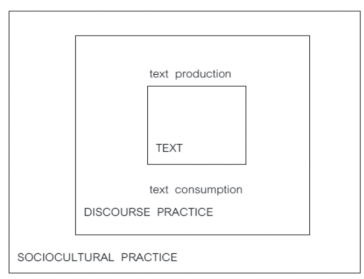


Figure 1 Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (1995)

Figure 1 illustrates critical discourse analysis of Fairclough which has three dimensions: sociocultural practice, discursive practice, and text. It can be seen that these three dimensions are connected to each other. Sociocultural practices shape discourse practice; discursive practices shape text; and text shapes sociocultural practice.

Apart from CDA, the researchers also used semantics and pragmatics to analyze the text to examine linguistic features which can reflect social phenomenon (Hongladarom and Iamanond, 2006; and Kaewjunge, 2009)

3. Linguistic Features employed to construct identities of Mia Farang

The movie script was transcribed and details of each scene were described in order to examine linguistic features and contexts. Various linguistic features are used to construct identities of Mia Farang: language choices, the use of nonverbal language, lexical choices, claiming, rhetorical questions, and metaphors.

1) Language choices

The language that the sender uses to communicate can reveal some background information on the that person's hometown and educational background. In this movie, Mia Farang use Isaan dialect and broken English. These two languages indicate that Mia Farang are originally from the Northeast of Thailand and they are uneducated.

1.1 Isaan Dialect

Isaan dialect is mainly used by Mia Farang in the story. This constructs the identity that Mia Farang are originally from the Northeast of Thailand.

Scene//At the market, Suk, the head of the village, and his son, Boonmark or Mark, is ordering papaya salad with the vendor who is Mia Farang.

ผู้ใหญ่สุข: เอาตำปูได้ใส่ปลาแดกเป็นต่อนำแล้วก็เอาปลาเสียบไม้หนึ่งแล้ว
เอาไก่ย่างสองไม้

Suk: One papaya salad with crab and fermented fish, one grilled fish, and two grilled chicken, please.

เมียฝรั่ง: บักไมเคิลตำบักหุ่งให้พ่อใหญ่เผ็ดๆ แซบๆ (เสียงแม่ค้าบอกตัวฝรั่งให้มาตำส้มตำขาย)

Vendor: Buk Michael, make one spicy papaya salad for the head village.
(The vendor asks her Western spouse, Michael, to make papaya salad for the head village) (NB: "Buk" is an address term used for Isaan man to show intimacy).

ตัวฝรั่ง: ตำบักหุ่งปูปลาร้าเผ็ดๆ บ่ใส่พริกก็เผ็ด

Michel: One spicy papaya salad with crap and fermented fish, right?
How many chilies do you want?

1.2 Broken English

Mia Farang use simple and broken English to communicate with their Western husband. Code switching between Isaan dialect and English are also used when Mia Farang translate their husband's words for other characters in the story. Due to the fact that their English is simple and broken, Mia Farang also use gestures in communication.

Scene// At the house of Vasana who is Mia Farang, Robert comes to see Taew. Taew doesn't like him, so she is out to the work on the sugar cane field. Vasana tells Robert about Taew's feeling in broken English:

Vasana: Taew she said that Farang or Thai she don't care if she don't love talk about this impossible. (*N. B. This broken English is spoken with Isaan accent*)

Standard English version: Taew said it doesn't matter whether the guy is a Thai or a Western-if she doesn't love him, it's impossible for her to have a relationship with that guy.

Mia Farang use broken English together with gesture and drawing to communicate with their Western husbands (Sroikudrua, 2012). These indicate that Mia Farang are uneducated.

2) The use of nonverbal language

Cherry (2014) stated that a substantial portion of human communication is nonverbal. Every day, we respond to thousands on nonverbal cues and behaviors. From our handshakes to our hairstyles, nonverbal details reveal who we are and

impact how we relate to other people. There are 8 types of nonverbal language: facial expressions, gestures, paralinguistics, body and posture, proxemics, eye gaze, haptics, and appearance.

