Analysis of Linguistic Features and Functions in News Editorial Discourse
Related to Human Trafficking in the ASEAN Community

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Abstract
News editorials are embedded with editors' critical views on current issues. To convince the editors' views through news editorials, different levels of discourse are the key of news editorial production. The use of linguistic features and functions served as an important element in contributing news editorials since they are used to show editors' thorough viewpoints on a critical or controversial issue. There has been a growing body of research on the use of linguistics and its functions. However, most of these discourse studies have focused on some critical issues happening in one country. Studies on linguistic features and functions in co-occurred issues among different countries were still scarce. Therefore, this study sought to shed some light on the linguistic features and functions employed in news editorial discourse related to one critical issue – human trafficking – that has been found in many countries in ASEAN and has been widely discussed in different ASEAN presses. Systemic Functional Linguistics was used as an instrument to analyze five news editorials related to Rohingya people. The study revealed that news editorials mostly contained ideational function, logical function and experience. News editorial discourse contained all types of processes under ideational metafunction. The most employed process was material process while behavioral process was not found in some news editorials. In addition, the interpersonal function was found in different forms of mood. The declarative mood, imperative mood, and interrogative mood were included in each news editorials. However, identifying the exact meaning of interpersonal function carried some difficulties since news editorials were a written text with one-way communication. News editorial discourse contained different functional use of language. Each news editorial from different presses has their own stylistic use of language to convey its viewpoint.

Keywords: Linguistic Features, Linguistic Functions, News Editorial Discourse, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Human Trafficking

Introduction

Newspaper is considered as a powerful source of information in a written form (Cissel, 2012). The information in newspaper can be published in different kinds of news including news reports, featured articles, and news editorials (Danesi, 2009, Fowler, 1991, and Reitz, 2004). Each kind has its own communicative purposes. For instance, news reports aim to present a short report of new information and current events, while featured articles represent the depth information of specific events, subjects, or people. Unlike the prior kinds, news editorials publicize editors' views discussing issues related to social interests such as politics, culture, and social issues (Danesi, 2009 and Turow, 2014). Since different kinds of news contain different communicative purposes, the discourse used in news seems to be different as well.

The written discourse used in news reports and featured articles is obviously different from the discourse used in news editorials (Franklin, 2008). The differences rely on comprehension of language, explicit and implicit written language, and linguistic features (Conboy, 2007). Firstly, the language used to report fact in news reports and featured articles is direct. The readers also gain the direct meaning from the sent message. As a descriptive language containing explicit meaning, news reports and featured articles comprise unbiased and unambiguous language. On the other hand, with the aims to convince the readers on social interest issues, news editorials contain the use of implicit language to express the editors' critical views and to accomplish the editors' goal. In this kind of news, the editors mostly use persuasive language, narrative language, and linguistic perspective, to claim the editors' opinions (Fowler, 1991). The language is sometimes implicitly interpreting rely on different writing style of editors. News reports and featured articles are produced in what they meant to convey. Reading news editorials may not be the same.

Besides news comprehension, the discourse used to claim the editors' point of view is to concern (Van Dijk, 1988). This aspect can be based on both the editors' point of view and the readers' standing point. From the editors' point of view, language used to convey the opinion is considered as a language conveying the editor's attitudes, thoughts, and belief (Fowler, 1991). Apart from that, when the readers read news editorials, they are to understand the language as well as understand the meaning underlying the language (Christopher, 2007). Language of news editorials contains editors' attitude and points of view both of which are not explicitly stated. In brief, news editorials include different aspects with specific discourse used to deliver editors' intention and influence readers' attention (Fowler, 1991).

The discourse used in news editorials is able to influence public opinions due to numerous aspects (Van Dijk, 1988). News editorials discourse contains the description of language units which is the relations between its features and functions (Baker and Ellece, 2011). These units are employed to explain the systemic and implicit discourse used in news editorials (Van Dijk, 1988). Since the production of news editorials consists of a number of discourse aspects, to comprehend discourse used in news editorials is to gain mutual comprehension between the editors and the readers.

One aspect under the study of discourse has been known as discourse analysis (Cotter, 2010). Discourse analysis is related to the language use at a discourse level covered in communicative functions (Cotter, 2010). The study of discourse focuses on linguistic

units which are both meaning and structure. As a communicative function, discourse analysis lays an emphasis on the relations of how people express or exchange thoughts through the messages. In attention to discourse, the meaning of delivered message is beyond the text or sentence influenced by different backgrounds in social context (Baker and Ellece, 2011, Cook, 2011, and Van Dijk, 2008). Van Dijk (2008) further pointed out that discourse is an important tool to connect the meaning of text with the expression of ideas as well as to understand the systemic use of language in different contexts, e.g. social and cultural context. Due to different concepts and thoughts and different contexts of the readers, one message can be interpreted into different meanings (Paltridge, 2006). Discourse analysis has been conducted in a variety of contexts with the relations between communication and society. (Van Dijk, p. 111, 2008).

