

## Abstract for SEALS XVIII

**Title** POLITICS IS THAI BOXING:  
The concept of politics as reflected in metaphorical  
expressions used by Thai politicians

**Sub-field** cognitive linguistics, pragmatics

**Name of Author** Miss. Ratchaneeya Klinnamhom

**E-mail** ratchaneeya@swu.ac.th

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#### Abstract

This research aims at examining concepts related to politics as reflected in metaphorical expressions used by Thai politicians. The data elicited includes various types of discourse such as media interviews, censure debates and campaign speeches. According to Lakoff & Johnson (1980), metaphorical expressions in our language are tied to metaphorical concepts in systematic way. For this reason, we can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the metaphorical nature of concepts that structure our everyday activities.

The study reveals that Thai politicians represented politics as Thai boxing whereas politicians were viewed as professional boxers. In Thai culture, good boxer are 'Look phoo chai' [lû:k phû: cha:j]-- 'the real man' In addition, elections and censure debates were also represented as boxing matches and arguments between the politicians were their fights on the ring. In term of functions, Thai politicians use these metaphorical linguistic expressions to attract voters' attention, to cultivate in-group solidarity, and to create positive images for themselves. The image projected is "They are brave and professional fighters."