Due to that fact that films mainly communicate through pictures, three types of nonverbal communication are found in this movie to construct the identities of Mia Farang: facial expressions, gestures, and appearance. Facial expressions are responsible for a huge proportion of nonverbal communication. Consider how much information can be conveyed with a smile or a frown. Gestures: deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words. Common gestures include waving, pointing, and using fingers to indicate numeric amounts. Other gestures are arbitrary and related to culture. Appearance: our choice of color, clothing, hairstyles and other factors affecting appearance are also considered a means of nonverbal communication. Appearance can alter physiological reactions, judgments and interpretations (Cherry, 2014).

After analyzing certain scenes from the movie *E-Nang Oie Koie Farang* (White Buffalo), it was found that three types of nonverbal language mentioned above are used to construct four identities of Mia Farang: having an unpleasant physical appearance (a small girl with tanned skin) and working in the field, being materialistic, having a happy married life with a Western spouse, and having an unsuccessful married life (being physically abused by their Western men).

2.1) Having an unpleasant physical appearance and working in the field



Figure 2 Mia Farang have an unpleasant physical appearance and work in the field

Figure 2 illustrates the picture of Taew, an Isaan girl who has an unpleasant physical appearance. Her physical appearance and the way she dresses indicate that she is a small girl with tanned skin working in a sugar cane field. This also depicts the way of life of Isaan women who usually work in the field.

2.2.) Being materialistic



Figure 3 Mia Farang are materialistic.

Figure 3 (left) Bua Phan and her friend walks pass the house of Mia Farang. They stop to look at the big house and a car. Bua Phan is talking to her friend about her decision to flee from her Thai husband to meet a Western guy in Bangkok. (right) Bau Phan is very happy with all the stuff that her Western husband bought for her. The gestures of Bua Phan together with a smile on her face indicate that Mia Farang are materialistic.

2.3) Having a happy married life with a western spouse



Figure 4 Mia Farang have a happy married life.

Figure 4 illustrates Mia Farang who have a happy married life. (top left) The villagers come to a welcoming party for the Western husband at Mia Farang house. (top right and bottom left and right) Mia Farang and their husbands have a good time doing activities together like offering foods to the monk, selling food, and going to the market. These indicate that Mia Farang have a happy and affluent life. It also shows that the number of Western husband is increasing in the village. These encourage other Isaan women to have a Western husband. The facial expressions i.e. the smile on Mia Farang's face shows that they have a happy married life with their Western spouse.

2.4) Having an unhappy married life with a western spouse



Figure 5 Mia Farang have an unsuccessful married life.

Figure 5 shows the unsuccessful married life of Mia Farang. (left) Bua Phan is physically abused by her Western husband because she refused to have sexual relationship with him. (right) Looking at the picture of her and her Thai husband, Bua Phan is crying. Bhu Phan's gestures of crying and the way she raised both of her hands in the "Wai" gesture to beg her Western husband not to bully her indicate that not all Mia Farang have a successful married life. Although they have a big house and an affluent life, they are not happy. These Thai women are only a sex object of their Western spouse.

3) Lexical Choices

The choice of words is important in providing receivers with cues for interpreting events. It can define how we perceive the actions and the intentions of the participants in events, and thereby convey the message that the producer of the text intended receivers to receive. Lexical items have expressive value implying the producer's positive or negative evaluation of actions, participants, and events. Where an unusually high degree of wording, often involving clusters of related terms that are near synonyms, occurs, this overwording or overlexicalization often indicates a key concept or particular preoccupation that gives certain meanings the producer of texts intends to convey (Fairclough 1989; Fowler, 1991 as cited in Min, 1997).

The outstanding lexical choices that reveal the identities of Mia Farang in this movie is the choice of verbs. The choice of verbs has established expressive value (Min, 1997). The choice of verbs used in this movie signals the status, the wish,

the thought, and the action of Mia Farang. These verbs constructs various identities of Mia Farang: being materialistic, being uneducated, being reserved, and being a gambler. The choice of verbs in this movie also constructs negative identities of Thai men. These verbs signal the actions of Thai men that they are a drunkard and lazy to help out with housework.

3.1 The choice of verbs signaling the status, the wish, and the actions of Mia Farang

- The choice of verbs signaling the status of Mia Farang e.g. “own a big house” constructs the identity of being materialistic:

Scene//At the Banana Salad Club, a group of women are having banana salad and conversing about Vasana who has a successful married life with a Western guy.