Throughout the development within the domain of discourse analysis, news editorial discourse analysis seems to gain more interests thanks to different stylistic use of discourse (Cotter, 2010). The study of news editorial discourse has emerged as one of the interesting topics. Since news editorials can have powerful influences on the readers' thought, attitude, and beliefs, there might some misunderstandings owing to a different background of thought. Employing discourse analysis can help explain and discover the impact of its content (Cotter, 2010). Without doubt, discourse analysis plays a key role as a tool to review unanswered questions of discourse used in social practices, i.e. news editorials (Johnstone, 2008).

Among a number of studies related to the analysis of news editorial discourse, most of previous studies focused on two aspects. Firstly, most of them relied on analysis of written discourse in content specific fields of linguistics such as content analysis. Secondly, previous studies seemed to center on particular issues in individual countries, the study about one topic in only one country (Chakorn, 2008, and Sa-ngiamwibool and Kumsorn, 2013). There is yet no study investigating the same social issues across different countries. Thus, there are still a room for news editorials studies centering on the use of linguistic features and functions so as to find the stylistic use of discourse from news editorials related to social issues among different countries.

News editorials are concerned with diverse issues such as economics, politics, international relations and social issues. One of the most concern issues is social problems in the countries that are numerous and always crucial, – e.g. inequality, religious, violence, and human trafficking (Bangkok Post and The Nation, 2015). One issue which affects individual country and international relations is human trafficking (Thai Khu Fah Journal, 2015). Remarkably, there was the memorandum of understanding (MOU) on anti-trafficking among ASEAN countries that Thailand has to eliminate the trafficking of people in the country but the resolution is still too weak (International Organization for Migration, n.d.). This issue impacted Thailand's stability and turned to be more crucial when Thailand has been reported as the Tier3 Watch List as indicated in Trafficking in Persons Report 2014 in July, 2014, by Department of State, United States of America. For this reason, human trafficking can be regarded as the concerned trouble which has been discussed through different opinions in media, especially news editorials which contains the authors' attitudes.

On May 2015, human trafficking was viewed as another urgent trouble since boat carrying Rohingya refugees floated on the boundaries of ASEAN countries (The Guardian, 2015). This issue needs to be urgently resolved. So, the trouble attracted considerable interests among countries in ASEAN community. At that time, the issue of the Rohingya people was counted as the social interest issues. News editorials on human trafficking related to Rohingya contained the author's multiple views. In order to perceive the information with opinions and attitudes of the ASEAN countries in human trafficking, news editorial plays a role as another source of information embedded with multiple viewpoints.

In particular, an investigation of discourse can be employed to reveal such important social issues as human trafficking encountered in different countries may bring more understanding of the issue via the stylistic use of language. To address the gap, it is worth to investigate the use of discourse in news editorials discussing the social issue, but written by authors with different cultural background and published in different presses in ASEAN countries.

Objective of the Study

The study aimed to analyze the use of discourse in news editorials related to human trafficking, published in online newspaper of ASEAN countries during May 2015.

Research question

- What linguistics features and functions are employed in news editorials related to human trafficking published in ASEAN countries' online newspaper?

Materials and Methods

The present research collected the news editorials related to human trafficking published in three ASEAN countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. These countries have been confronted common problems, i.e. Rohingya refugee. The selected news editorials were from three news cites: The Jakarta Post (http://www.thejakartapost.com), New Straits Times Online (http://www.nst.com.my/), and The Nation (http://www.nationmultimedia.com) from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand respectively.

Five news editorials gathered from three news site were titled as follows:
  1) An ASEAN emergency published by The Jakarta Post on May 18, 2015;
  2) Stop human trafficking published by New Straits Times Online on May 11, 2015;
  3) Yangon must act responsibly published by New Straits Times Online on May 18, 2015;
  4) Does Asean know the meaning of 'emergency'? published by The Nation on May 19, 2015; and
  5) Handling of Rohingya issue was embarrassing published by The Nation on May 24, 2015.

