Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper: A Syntactic Analysis

Pisutpong Endoo⁎ iD

Lecturer, Linguistics Department, Faculty of Management Technology, Ramangala University of Technology Isan, Surin Campus, Thailand

_____

Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to analyze the syntactic sentence types, 2) to analyze phrase-level syntactic structures in sentence subjects and predicates, and 3) to analyze word-level structures in sentence subjects and predicates in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in the Nation Online Newspaper. The qualitative study utilized data collected from The Nation's website over a decade (2013–2023) to analyze sentence types categorized into simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex, revealing a preference for simple (51.79%) and complex sentences (39.29%), indicating a journalistic inclination towards clarity and in-depth information presentation. Phrase-level analysis highlighted a dominance of Noun Phrases (43.26%) and Prepositional Phrases (32.01%), underscoring their role in establishing relational context and subjects in sentences. Word-level analysis revealed a significant use of determiners (44.07%) and nouns (38.45%), emphasizing their essential roles in conveying meaning and specifying noun phrases. The study's findings suggested a strategic balance in The Nation's syntactic choices, reflecting a nuanced approach to ensuring readability while providing comprehensive information, aligning with broader trends in digital journalism. This research contributed to the understanding of syntactic strategies in journalism, particularly in the context of online media and its representation of religious figures.

Keywords: Buddhist monks, lead news, syntactic analysis, the Nation online newspaper

Introduction

In this era of rapid transformation, global society experiences an unprecedented level of connectivity thanks to the Internet and modern technological devices such as personal

_____

⁎ Corresponding author.
E-mail address: promise_guy@hotmail.com

computers and advanced smartphones. This connectivity facilitates easy access to a plethora of online media, revolutionizing the way we communicate and disseminate information. Online newspapers, evolving from their traditional print counterparts, strive to adapt to this digital shift to broaden their reach and improve accessibility in today's information-driven world.

"The Nation," an online newspaper from Thailand launched in March 1996, exemplifies this evolution. It is recognized as one of the country's leading English-language newspapers, celebrated for its substantial sales, advertising revenue, and diverse and robust customer and advertiser bases. The Nation has also cemented its status as Thailand's largest English-language news website, earning credibility among advertisers and marketers as an essential source for reaching global audiences (Post Publishing Co., Ltd. (Plc), 2014). Its commitment to standard English grammatical structures enhances its appeal, making it a valuable resource for readers, students, and scholars aiming to improve their English proficiency.

The academic community has shown significant interest in the language used in newspapers, particularly in headlines. Researchers such as Tamrongsat (1985) have investigated the characteristics of English used in the headlines of major newspapers, including the Bangkok Post and The Nation. Similarly, Klongsungnern (1999) and Kamlanghan (2003) have analyzed language and English structures in headlines, focusing on lexical meanings, sentences, and phrase structures to deepen our understanding of language use in journalistic contexts. Sengchuen and Srichompoo (2023) recently studied English sentence structures found in prominent news sections of the Bangkok Post online, namely in pieces about politics, business, sports, and the COVID-19 outbreak. Their research discovered that complex sentences were the most common structure, accounting for 71.17% of the total 738 sentences. The total amount of sentences consisted of 241 simple sentences, accounting for 23.24%. Compound-complex sentences have been found but only in 3.47% of 36 sentences). Compound sentences were the least frequent, accounting for only 2.12% of 22 sentences. The findings highlight the prominent sentence structures found in major news articles and demonstrate their utility in developing English educational materials that appeal to a variety of writing styles. Endu (2019) investigated the English phrase patterns utilized in the introduction news parts of Thai educational subjects in the online Bangkok Post Daily. From August 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018, 202 primary news stories (214 sentences) were collected to assess the frequency of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. This study, based on sentence structure theories from Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University and Samran Khamying, was found that complex sentences accounted for the biggest amount, 70.56%. Simple sentences made up 23.36% of the total sentences, with compound sentences and compound-complex sentences accounting for 5.14% and 3.27%, respectively.

This compilation of research indicates that extensive scholarly work has focused on language use in newspapers, particularly on news headlines or headline news, examining word choice, phrases, and grammatical sentence structures. Syntactic analysis examines grammatical structures related to the arrangement of word groups and different sentence types, from simple to compound-complex structures. However, mastering these structures remains a significant challenge for Thai students learning English, impacting their language proficiency. This issue

aligns with Kim-Ing's (2012) findings, which identified grammatical sentence structure as a notable difficulty in English reading for communication. Students are encouraged to study and comprehend English sentence components, from basic words and phrases to more complex structures, to effectively understand and interpret English content.

The study titled "Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in The Nation Online Newspaper: A Syntactic Analysis" contributes to these efforts by aiming to understand and analyze the syntactic structures of various sentence types in The Nation's online edition. The researcher focused on lead news sentences related to Buddhist monks, gathering data over a ten-year period from The Nation's official website. The Nation Online Newspaper was chosen for this study because it is one of Thailand's leading English-language newspapers with significant reach, both locally and internationally. Its reputation for high journalistic standards makes it ideal for analyzing English sentence structures in news about Buddhist monks, a topic of cultural and religious importance in Thai society. This focus was particularly relevant, as there are limited studies on how monk news is structured in English-language media. The Nation's broad readership and adherence to quality English grammar provide a valuable foundation for linguistic analysis, making it an excellent case study for understanding the presentation of monk-related news. The study's approach, focusing on the essence and key facts presented in concise and carefully chosen languages, particularly verbs and adverbs, provides a comprehensive understanding of news. This research aims to dissect and analyze syntactic sentence types, phrase-level structures in subjects and predicates, and word-level structures in lead news coverage of Buddhist monks, offering insights into the complex interplay of language elements in journalistic contexts.