Prai, who has just divorced from her Thai husband says that:

ไพร: ผัวฝรั่งมันก็ดีซึ้งซึ้งละ ได้อยู่เหียนหลังบั๊กใหญ่ มีเงินใช้หลายๆ
เนาะ

Prai: Getting married with Western husband is good. Women who married Western guy **own a big house and have a lot of money.**

- The choice of verbs signaling the wish of Mia Farang e.g. “will get married with a big rich western guy” also constructs the identity of being materialistic:

Scene // In front of Bua Phan’s house one morning, she is offering two big guavas for the monk. She is talking to the monk about the reason of doing this:

ผัน: หลวงพ่อที่เอบักสิดาหน่วยใหญ่มาใส่ให้หลวงพ่อนี้ หนูกะจะได้
ฝรั่งตัวโตๆ รวยๆ คืออี วาสนาละเจ้าค่ะ

Bua Phan: I make merit with two big guavas hoping that I **will get married with a big rich Western guy** like Vasana does.

Later on in the story, Bua Phan left her Thai husband and got married with a Western guy.

- The choice of verbs signaling the educational background of Mia Farang e.g. “don’t understand English” constructs the identity of being uneducated:

Scene//At the kitchen of Mali's house, Taew is having a phone conversation with Rober, a Western guy who asked Vasana to be a match-maker for him and Taew. Taew is trying to ring off because she doesn't like a Western guy and she is not able to communicate well in English.

แต้ว: แค่นี้ได้ก็ยังไม่**ฟังไม่รู้เรื่อง** แค่นี้ได้ซื้อค่านฟังแล้ว ปัดต้องว่าแล้ว
(วางสาย)

Taew: Well, I **don't understand English**. Stop talking. I don't want to talk to you. (ring off)

Later on, Taew fell in love with Robert and they got married.

- The choice of verbs signaling the thought of Mia Farang e.g. “ felt sympathetic “ Please don't think that I'm simple” constructs the identity of being reserved:

Scene// At the shelter in the sugar cane field where Taew works, Taew is feeding Robert because Robert cut himself with a grass leaf. Taew prays to the guardian spirit at the field.

แต้ว: ลูก**ซื้อ**ข้าวฝรั่งบ่แมนลูกมักเขาได้ แต่ลูก**สงสาร**เขา เขามา
ชอย ลูกเข็ดงาน อย่าว่าลูกใจง่ายได้อพ่อปู้

Taew: Phor Phoo, I ask for your permission to **feed this Western guy** because his hand hurt from helping me out on field. I felt sympathetic for him. It doesn't mean that I like him. Please don't think that I'm simple. (NB: 'Phor Phoo' is an address term used for a guardian spirit.)

- The choice of verbs signaling the action of Mia Farang e.g. “(bought a lottery but) didn't win a lottery “ constructs the identity of being a gambler:

Scene// On the road in front of a big house owned by one Mia Farang, Bua Phan is talking with her friend about Prai, the other Mia Farang, who just won a lottery:

ผัน: นางเมืกวาน**ซื้อ**หวย**บ่**ถูก อีไพรมันถูกหวยเดะ... เฮ้ยนาง ฝรั่ง
ที่อีวาสนามันติดต๋อให้ช้อยนะ มันจะส่งตัวมาให้ช้อยลงไปเจอมัน
ที่กรุงเทพ โอ้ยจะเข็ดจังได้ละหือ

Phan: Yesterday I **was unlucky. I didn't win a lottery** like Prai did.

By the way, the Western guy whom Vasana introduced to me will send me a bus ticket to Bangkok to meet up. Oh, what should I do?

3.2 The choice of verb signaling the actions of Thai men

From analyzing the choice of verb signaling the actions of Thai men e.g. “enjoy drinking”, it was found that Thai men are a drunkard:

Scene// At the White Buffalo Club, Suban is sad after Bua Phan left him to married a Western guy, Boonmark is upset that his love with Waewdoa was blocked by her mother. Suban and Boonmark are talking about their disappointment with their friends while drinking. Joi, one of their friends, says that:

จอย: ไผ่เถิกเมียทั้งคืนนี่คือสิกินเหล้าคล่องคอดีเนาะ

Joi: Any (Thai) guys who were left by his wife might **enjoy drinking** tonight.

มาร์ค: ย้อนเรียนบ่จบ บ่มีเงินบ่มีงาน เขาเลยรังเกียจดีเดียวดหน้ากรรมของสัตว์โลก กรรมของกู

Boonmark: Because I **could not complete my study** and unemployed, she (Waewdao's mother) hated me. It's my own karma!