Conceptual Framework

To address the research objective and answer the research question, this study was based on the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistic, the functional theory developed by M.A.K. Halliday, Linguistics Professor at the University of Sydney, Australia. Based on SFL, it is to focus on the functions of language use to grasp communicative processes in social practice between the sender – the productive discourse – and the receiver within the different contexts (Bartlett, 2010). The interpretation of meaning in communicating is specified by different functions according to different modes of meaning which could be categorized as three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Morley, 2000). These metafunctions also identify the meaning of text in the sentence under the clause structures (Eggins, 2004).

1) **Ideational metafunction** – experiential and logical – primarily realizes on its meaning both outer and inner meaning deal with people, things, and events.
2) **Interpersonal metafunction** mainly concerns on the meaning related to interpersonal relations.
3) **Textual metafunction** mainly focuses on its expression, context: the link of ideas between speaker and their own experience.

According to SFL, ideational is concerned with on the language use to express the experience, the relations of one to another, while interpersonal is pertinent to the negotiating social relations on the interaction of people in society, and textual concerns on the information that used to communicate where ideational and interpersonal were gathered for interconnection (Martin and White, 2005).

Data Analysis

To find out the linguistic features and functions, SFL was used as a framework to review the discourse used in news editorials including ideational metafunction and interpersonal metafunction. Ideational metafunction and interpersonal metafunction defined the linguistic functions found in the clause or the sentence. Moreover, to focus on its linguistic features, TRANSITIVITY and MOOD were included. Textual metafunction was not included in this analysis because textual metafunction consisted of ideational and interpersonal metafunction.

Firstly, the linguistic functions were considered through its definition. The sentences related to the interpretation of logical contents included experience were identified as ideational function. In addition, the sentences consisted of social interaction or social relations and modality were categorized as interpersonal function.

For interpersonal metafunction, the sentences that were categorized as an interpersonal meaning consisted of the act of **interaction** and the exchange of **personal mediation** (Morley, 2000). Morley further pointed out that the main key of this metafunction focused on the relations between writers' positions and the topics divided into two elements, social interaction and personal mediation or modulation. The social interaction is based on how to construct and maintain social relations comes with three elements.

(1) Instrumental interaction: discourse that influences behavior in the form of command, request, suggestion, offer, and will/wish;
(2) Informational interaction: discourse that gives/seeks information in statement, question, and exclamation; and
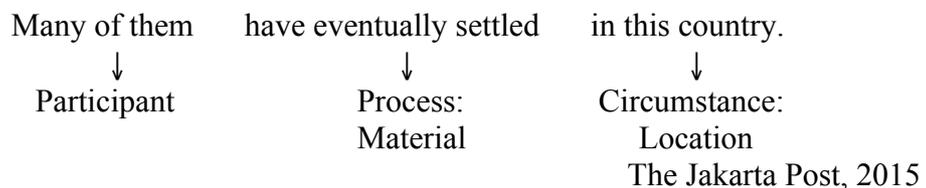(3) Expressive interaction: discourse that is produced through exclamations without contents.

Moreover, the personal mediation or modulation delivers authors' attitudes as well as the way to interact with each other including personal attitudes or assessment, express author attitude, and reference. The interpersonal metafunction sometimes expresses through ideational.

For example,

Of course, slavery in the sex trade is a familiar tale. *(Personal attitude)*

Secondly, ideational metafunction is grammatically explained as TRANSITIVITY consisting of participant, process, and circumstance (Bloor and Bloor, 2004 and Matthiessen, et al., 2010). The **participant** is mostly found in subject or complement of the sentence within the particular process. The **process** is mostly conveyed through main verb that can be grouped into six sub-categories: material process, mental process, relational process, verbal process, existential process, and behavioral process. Finally, the **circumstance** represents as one of function among the clause which helps modify participant and process.

The collected news editorials were analyzed by the sentence and identified by coding symbols in order to find the impact of meaning of each news editorial. The example is shown below.

Many of them	have eventually settled	in this country.
↓	↓	↓
Participant	Process: Material	Circumstance: Location

The Jakarta Post, 2015

Interpersonal metafunction is in relations to MOOD which identifies modality in the sentence. The meaning explains the way people interact with each others as well as their position and the role in society. In addition, the subject analysis focused on the relations between writer's position and the topic including in declarative sentence, imperative sentence, and interrogative mood (Patpong, 2008).

Under the analysis, the clauses and sentences representing linguistic features and functions were coded through different metafunctions. In one news editorial, the employed linguistic components were specified among the clauses. Elements found in news editorials were calculated as a percentage. The metafunction found in news editorial led to show the similarities and differences of news editorials from each press.