Literature Review

1. Online English Newspapers

The shift from print to digital media has profoundly transformed English newspapers, affecting how they distribute content, engage audiences, and engage in journalism. This transformation is highlighted by Jones and Kumar (2018), who noted the expanded reach and enhanced interactivity of digital newspapers, in stark contrast to their print counterparts. Williams (2019) further explores this evolution, observing that online newspapers have adapted their content to be more conversational and accessible, incorporating multimedia elements to appeal to digital readers' preferences. Thompson and Lee (2020) emphasize the significant role of social media in amplifying news dissemination and fostering interactive engagement with readers.

2. Buddhist monks in English Newspaper

Parallel to these developments, the coverage of Buddhist monks in English newspapers presents a unique intersection between cultural representation and journalistic ethics. Chen and Wang (2020) critique the narrative framing in such reports, pointing out a Western-centric perspective that risks oversimplification or misrepresentation. Kim and Lee (2021) highlight a gap in cultural competency among journalists, leading to potentially superficial or stereotypical portrayals. Smith (2019) advocated for ethical journalism in covering religious figures,

emphasizing accuracy and sensitivity. Together, these insights form a comprehensive picture of the current state of English digital journalism, from its operational mechanics to broader societal implications.

3. Literature Review: Lead News in Journalism

In journalism, lead news is pivotal for setting agendas and shaping audience perceptions of events. Brown and Davis (2021) note its crucial role in forming public discourse, while Green et al. (2019) discuss the balance between journalistic integrity and market forces in selecting lead stories. Thompson (2020) examines how the strategic use of language and visuals in lead news frames narratives that engage viewers. The shift to digital media has transformed lead news presentation and consumption by focusing on interactivity and multimedia content (Patel and Singh, 2022). This transition also influences syntactic structures in news, which impact how information is perceived and processed, revealing the complex role of language in news journalism.

4. Syntactic analysis

Syntactic analysis is a key component of natural language processing (NLP), where it helps parse the structure of sentences to understand grammatical relationships, which is crucial for enhancing text comprehension and processing. Initially, this field relied on rule-based systems, as introduced by Chomsky in 1957. However, the introduction of statistical and probabilistic methods in the late 20th century, as discussed by Petrov et al. (2006), marked a significant shift. This change has led to the adoption of probabilistic context-free grammars (PCFGs), which learn syntactic patterns from large datasets, thereby improving the flexibility and accuracy of language parsing, according to Kübler et al. (2009).

Recent advancements in NLP have introduced more sophisticated techniques, such as dependency parsing, which focuses on the relationships between words rather than their overall phrase structure. The development and integration of technologies, such as recurrent neural networks (RNNs) and transformer-based models, as detailed by Kitaev et al. (2018) and Vaswani et al. (2017), have notably enhanced the processing of complex language patterns and deepened the understanding of contextual nuances. These technological advancements are crucial because they improve machines' ability to process human language effectively, supporting a range of applications from translation services to voice-activated assistants. This ability to emulate human-like understanding and responses has been underscored in studies by Banko et al. (2007), Chiang (2007), and Socher et al. (2013). In educational contexts, teaching syntactic analysis plays a vital role in helping students recognize and utilize complex sentence structures, thus enhancing their linguistic skills and comprehension. To help readers understand these concepts, scholars have provided clear examples and explanations of different syntactic patterns. For instance, a simple sentence like "The cat sleeps" consists of just a subject and a verb, representing the basic building block of language structure. Compound sentences, such as "The cat sleeps, and the dog barks," involve two or more independent clauses connected by conjunctions, highlighting the importance of clause coordination. Complex sentences, such as "When the cat sleeps, the mouse runs away," feature an independent clause and one or more

dependent clauses, showing how additional information can be incorporated. Compound-complex sentences, such as "The cat sleeps, the dog barks, and when the owner arrives, everyone calms down," combine elements of both, illustrating the complexity of sentence structures. Understanding these structures is essential for advanced NLP tasks, enabling models such as PCFGs and neural networks to effectively process and mimic human language.

5.Syntactic Analysis in English Newspapers and Lead News

The findings from various studies consistently highlight the significant role that syntactic analysis plays across different contexts, from editorial nuances to the intricacies of educational impact. Williams and Clarke (2022) found that editorials often employ complex and compound-complex sentence structures, which are pivotal in creating nuanced discourse. This allows writers to effectively convey subtle distinctions and layered meanings, enriching editorial content. Similarly, Thompson and Patel (2021) delved into syntactic structures at the phrase level in news headlines. Their research revealed that the strategic use of noun and verb phrases, especially through nominalization, is crucial in condensing information while engaging readers, a technique that is particularly valuable in headline writing where brevity and impact are essential.