The other verbs signaling actions of Thai men e.g. “don't do some cooking” and “cannot do housework” indicate that Thai men are lazy to help out with housework. It is believed that if a Thai guy does housework, he will be in bad luck. Thai guys also believe that being rich or poor depends on fate not on their own deeds.

Scene// At Prai's house, her Thai husband is brushing his teeth.

Prai is scolding her husband for not doing some cooking.

ไพร: ดำเป็นหยั่งมึงคือบ่ล้างข้าว ย่างไฟทิ้งไว้เห็ดแห้ง

Prai: Dum, why don't you do the cooking?

ทิดดำ: อะไรนะให้ก่อไฟล้างข้าว บ้าไปแล้วหรอ ผู้ชายทำงานผู้หญิงไม่ได้มันผิดผู้ ทำมาค้าไม่ขึ้น

Dum: What? Why I **don't do some cooking?** Are you crazy?
Men cannot do housework. It's a taboo! If I do housework,
I will be in bad luck!

4) Claiming

Making generalization about the identities of Mia Farang by using the term of address to claim that the majority of Mia Farang think and behave in particular ways. The terms of address found in this movie are, for example, “most of the girls in our village”, “Thai women”, and “Isaan women”. This linguistic feature constructs several identities of Mia Farang: being materialistic, being reserved, and being a nice wife who takes a very good care of her Western husband and his family.

4.1 Being materialistic

สมัยนี้**ผู้สาวบ้านเฮา**มักเอาแต่ตัวฝรั่ง

Nowadays, **most of the girls in our village** tend to get married with Western men.

ผู้หญิงบ้านเฮาตอนนี้กำลังแหกกันไปเอาตัวฝรั่ง

Most of the girls in our village are getting married with Western men.

4.2 Being reserved

Set// At the sugar cane field, Robert touches Taew's cheek. Taew gets angry and kicks him.

แต่ว: หนี นี่พวกฝรั่งคือมามือไวใจง่ายเออะหือ บ่ต้องมาขอขอรื้อเลย ...เจ็บปานนั้นบ่ ลูกๆ คือ ตะค่อยๆ หนึ่งไปๆ โอ้ยยย เนาะลำบากอีหลี คือสิเจ็บคักเนาะ (แต่วพุงโรเบิร์ตไปที่แคร่) ที่หลังกะอย่ามาเอ็ดแนว นี่**ผู้หญิงไทย**นิเขารักนวลสงวนโตเข้าใจบ่ เสาบ่มีผู้ชายมาลุ่มล่อม มีอุปลาหมึก ผู้เรื่องบ่เน่า

Taew: Don't say you are sorry. You touched me up!...Is it that hurt? Get up! (Taew helps Robert to get up and walks him to a litter.) Don't do that again! **Thai women** are reserved. We don't want the guy to take advantage of us. You know what I mean?

4.3 Being a nice wife who takes a very good care of her Western husband and his family

Set// At Taew and Robert's house, Boonmark asks Robert why Western men like to get married with Isaan women.

โรเบิร์ต: แต่ฝรั่งชอบสาว**อีสาน**เพราะสาวอีสานเอาใจเก่ง ดูแลพ่อผัวแม่ผัวซึ่ง**ผู้หญิงฝรั่ง**ไม่มี

Robert : Western men like **Isaan women** because, unlike Western women, Thai women take a very good care of not only their Western husband but also his parents.

In addition, terms of address in this movie e.g. “our Isaan men” in this movie also generalize the negative image of Thai Isaan men that the majority of them are inactive, lazy and drunkard. This is the reason why many Isaan women would like to get married with Western men.

“หนุ่มอีสานหาเงินมาได้ก็เอาไปซื้อเหล้ากิน ทำให้ครอบครัวลำบาก” และ **“ผู้ชาย บ้านเฮาเขา บ่พัฒนา”**

Isaan men are a drunkard. They spend all their income on the drinks. This makes the family in trouble. Our Isaan men are lazy and inactive. They don't want to make their lives better.

5) Rhetorical question

Rhetorical question is a question asked for the sake of persuasive effect rather than as a genuine request for information (Oxford Reference). Rhetorical questions, which pre-suppose the answer implied by the questioner in open (yes-no) questions – or in the case of closed (wh-) questions provide the questioner with the opportunity to answer their own question, the question they have framed and therefore presuppose the self-response as ‘true’ (University of Strathclyde, n.d.).

