DISCOURSE ON POVERTY IN THAI POLITICS:
A CASE OF PM THAKSIN’S TALK

Nipa Geerapatr

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts (Language and Communication)
School of Language and Communication
National Institute of Development Administration
2007
DISCOURSE ON POVERTY IN THAI POLITICS:
A CASE OF PM THAKSIN’S TALK

Nipa Geerapatr
School of Language and Communication

The Examining Committee Approved This Thesis Proposal Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
(Language and Communication).

Assistant Professor .................. Saviti Gadavanij ................. Committee Chairperson
(Saviti Gadavanij, Ph.D.)

Assistant Professor .................. Committee
(Ketkanda Jaturongkachoke, Ph.D.)

................................. Committee
(Siriporn Phakdeephasook, Ph.D.)
DISCOURSE ON POVERTY IN THAI POLITICS:
A CASE OF PM THAKSIN'S TALK

Nipa Geerapatr

School of Language and Communication

The Examining Committee Approved This Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
(Language and Communication).

[Signature]
Assistant Professor........................................Committee Chairperson
(Ketchanda Jaturongkachoke, Ph.D.)

[Signature]
Assistant Professor........................................Committee
(Savitri Gadavanij, Ph.D.)

[Signature]
Committee
(Siriporn Phakdeephasook, Ph.D.)
ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis  Discourse on Poverty in Thai Politics: A Case of PM Thaksin’s Talk
Author        Mrs. Nipa Gerapatr
Degree        Master of Arts (Language and Communication)
Year          2007

This study focuses on the notion of poverty, which is variously defined and redefined overtime. The study is to propose that its changes shape and reshape the Thai society into producing more severe suffer, especially to the poor people. The aim is to uncover how discourses work in the Thai society, representing the relationship between language, power and society, as well as how the Thai people are concerned with poverty in various dimensions. The data are collected from Thailand’s currently outsted tycoon-cum-Prime Minister, Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra’s talks on his weekly radio program. It investigates how his discourses on poverty are produced and what discursive strategies are employed. The data are divided into three phases: the first two years of his first term, the second two years of his first term and first six-month period of his second term.

The Thaksin’s pivotal policy that says “poverty has to be urgently evaporated from the Thai society within six years” creates a new frame of thought and sets the Thai society on the motion towards extreme materialism which has been seen as a social phenomenon. The study demonstrates that the power of discourse is originated from the interrelationship between the combination of the properties of discourse and the mechanism in human mind/brain and social practice in the given society. The analysis works within critical discourse analysis (CDA) and socio-cognitive approach (SCA), under the Fairclough’s framework and van Dijk’s proposition together with Foucault’s archeology and genealogy’s assumption and Bourdieu’s concept and habitus assumption.
The results show that PM Thaksin employs three strategies at the level of people’s cognitive system; marketing strategies, political strategies and socio-cultural fabrications to constitute his reproduction of discourses on poverty.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank NIDA at which I have a chance to study in a Master Program of the School of Language and Communication and allow me to do this thesis with some financial support.

I would like to thank the first professor, who inspire me with the mystery of language, Assistant Professor Dr. Ketkana Jaturongkachoke. The knowledge I have obtained from her helps assert some ideas on the possibility on doing this thesis. My deepest gratitude is expressed to Assistant Professor Dr. Savitri Gadavuni. my thesis advisor, for believing in my ability to do this research, especially at the very beginning of the work. Without her moral supports, kindness, encouragement, intellectual suggestions, this thesis have never been produced and reach its destination. I am also grateful to the brilliant mind of Ajarn Dr. Siriporn Phakdeephasook. Her valuable comments and suggestions improved my thesis considerably. I also thank her very much for giving me a valuable experience. I would like to thank many professors in the school of language and communication for varieties of knowledge and experience, especially Assistant Professor Dr. Saksit Sangboon. He is the first person who guides me how to step on drafting a qualitative research and structure research methodology effectively. He is also for me a role model of lecturing in English.

I am thankful for the staffs of the secretarial office of the faculty, especially Phi Thip for her warm supports, advice and concerns along the way of doing this thesis as well as Phi Pawana and Phi Saipin of the LIC. Thanks Aor, my best friend, for her unexhausted encouragement, for pointing out some errors in the written work. Also many other persons who have contributed to this work not mentioned here to whom I want to say “thank you” to all of you. Last but not least, I thank my family for all unconditional supports.

Nipa Geerapat

May 2007