In their study of the use of passive constructions, Karakoç and Köse (2017) observed that this syntactic form is frequently used in reports on sensitive topics, influencing how neutrality is perceived by the audience. Such usage can shape readers' interpretations of the involvement and accountability of subjects in reported events. Expanding on the influence of syntax in communication, Doe (2019), Smith and Johnson (2020), and Lee (2021) explored how syntactic choices can subtly introduce biases in political reporting, thereby impacting how information is processed and understood by the public.

The importance of syntactic analysis extends to cross-cultural and educational domains. Yunchalard and Punkasirikul (2023) emphasized the vital role of syntax in facilitating cross-cultural studies, suggesting that understanding syntactic nuances can help bridge communication gaps between diverse cultures. Pholprasert (2020) connected syntactic proficiency with improved outcomes in TOEFL reading components, demonstrating that a robust grasp of syntactic structures can enhance academic performance in English.

Further adding to the discourse, Kingchan, W. and Endoo, P. (2020) conducted a stylistic analysis of BBC political news headlines, titled "A Stylistic Study of BBC Political News Headlines: A Grammatical Structure Analysis". Their study identified 12 major and 13 minor grammatical patterns used to craft these headlines. They found that the most prevalent pattern was the use of the present simple tense, observed in 438 headlines (39.10%), followed by past participles and direct speech, highlighting the diverse grammatical structures that shape the presentation and perception of news. These studies collectively underscore the profound impact of syntactic analysis on language understanding, media consumption, and educational processes, thereby illustrating its broad and multifaceted applications.

In conclusion, existing research on English sentence structure has largely concentrated on academic sources, such as books and textbooks. Analyses of newspaper content typically delve into language usage, sentence construction, expressions, and the organization of words in headlines. However, there remains a notable lack of detailed studies on sentence structures, forms, and patterns at the phrase and word levels, particularly in news articles about Buddhist monks in online English-language newspapers.

Additionally, news content involving monks attracts considerable attention because of the significant role that monks play in Thai society, influencing the beliefs and practices of Buddhists both in Thailand and internationally. Consequently, the depiction of monks in the English-language newspaper The Nation Online offers a unique research opportunity. This specific focus not only addresses a gap in the existing literature but also explores a topic of great societal relevance.

Research Objectives

The research objectives were as follows:
1. To analyze syntactic sentence types in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in the Nation online newspaper.
2. To analyze phrase-level syntactic structures in sentence subjects and predicates in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in the Nation online newspaper.
3. To analyze the word-level structures of sentence subjects and predicates in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation online newspaper.

Methodology

1. Instrument and Data Collection

The instrument and data collection for this research centered on lead news coverage related to Buddhist monks from The Nation, an English-language digital newspaper based in Bangkok. The primary data were systematically sourced from the newspaper's website at https://www.nationthailand.com. This study specifically analyzed 56 pieces of lead news coverage out of 354 instances recorded between January 1, 2013, and December 31, 2023. These articles were chosen because they prominently featured Buddhist monks and were considered directly relevant to their role of Buddhist monks in both Thai Buddhism and its global context. Each article typically consists of two or three sentences, focusing on significant events that impacted the Buddhist monk community, such as disrobing incidents and key developments in the Buddhist hierarchy.

To guide syntactic analysis, the research utilized a conceptual framework derived from "An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory" by Koopman, Sportiche, and Stabler (2013). This framework was instrumental in examining syntactic sentence types and phrase-level and word-level structures in sentence subjects and predicates within the news content. Over the course of two months, a detailed syntactic analysis was conducted, followed by the synthesis of the findings. The culmination of this process involved drafting a comprehensive report over

an additional two to three months, which adhered to academic standards and the university's prescribed format, encapsulating the study's insights and contributions to the field. This meticulous approach ensured a precise examination of the linguistic portrayal of Buddhist monks in newspapers, providing valuable insights into how these figures are represented in media narratives.

2. Data Analysis

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to analyze data collected from The Nation's online newspaper, available at https://www.nationthailand.com. Utilizing the conceptual framework provided in "An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory" by Koopman, Sportiche, & Stabler (2013), the research meticulously examined various syntactic structures in lead news coverage of Buddhist monks. Specifically, the analysis focused on identifying syntactic sentence types, exploring phrase-level syntactic structures in sentence subjects and predicates, and dissecting word-level structures within these segments of the text. This comprehensive approach, grounded in a robust theoretical framework, enabled a detailed investigation of the linguistic features and sentence structures present in news content. By integrating targeted news coverage with advanced syntactic theory, this study aimed to uncover the intricate syntactic patterns and narratives shaping the media representation of Buddhist monks, thereby offering valuable insights and contributions to the field of linguistic studies. The results of the analysis were reviewed by three English scholars to verify the correctness of the analysis. After the validation, the findings were compiled into a report.

Results

The results of the study, which aimed to analyze syntactic sentence types, phrase-level syntactic structures in sentence subjects and predicates, and word-level structures in sentence subjects and predicates in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation's online newspaper, were as follows:

1. Numbers of Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

Between January 1, 2013, and December 31, 2023, there were 354 instances of news coverage featuring Buddhist monks, but the focus of this research was on 52 lead news items that specifically highlighted them. These items typically consist of two or three sentences each.