The producer of this movie uses rhetorical question to encourage the audiences to consider certain viewpoint. The function of rhetorical question is to persuade the audiences to believe that what is presented in the movie about Mia Farang is true.

Rhetorical question used in this movie indicates the increasing number of Mia Farang because other Isaan women would like to have an affluent life like Mia Farang.

Scene// At the White Buffalo Club, Boonmark, Suban, and their friends are drinking and talking about the reason why he went to Robert's house.

มาร์ค: ที่ข่อยไปเฝ้ากับนักโรเบิร์ตนี่ ก็เพราะว่าอยากอยู่แนวคิดของฝรั่ง บ่ได้คั้ง ไคล์ฝรั่ง ม่องได้เลย...เป็นหยั่งฝรั่งชอบเอาเมียคน **อีสานบ้านเฮา** เป็นหยั่งสาวอีสาน บ้านเฮาอยากเอาผัวฝรั่ง

Boonmark: The reason why I went to see Robert is that I want to know **why Western men like to get married with our Isaan women and why Isaan women would like to get married with Western men.** It's not because I'm crazy about Western men.

6) Metaphors

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>). Lakoff and Jonhnsen (1980) stated that metaphors not only make our thoughts more vivid and interesting but that they actually structure our perceptions and understanding. Metaphor plays a fundamental part in the way people represent social reality. The use of metaphor is central in the way it positions what is described and the reader's relationship to this. This is clearly seen in the description of individuals or the personification of entities e.g. *Saddam Hussein was a 'monster'*, and *Margaret Thatcher was the 'Iron Lady'* (University of Strathclyde, n.d.). Two metaphors are used in constructing identities of Mia Farang in this movie: Mia Farang is a bird and Mia Farang is an epidemic.

6.1 Mia Farang is a bird indicating that owning a big house and having lots of money differentiate Mia Farang from other villagers. Having an affluent life is like being a bird that can fly while other people cannot. They are superior than others in the village.

Scene// At the White Buffalo Club, Suban and his friends are drinking and talking about his Thai wife who has just left him to married a Western man.

สุบรรณ: พ่อตาแม่ยายก็อยากมีรถกระบะ เมียกะอยากมีฝรั่ง

Suban : My father in-law and mother in-law want to have a pickup truck. My wife wants to have a Western husband.

มาร์ค: แมน มีฝรั่งแล้วมันสิมีปีกบินได้บ่

Boonmark: **Can** she **fly** after getting married with a Western man?

สุพรรณ: ถ้ามันมีปีกกะให้มันขึ้นคือนกไปเลยพวกบ้าฝรั่ง เกิดชาติหน้าฉันได้ ภูขอเกิด เป็นฝรั่งละกัน ภูจะแก้แค้นผู้หญิงแถวบ้านเขาให้หมดเลย

Suban: If she can fly like a bird, then let her go with those Western guys! If it is possible, I'd like to be a Western guy in my next life. And I'll take revenge on those girls who are crazy about Western men!

6.2 Mia Farang is an epidemic that spreads and weakens the village. The reason why most women in this village would like to get married with the Western men because they want to have an affluent life. These women are materialistic which is like an epidemic that spreads through the village.

Scene//At the end of the story, Boonmark smiles with pride.

(เสียงบรรยาย) ชุมชนไหนที่มีภูมิคุ้มกันอ่อนแอ แนวความคิดบกพร่องก็จะกลายเป็นเหยื่ออันโอชะของระบบทุนนิยม ชุมชนไหนที่มีผู้นำและผู้ตามเข้มแข็งอย่างชุมชนของมาร์กก็จะรอดพ้นจากปากเหยี่ยวปากกา นักควายดอนจ่งผู้ต่อไป

(Narrator) If the head and the villagers of any community are weak or have **an immune deficiency, they will become a victim of capitalism. But if both are determined** like at Boonmark's village, they will survive. Carry on, White Buffalo! Don't give up!

4. Identities of Mia Farang in the movie E–Nang Oie Koie Farang (White Buffalo)

Nine identities of Mia Farang are constructed from the linguistic features discussed in the previous section.