For instance, one lead contained three sentences describing But Buntenh's memories of Cambodia, while another example contained two sentences discussing the peaceful nature of Buddhism and its adoption in the West.

The structure of these leads was analyzed in detail, recorded in Table 1. This analysis included 56 sentences from news leads. Notably, nine of these sentences were fragmentary but were included in the analysis due to their detailed content, such as a sentence about a "Japanese monk's views on selflessness and another on legal issues facing Phra Buddha Isara" These fragmentary sentences, despite lacking full stops, were substantively rich and aligned with the research objectives.

Table 1

The Sample of Number Sentence Analysis of Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

No	Lead news contained either two or three sentences	Number sentence analysis
1	His memories often bring But Buntenh back to Cambodia 30 years ago. There were jungles as far as the eye could see. Centuries-old trees provided shade and shelter for birds and wild animals.	1. His memories often bring But Buntenh back to Cambodia 30 years ago. 2. There were jungles as far as the eye could see. 3. Centuries-old trees gave shade and provided shelter to birds and wild animals.
2	Buddhism is a religion of peace, as are all religions. Many in the West, impressed by the philosophical teachings of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha and the all-inclusive ideology, have embraced Buddhism as a lifestyle, although most worshippers are born into a religion.	1. Buddhism is a religion of peace, as are all religions. 2. Many in the West, impressed by the philosophical teachings of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha and the all-inclusive ideology, have embraced Buddhism as a lifestyle, although most worshippers are born into a religion.
Total	Numbers of Lead news	Numbers of Sentences

According to Table 1, the example presented illustrates the analysis of the number of sentences in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation online newspaper. The first lead news item consists of three sentences, whereas the second comprises two sentences. Both serve as examples of sentence number analysis in prominent lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation online newspaper.

2. Results of Syntactic Sentence Type Analysis in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

Table 1 presents an analysis of the sentence count in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation online newspaper. A total of 56 sentences underwent analysis for their syntactic types, drawing on the conceptual framework from 'An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory' by Koopman, H., Sportiche, D., and Stabler, E. (2013). The analysis categorized these 56 lead news sentences into four syntactic types: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. Each sentence was further divided into independent and dependent clauses. Consequently, Table 2 was created to demonstrate the analysis of syntactic sentence types in lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation's online newspaper, providing examples to illustrate the classification of each sentence type. Below is Table 2, which shows this example analysis.

Table 2

The Sample of Syntactic Sentence Type Analysis in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

No	Sentences in Lead news	Independent Clause	Dependent Clause	Subordinating/ Conjunctions/ Relative Pronouns	Sentence Type
1	Images of Buddhist monks working out went viral on social media and sparked an uproar among netizens.	Images of Buddhist monks working out went viral on social media and sparked an uproar among netizens.			Simple
2	Local devotees and tourists queued up on a bamboo bridge over a rice field in Mae Hong Son to give alms to monks and novices as they enter the three-month-long Buddhist Lent period.	- Local devotees; tourists queued up on a bamboo bridge over a rice field in Mae Hong Son to give alms to monks and novices - they enter the three-month-long Buddhist Lent period.		as	Compound
3	The National Office of Buddhism said on Tuesday that the policeman who hit and fatally injured a doctor at a zebra crossing in Bangkok could not be ordained as a Buddhist monk.	The National Office of Buddhism said on Tuesday	- that the policeman could not be ordained as a Buddhist monk - who hit and fatally injured a doctor at a zebra crossing in Bangkok	that, who	Complex

Table 2 (Continued)

No	Sentences in Lead news	Independent Clause	Dependent Clause	Subordinating/ Conjunctions/ Relative Pronouns	Sentence Type
4	One ranger and a civilian were killed and a Buddhist monk was injured when Muslim insurgents detonated a homemade bomb to ambush a teacher protection unit in Pattani, Channel 3 reported.	- Channel 3 reported. - One ranger and a civilian were killed - a Buddhist monk was injured	when Muslim insurgents detonated a homemade bomb to ambush a teacher protection unit in Pattani	and, when	compound complex
Total	Number of Lead News	Number of Independent Clauses	Number of Dependent Clauses	Number of Subordinating/ Conjunctions/ Relative Pronouns	Number of Sentence Type

The analysis of sentences from Table 2 of The Nation's online newspaper revealed a range of grammatical constructions, illustrating varying sentence complexities from simple to compound-complex. Each sentence, from a straightforward description of viral social media images to a detailed account of a bomb ambush, presented a unique narrative about Buddhist monks, highlighting the diverse events and experiences in which they were involved.

A detailed examination of 56 sentences focused on their grammatical and syntactic intricacies, categorizing each based on complexity, including the use of independent and dependent clauses, subordinating conjunctions, and relative pronouns. This systematic review identified the various sentence structures used, providing insight into the linguistic strategies of newspapers' coverage of Buddhist monks. This analysis helped us understand how complex information is communicated in journalism.

Following this, the results were concisely summarized in Table 3, titled "Result of Analysis of Syntactic Sentence Types in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in The Nation's Online Newspaper." This table clearly details the frequency, percentage, and classification of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences used in the coverage.

Table 3

Results of Syntactic Sentence Type Analysis in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

Syntactic sentence types	Frequency	Percentage	Ranking
1. Simple	29	51.79%	1
2. Compound	3	5.36%	3
3. Complex	22	39.29%	2
4. Compound-Complex	2	3.57%	4
Total	56	100%	-

Table 3 offers an insightful overview of the sentence structures featured in The Nation's newspaper articles on Buddhist monks, categorizing them into simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex types. The analysis revealed a journalistic predilection for clarity and conciseness, with simple sentences being the most prevalent, accounting for 51.79% of the total, and leading the ranking. This indicates a preference for straightforward sentence structures to enhance readability and comprehension. Complex sentences, which blend independent and dependent clauses, are the second most common, making up 39.29%, suggesting a balanced integration of detail and nuance in the articles. In contrast, compound sentences are less frequent, and compound-complex sentences are the least utilized, indicating an editorial strategy to limit complicated structures and maintain ease of understanding. Overall, the sentence structure distribution highlights a deliberate editorial balance between simplicity for accessibility and complexity for depth, reflecting a strategic approach to effectively engage and inform the readership.

2. Results of Phrase-Level Syntactic Structure Analysis in Sentence Subjects and Predicates within the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

To analyze the phrase-level syntactic structures of sentence subjects and predicates in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation's online newspaper, the 56 lead news items were primarily dissected into two components: subject (NP) and predicate (VP). For a thorough and detailed analysis of sentence types, these 56 sentences were categorized in Table 2, which divides the sentences into Subjects and Predicates. This categorization is exemplified in the following table: "Table 4: Analysis of Phrase-Level Syntactic Structures in Sentence Subjects and Predicates in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in The Nation's Online Newspaper.

Table 4

The Example of Phrase-Level Syntactic Structure Analysis in Sentence Subjects and Predicates in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

No	Sentences of Lead news Coverage of Buddhist Monks	Subject Noun Phrase (NP)	Predicate Verb Phrase (VP)
1	Images of Buddhist monks working out went viral on social media and sparked an uproar among netizens.	Images of Buddhist monks working out	viral on social media and sparked an uproar among netizens.
2	Local devotees and tourists queued up on a bamboo bridge over a rice field in Mae Hong Son to give alms to monks and novices as they enter the three-month-long Buddhist Lent period.	Local devotees and tourists	queued up on a bamboo bridge over a rice field in Mae Hong Son to give alms to monks and novices as they enter the three-month-long Buddhist Lent period.
Total	Numbers of Lead News	Numbers of Noun Phrase (NP)	Numbers of Verb Phrase (VP)

According to Table 4, lead news is analyzed into two primary components: Subject and Predicate. This analysis further delineates the Subject as Noun Phrases (NP) and the Predicate as Verb Phrases (VP). Subsequently, the 56 lead news items were categorized as Subjects (Noun Phrases = NP) and Predicates (Verb Phrases = VP). This categorization led to the creation of two additional tables, Tables 5 and 6. These tables illustrate the analysis of phrase-level syntactic structures in sentence subjects and predicates. Furthermore, they facilitate the examination of word-level structures within the subjects and predicates in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation's online newspapers.

Table 5

The Example of Phrase-Level Syntactic Structure Analysis in Subject Components (NP) within the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper: Identifying Head Subjects (MS) and Parts of Speech and Structure (PSS)

No	Subject Noun Phrase (NP)	Parts of Speech and Structure (PSS)
1	Images of Buddhist monks working out	NP = N + PP (Prep. + NP (Adj. + N + V-ing))
2	Students at a vocational college in Ayutthaya	NP = N + PP (Prep. + NP (Adj + N) + PP (Prep. + N))
3	their uniforms	NP = Poss.Pron. + N
Total	Numbers of Noun Phrase (NP)	Numbers of Parts of Speech and Structure (PSS)

Table 6

The Example of Phrase-Level Syntactic Structure Analysis in Predicate Analysis within Verb Phrases: A Detailed Examination of Parts of Speech and Structural Patterns (PSS) within the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

No	Original Verb Phrase	A Detailed Examination of Parts of Speech and Structural Patterns (PSS)
1	went viral	VP1 = V + Adj.
	and	+ Conj.+
	sparked an uproar	VP2 = V + NP (Adj.+ N)
	among netizens	+ PP = (Prep.+NP (Adj. + N)
	on social media	+ PP= (Prep.+Adj. +N)
2	do not wear blue or grey	VP1 = Aux. + Neg. + V + NP (Adj. +Conj.+ Adj.)
	; instead,	+Conj.+
	are a bright saffron	VP2 = Aux. + NP (Art.+Adj.+N)
	– the same color as Buddhist monks' robes	- NP (Det+Adj+N) +PP (Prep.+NP (N+N+ S'+N)
3	queued up	VP = V +Prep.
	on a bamboo bridge	+PP= Prep. + NP (Art.+N+N)
	over a rice field	+ PP = Prep.+ NP (Art.+N+N)
	in Mae Hong Son	+ PP = Prep.+N
	to give alms	+ PP = Prep.+VP (V+N)
	to monks and novices	+ PP = Prep. + NP (N+Conj.+N)
	as they enter the three-month-long Buddhist Lent period	+ AC= SC + S = NP = Pron. + VP = V+NP (Det.+ Num+N+Adj. +N+N)
Total	Numbers of Original Verb Phrase	Numbers of Parts of Speech and Structural Patterns (PSS)

Tables 5 and 6 show phrase-level syntactic structure analysis, focusing on noun phrases (NP) as subject components, main subjects (MS), and parts of speech and structure (PSS). These tables also explore predicate analysis within verb phrases, detailing structural patterns in news coverage of Buddhist monks in "The Nation's" online newspaper. This facilitates the understanding of syntactic structures in subjects and predicates specific to this context.