1. Mia Farang are originally from the Northeast of Thailand and work in the field.

The linguistic features employed to construct this identity are:

- 1) Language choices: Isaan dialect is used as a main language in the story.
- 2) Nonverbal language: the physical appearance and the clothing of the main characters in the story reveal that Mia Farang are a small tanned Isaan girl who works in a sugar cane field.

2. Mia Farang are materialistic.

The linguistic features employed to construct this identity are:

- 1) The choice of verbs signaling the status, the wish, and the actions of Mia Farang e.g. ได้อยู่บ้านหลังโต ‘own a big house’ มีเงินใช้หลาย ๆ ‘have lots of money’, ได้ฝรั่งตัวโต ๆ รวย ๆ ‘get married with a big and rich Western men’, and ซำบาย ‘have a happy life’
- 2) Claiming by using the terms of address e.g. ผู้สาวบ้านเฮา “most of the girls in our village” to claim that the majority of Isaan women would like to get married with Western men.
- 3) Rhetorical questions e.g. เป็นหยังฝรั่งชอบเอาเมียคนอีสานบ้านเฮา *Why do the Western guys like to get married with our Isaan girls?* and เป็นหยังสาวอีสานบ้านเฮาอยากเอาฝรั่ง *Why do our Isaan girls like to get married with the Western guys?*
- 4) Metaphors: Mia Farang is a bird indicating that owning a big house and having lots of money differentiate Mia Farang from other villagers. Having an affluent life is like being a bird that can fly while other people cannot.
- 5) Nonverbal language use: the smile on the main character’s face when she when she gets a gold necklace from her Western husband indicates that Mia Farang are materialistic.

3. Mia Farang are uneducated.

The linguistic features employed to construct this identity are:

- 1) Language choices: Mia Farang use broken English to communicate with her Western husband.
- 2) Choice of verbs indicating the educational background of Mia Farang e.g. แค่นี้ได้กะยังว่าฟังไม่รู้เรื่อง *‘Stop talking. I don’t understand English.’*

4. Mia Farang have a happy married life with a Western spouse.

Nonverbal language is employed to construct this identity. The facial expressions i.e. the smile on Mia Farang’s face shows that they have a happy married life with their Western spouse. Some scenes also illustrate this identity: the welcoming party for Western guys or the scenes showing Mia Farang and their

husbands spend good time doing activities together like going to the market, cycling, or taking their baby for a walk. These depict a successful and happy married life. They also show that people from different cultures could live happily together.

5. Mia Farang have an unhappy married life with a Western spouse.

Not all Mia Farang have a successful married life. Some of them are physically abused by her Western spouse. Nonverbal language is employed to construct this identity e.g. the scene that Bua Phan is raising both of her hands in the “Wai” gesture to beg her Western spouse not to attack her or the scene that she is crying because she misses her Thai husband.

6. Mia Farang have an unpleasant physical appearance.

Nonverbal language is employed to construct this identity. The physical appearance of the actresses acting as Mia Farang are a small and tanned woman.

7. Mia Farang are a gambler.

The linguistic feature used to construct this identity is verbs signaling Mia Farang’s action e.g. *เมื่อวานซื้อหวยถูกรึเปล่า พรหมันถูกหวยเด๊ะ* ‘Yesterday (I bought a lottery, but) I didn’t won the lottery, while Prai (who is Mia Farang) did.’

8. Mia Farang take a good care of their Western husband and his family.

Claiming is used to construct this identity. Terms of address like *สาวอีสาน* “Isaan women “ are used to claim that the majority of Isaan women take a very good care of their Western husband and his family.

9. Mia Farang are reserved.

The linguistic features employed to construct this identity are:

1) Claiming: terms of address like *ผู้หญิงไทย* “Thai women” are used to claim that Thai women are reserved.

2) The choice of verbs signaling the thought of Mia Farang e.g. *อย่าว่าลูกใจง่ายเด้อ* “Please don’t think that I’m simple”

In addition to the nine identities of Mia Farang mentioned above, the negative identities of Thai men are also found in the movie. Those identities are being a drunkard, being a gambler, being a flirt, and being lazy not helping out with house-

work. These negative characteristics of Thai men is one of the reasons why Isaan women would like to get married with Western men. These are achieved by two linguistic features:

1) Claiming: terms of address like “Isaan men” is used to claim that the majority of Thai men spend all their income on drinks causing their family in a big trouble.