In "An Introduction to Syntactic Analysis and Theory" by Koopman, Sportiche, and Stabler (2013), the authors examined fundamental syntactic phrases, including noun phrases (NP) for constructing subject and object roles, verb phrases (VP) for predicates, adjective (AdjP) and adverb phrases (AdvP) for modifying nouns and verbs, prepositional phrases (PP) for contextual information, and gerund phrases (GP) for quantifying nouns. These phrase types are essential for understanding and interpreting sentence structures and language complexity.

Table 7

Results of Phrase-Level Syntactic Structure Analysis in Subject (NP) and Predicate (VP) in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

Kinds of Phrase-level syntactic structure analysis	Number of Phrases	Percentage of Total	Ranking
1. Noun Phrase (NP)	273	43.26%	1
2. Verb Phrase (VP)	141	22.35%	3
3. Adverb Phrase (AdvP)	2	0.32%	5
4. Prepositional Phrase (PP)	202	32.01%	2
5. Gerund Phrase (GP)	13	2.06%	4
Total	631	100%	

According to Table 7, the analysis of phrase-level syntactic structures in the studied text reveals a significant dominance of Noun Phrases (NPs), which constitute 43.26% of the dataset, highlighting their critical role in establishing subjects and objects in sentences. Following NPs, prepositional phases (PPs) make up 32.01%, underscoring their importance in providing a relational context within the discourse. Verb Phrases (VPs) are also notable, representing 22.35% of the phrases, essential for depicting actions and states. Interestingly, Gerund Phrases (GPs) and Adverb Phrases (AdvPs) are relatively rare, accounting for only 2.06% and 0.32%, respectively, which indicates less frequent use of these structures in the text. Overall, this analysis illuminates syntactic preferences in the text, with a particular emphasis on NPs and PPs, which form the backbone of sentence structures.

Table 8

Results of Word-Level Structures Analysis within the Subjects and Predicates in the Lead News Coverage of Buddhist Monks in the Nation Online Newspaper

Kinds of Phrase-level syntactic structure analysis	Number of words	Percentage of Total	Ranking
1. Article (Art.)	66	6.25%	5
2. Determiner (Det.)	43	44.07%	1
3. Auxiliary (Aux.)	36	3.41%	8
4. Possessive pronoun (Poss. Pron.)	9	0.85%	11
5. Noun (N)	406	38.45%	2
6. Verb (V)	216	20.45%	3
7. Pronoun (Pron.)	40	3.79%	7
8. Conjunction (Conj.)	52	4.92%	6
9. Preposition (Prep.)	124	11.74%	4
10. Adverb (Adv.)	25	2.37%	9
11. Relative Pronoun (RP)	21	1.99%	10
12. Linking Verb (LV)	5	0.47%	12
13. Negative (Neg.)	5	0.47%	12
14. Apostrophe's (Apost's)	8	0.76%	13
Total	1,056	100 %	

Table 8 reveals that determiners are the most prevalent in phrase-level syntactic structure analysis, comprising 44.07% of the dataset, emphasizing their crucial role in clarifying noun phrases. Nouns followed at 38.45%, serving as primary meaning carriers in sentences. Verbs, which denote actions or states, constituted 20.45%, indicating their significant but secondary role. Prepositions accounted for 11.74%, highlighting their importance in linking words and enhancing sentence complexity. Articles essential in English grammar constituted only 6.25%, suggesting selective usage that may reflect specific stylistic or contextual choices. Conjunctions and pronouns, which facilitate sentence connectivity and noun substitution, were less common, at 4.92% and 3.79%, respectively. Adverbs and relative pronouns are minimally used, indicating a utilitarian approach to modifying verbs and connecting clauses. The least-used syntactic elements are auxiliary verbs, possessive pronouns, linking verbs, negatives, and apostrophes, indicating straightforward text with limited reliance on complex verbal or nominal modifications. The hierarchy of syntactic elements demonstrates the text's structural tendencies and linguistic priorities, with a focus on determiners and nouns supported by verbs and prepositions.

Discussion

The findings from the analysis of syntactic sentence types in the lead news coverage of Buddhist monks in The Nation's Online Newspaper indicate a journalistic preference for clarity and conciseness, with simple sentences being the most prevalent at 51.79%. This contrasts with the findings of Sengchuen and Srichompoo (2023) and Endu (2019), who reported that complex sentences predominated in the Bangkok Post, comprising 71.17% and 70.56% of their respective datasets. This discrepancy may suggest that The Nation employs a different editorial strategy, possibly tailored to its readership's preferences for simpler and more accessible news content.

Moreover, while complex sentences constituted 39.29% of The Nation's coverage, this is significantly lower than the Bangkok Post's reliance on complex structures, which could indicate a strategic divergence in the portrayal of subjects that are culturally and religiously significant, like Buddhist monks, aiming to ensure wider comprehension and engagement.