2) Choice of verbs signaling the belief of Thai men e.g. ผู้ชายทำงานผู้หญิงไม่ได้มันผิดผู้ ทำมาค้าไม่ขึ้น “Men cannot do housework. It’s a taboo. It will bring me bad luck.

5. Conclusion

The movie E-Nang Oie Koie Farang or White Buffalo produces and reproduces the identities of Mia Farang which are perpetuated in a mainstream discourse: most of Mia Farang are small, tanned, Isaan women who are undereducated, are materialistic, work on field, and have an unhappy married life with Thai men. These identities are a driving force for them to get married with Western men. Moreover, this movie also produces new identities of Mia Farang that go against the mainstream discourse: having an unsuccessful married life with Western men, being physically abused, being a sex object, and being a reserved woman.

It should be noted that the objective of this study is not to persuade Thai women to be Mia Farang, but it aims to indicate that movie as a public discourse can construct social meanings including identities of some group of people. By analyzing various linguistic features used in this movie, the researchers investigate the identities of Mia Farang presented from the outsider’s point of view.

Some identities of Mia Farang revealed in the present study might not be found in other public discourses like songs, literary works, or news. Nevertheless, linguistic features in the movie can also indicate certain perspectives on Mia Farang in Thai society. Like other research using CDA, the aim of the present study is to illustrate the relationship of discourse and society in a way that language (discourse) can be a tool to produce and reproduce collective identities, ideologies, and social practices (Phakdeephasook, 2009).

References

- Cherry, K. (2014). Types of Nonverbal Communication. About.com:Psychology. Retrieved from <http://psychology.about.com/od/nonverbalcommunication/a/nonverbaltypes.htm>
- Ellis, K. (2010). Be Who You Want to Be: The Philosophy of Facebook and the Construction of Identity. *Screen Education*, 58, 36-41. Retrieved from <http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=209659174211287;res=IELHSS>
- Ellison, N. (2013). *Future Identities: Changing identities in the UK-the next 10 years. DR3: Social Media and Identity*. Michigan State University. Government's Foresight Project.
- Fairclough, N, Mulderrig, J., &Wodak, R. (2011). Critical Discourse Analysis. In van Dijk, T.A. (Ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. Los Anglese: SAGE.
- Fairclough, N.(1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London and New York: Longman.
- Feder, E.K. (2010). Power/Knowledge. In Dianna, T (Ed.), *Michael Foucault: Key Concepts*. Durham GBR: Acumen.
- Hatoss, A.(2012). Where are you from? Identity construction and experiences of 'othering' in the narratives of Sudanese refugee-background Australians. *Discourse and Society*, 23(1), 47-68. doi:10.1177/0957926511419925.
- Hongladarom, K., & Iamanond, J. (2006). *Mong Sagkhom Phan Wathakam* (Watching the Society through Discourse). Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University.
- Kaewjungate, W. (2009). The Ideology of Masculinity in Men's Advertising Discourse in Men's Magazines. (M.A. Thesis). Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). Metaphor We Live By. Retrieved from <http://theliterarylink.com/metaphors.html>
- Machin, D. & Mayr, A. (2012). *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis*. Los Angles, London: SAGE.

- Min, S.J. (1997). Constructing Ideologies: A Critical Linguistic Analysis. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 27(2), 147-164. Retrieved from <https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/11592/SLS1997v27.2-10Min.pdf?sequence=2>
- Phakdeephassook, S. (2009). Discourse of Femininity in the Advertisements in Thai Health and Beauty Magazines. *Manusya* 12 (2).
- Sroikudruea, T. (2012). Mia Farang: Language and Communication. *Humanities and Social Science Journal, Khon Kaen University*, 29(1), 165-185.
- Sroikudruea, T. (2013). The Relationship between Linguistic Devices and Identities of Mai Farang in Kawnoke. *Humanities and Social Science Journal, Khon Kaen University*, 30 (1).
- University of Strathclyde. (n.d). How to do CDA - Language Aspects. Retrieved from <http://www.strath.ac.uk/aer/materials/6furtherqualitative-research-design-and-analysis/unit3/how-to-do-cda-language-aspects/>
- Wood, F. A., & Smith, J. M.(2005). 2nd ed. *Online communication : linking technology, identity, and culture*. Mahwah, N.J. : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.