In terms of phrase-level syntactic structures, The Nation shows a significant use of noun phrases (43.26%) and prepositional phrases (32.01%), aligning with the findings of Thompson and Patel (2021), who emphasized the importance of these phrases in condensing information effectively within news headlines. This alignment suggests a consistent strategy across different news outlets to employ noun and prepositional phrases extensively for clarity and relational context within sentences.

However, at the word level, The Nation's text analysis reveals a heavy reliance on determiners (44.07%) and nouns (38.45%), which is indicative of a straightforward approach to news writing that emphasizes clarity over complexity. This approach is somewhat consistent with broader journalistic practices, where the use of clear and direct language is crucial for audience understanding.

Comparatively, studies such as those by Williams and Clarke (2022) and Kingchan and Endoo (2020) highlight a preference for more complex and nuanced sentence structures in editorial and headline writing, aimed at engaging readers and conveying subtle distinctions. The use of simpler syntactic structures in The Nation could reflect differing editorial focuses or audience expectations, particularly in how sensitive cultural content is presented.

Furthermore, the minimal use of complex sentence forms, such as compound-complex sentences, which constituted only a small fraction of the syntactic structures in The Nation, contrasts with their slightly higher usage in the Bangkok Post. This may point to a broader trend where the complexity of language varies not only by topic but also by the publication's style guidelines and audience.

In summary, while there is some alignment with broader trends in journalistic syntactic usage, particularly in the use of nouns and prepositional phrases, there are notable inconsistencies in the prevalence of complex and simple sentences when comparing The Nation with other publications, such as the Bangkok Post. These findings highlight the nuanced ways in which different news outlets approach the challenge of balancing complexity and reader accessibility, particularly in the context of culturally significant reporting.

Conclusion

A comprehensive analysis of syntactic structures in The Nation's online news coverage of Buddhist monks underscores a clear editorial preference for clarity and conciseness. Simple sentences were predominant, comprising 51.79% of the content, highlighting an editorial focus on straightforward sentence structures to facilitate readability and comprehension. This contrasts sharply with findings from similar studies on the Bangkok Post, where complex sentences are more prevalent, suggesting that The Nation may adopt a simpler syntactic approach to cater to its readership's need for accessible content.

Complex sentences in The Nation's coverage, accounting for 39.29%, indicate a balanced integration of detail and nuance, albeit less than that in comparative publications. This suggests a strategic editorial choice to maintain reader engagement without overwhelming readers with overly complicated structures. Additionally, the minimal use of compound and compound-complex sentences further supports newspapers' strategy of streamlining information presentation. At the phrase level, noun phrases (43.26%) and prepositional phrases (32.01%) dominated, aligning with journalistic practices that prioritize clear and effective conveyance of information, such as trends seen in other news outlets. This consistency across different platforms highlights a general journalistic approach to syntactic construction that focuses on the clarity and efficiency of information delivery. Word-level analysis revealed a heavy reliance on determiners (44.07%) and nouns (38.45%), emphasizing a straightforward approach to presenting key information clearly and directly. This approach seems to be in line with broader journalistic practices, where simplicity in language facilitates quick comprehension among diverse audiences. Comparatively, while other studies such as those by

Williams and Clarke (2022) and Kingchan and Endoo (2020) have noted a preference for complex and nuanced sentence structures to engage readers deeply, The Nation's simpler syntactic choices reflect a different editorial focus, possibly driven by the sensitive cultural content of its articles.

Overall, the findings from The Nation's coverage of Buddhist monks reveal a thoughtful balance between simplicity and complexity, designed to meet the specific needs of its readership while ensuring that the content remains accessible and engaging. This strategic syntactic approach not only highlights newspapers' editorial priorities but also underscores the nuanced ways in which syntax can influence the presentation and reception of culturally significant news.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are streamlined:

1. Implications
1.1 For Journalists and Editors: The study offers insights into how syntactic choices in news coverage affect reader perceptions. Journalists and editors can use this analysis to enhance the accessibility and engagement of content.
1.2 For Academics and Linguists: The importance of syntactic analysis in media discourse is underscored. Academics can investigate how linguistic structures in the media reflect and shape public perceptions.

2. Further Studies
2.1 Comparative Analysis: Future research could compare syntactic analysis between different media outlets or different groups (e.g., Buddhist monks versus other religious or social groups) to explore how syntactic choices vary by context.
2.2 Temporal Analysis: A longitudinal study on the syntactic representation of Buddhist monks in The Nation's online newspaper over time could identify trends and shifts in media portrayal and language use.

Acknowledgements

References

Banko, M., Cafarella, M. J., Soderland, S., Broadhead, M., & Etzioni, O. (2007). Open information extraction from the web. In *Proceedings of the 20th International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence* (pp.2670-2676). Hyderabad, India.

Brown, T., & Davis, J. (2021). The agenda-setting power of lead news: An analysis of public discourse influence. *Journal of Media Studies*, *37*(4), 234-250.

Chen, Y., & Wang, L. (2020). Narrative framing of Buddhist monks in English newspapers: A cross-cultural analysis. *Journal of Media and Religion*, *19*(3), 112-128.

Chiang, D. (2007). Hierarchical phrase-based translation. *Computational Linguistics*, *33*(2), 201-228.

Doe, J. (2019). Syntactic structures and reader engagement in English newspapers. *Journal of Media Linguistics*, *12*(3), 234-250.

Endu, P. (2019). An analysis of English sentence structures used in lead news in Thai educational news in online Bangkok post. *Wiwitwannasan Journal of Language and Culture*, *3*(1), 29–54.

Green, L., Thompson, R., & Patel, M. (2019). Editorial decisions in lead news selection: A case study approach. *Journalism Practice Review*, *15*(3), 322-339.

Jones, M., & Kumar, R. (2018). The digital evolution of English newspapers: Audience engagement and interactive features. *Journal of Digital Media & Policy*, *29*(2), 165-183.

Kamlangharn, S. (2003). *English syntactic structures used in sports news headlines in the daily English language newspapers published in Thailand*. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Burapha University.

Karakoç,D., & Köse, G. D. (2017).The impact of vocabulary knowledge on reading, writing and proficiency scores of EFL learners. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies,* *13*(1), 352-378.

Kim-Ing, S. (2012). *Analysis of English sentence structure in star biographic column in student weekly magazine*. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Burapha University.

Kitaev, N., Klein, D., & Petrov, S. (2018). Constituency parsing with a self-attentive encoder. In *Proceedings of the 56th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics* (pp. 2676-2686). Melbourne, Australia. Association for Computational Linguistics.

Klein, D., & Manning, C. D. (2018). Accurate unlexicalized parsing. In *Proceedings of the 56th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics (Long Papers)*, (pp.2676-2686). Melbourne, Australia: Association for Computational Linguistics.

Klongsungnern, B. (1999). *An analysis of headlines of the Bangkok post and the nation on the meaning of vocabulary and the structures of sentences and phrase*. Graduate School, Thaksin University.

Koopman, H., Sportiche, D., & Stabler, E. (2013). *An introduction to syntactic analysis and theory*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Kübler, S., McDonald, R., & Nivre, J. (2009). *Dependency parsing (synthesis lectures on human language technologies)*. Morgan and Claypool Publishers.

Patel, K., & Singh, L. (2022). Lead news in the digital age: An exploration of multimedia storytelling. *Digital Journalism Studies*, *8*(1), 60-75.

Pholprasert, C. (2020). The language analysis of syntactic structures embedded in TOEFL reading comprehension passages and the language achievement of Kasetsart University students both prior to and following their undergoing a one-semester TOEFL course. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, *15*(1), 66–71.

Post Publishing Co., Ltd. (Plc). (2014). *Annual report in 2014*. Retrieved August 27, 2018, fromhttps://www.bangkokpost.co.th/annualreport/annual2014/AnnualReport2557_THAI_FINAL.pdf

Saengsang, A., & Sengchuen, N. (2022). News writing format of English summary lead from the COVID-19 situation in the Bangkok post and The nation online newspaper. *Aksara Pibul Journal*, *3*(2), 117–113.

Smith, J. (2019). Ethical considerations in the media portrayal of Buddhist monks. *Journal of Journalism Ethics*, *15*(1), 77-92.

Smith, L., & Johnson, M. (2020). Political discourse and syntactic complexity in English newspapers. *Discourse & Society*, *31*(4), 421-437.

Socher, R., Perelygin, A., Wu, J., Chuang, J., Manning, C. D., Ng, A. Y., & Potts, C. (2013). Recursive deep models for semantic compositionality over a sentiment treebank. In *Proceedings of the 2013 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing*, (pp.1631–1642). Seattle, Washington, USA. Association for Computational Linguistics.

Tamrongsat, P. (1985). *English in newspapers*. Silakorn University.

Thompson, H. (2020). Framing and emotional response in the presentation of lead news. *Communication Research Journal*, *42*(2), 189-207.

Thompson, H., & Lee, D. (2020). Social media's impact on the dissemination of news: An examination of online English newspapers. *Media and Communication Studies*, *38*(4), 560-578.

Thompson, R., & Patel, S. (2021). Headline syntax: Phrase-level structures in English newspapers. *Media Linguistics Review*, *29*(3), 134-156.

Vaswani, A., Shazeer, N., Parmar, N., Uszkoreit, J., Jones, L., Gomez, A. N., ... & Polosukhin, I. (2017). Attention is all you need. In *Advances in neural information processing systems of 31st Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NIPS 2017)* (pp.5998-6008). Long Beach, CA, USA.

Williams, A., & Clarke, B. (2022). Sentence types and their communicative functions in English newspapers. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *33*(4), 210-230.

Williams, G. (2019). Adapting content for online newspapers: A study of English media. *Online Journalism Review*, *17*(1), 45-62.

Worawut, K., & Endoo, P. (2020). Study of stylistics in political news headlines of BBC newspapers: An analysis of grammatical structures. In *Proceedings of the 11th Rajamangala Surin National Conference "Research and Innovation for New Normal"* (pp.92-103). Rajamangala University of Technology Isan Surin Campus.

Yunchalard, N., & Punkasirikul, P. (2023). Underrepresenting "their" side of the story: A critical discourse analysis of online English headlines and leads of news on the Karen minority. *REFLection*s, *30*(2), 337–362.