Result and Discussion

The issue on human trafficking, the Rohingya refugee, has been considered among ASEAN countries, especially Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, as a controversial issue. Five news editorials related to human trafficking from those three countries were collected: one news editorial from The Jakarta Post, tow news editorials from New Straits Times Online, and the other two from The Nation. The news editorials were titled related to Rohingya people published on May 2015.

The present study revealed the use of discourse in news editorials into two points: linguistic features and linguistic functions.

The linguistic features found in news editorial can be described into two categories. That is the discourse use through ideational metafunction and interpersonal metafunction. The features were used to identify the process representing the act of an individual country. Table 1 presents the percentage of each process found in news editorials. There were the same trends of processes found in each news editorials.The study demonstrated that of all processes, material process was mostly found with the highest percentage which can imply that most of the used discourse contained the information of doing words, e.g. flee, abandon, take, allow, which were the action or response toward the issue on human trafficking.

Process	The Jakarta Post	New Straits Times Online		The Nation	
	An ASEAN Emergency (N = 36)	Stop human trafficking (N = 40)	Yangon must act responsibly (N = 51)	Does Asean know the meaning of 'emergency'? (N = 53)	Handling of Rohingya issue was embarrassing (N = 69)
Material	69.44%	47.50%	68.63%	67.92%	46.38%
Mental	11.11%	15.00%	0.00%	11.32%	10.14%
Relational	13.89%	32.50%	23.53%	16.98%	30.43%
Verbal	8.33%	5.00%	0.00%	1.89%	4.35%
Existential	8.33%	7.50%	1.96%	3.77%	5.80%
Behavior	8.33%	0.00%	1.96%	0.00%	1.45%

Table 1 The percentage of process found in news editorials

In addition, the result revealed that the interpersonal function found in news editorials was expressed through different kinds of mood. The most found mood was declarative mood, followed by imperative mood, and interrogative mood respectively. However, there were some differences. Even if the findings showed the common trend of the moods found in news editorials, the mood in News Straits Times Online was different. Inferior to declarative mood, the highest imperative mood found in The Nation's news editorial with the use of demand or request sentences toward Rohingya issue. For example,

> "With Malaysia now pushing to bring the issue to the table again, member-countries should resist the temptation to play the blame game."

> The Nation, 2015

Moreover, one news editorials published by New Straits Times Online found the highest percentage of the interrogative used in news editorial. Most of sentence found in this news editorial contained a number of questions that asked for the action from individual country by the use of question of possibility, or wh- question. For example,

"And, if they agree will they, firstly, restore to the Rohingyas their right to citizenship and, secondly, will they promise to protect them from the genocidal violence from which the Rohingyas are escaping?"

News Straits Times Online, 2015

The detail of mood found in each news editorial wasshown in Table 2.

Mood	The Jakarta Post	New Straits Times Online		The Nation	
	An ASEAN Emergency (N = 19)	Stop human trafficking (N = 24)	Yangon must act responsibly (N = 25)	Does Asean know the meaning of 'emergency'? (N = 29)	Handling of Rohingya issue was embarrassing (N = 29)
Declarative	78.95%	87.50%	68.00%	65.52%	68.97%
Imperative	21.05%	8.33%	8.00%	31.03%	24.14%
Interrogative	0.00%	4.17%	24.00%	3.45%	6.90%

Table 2 The percentage of mood found in news editorials

Moreover, the most of function found in all collected news editorials was ideational function at 73.02 in percentage while interpersonal function was 26.98. These numbers indicated the linguistic functions found in news editorials. Most of them contained experience or logical use through language expression with a small number of interaction or interpersonal interaction, which is interpersonal function.

The results indicated the trend of discourse found in news editorial. The material process and declarative mood were most found in the news editorials to inform and discuss on things happened. Most of the words used to express the action were situated as doing words. In addition, the declarative mood was used to inform or state the information that mostly found in narrative texts.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the use of discourse in news editorials related to human trafficking – a co-occurring issue between Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand – based on Systemic Functional Linguistics. From the overview, news editorial content, it mostly contained ideational function which provided the logical or experience of that topic. News editorial discourse contained all types of processes under ideational metafunction that revealed linguistic features and functions in news editorials. In addition, in the ideational view, the result revealed the same trend among five news editorials. The most employed process was material process, followed by relational process while mental process, verbal process, and behavioral process were not found in some news editorials. In addition, the interpersonal function was found in a

different form of expression. There were some questions and references included in news editorials. For instance, there were the questions for the action of an individual country as well as the references that referred to others' words or others' incidents related to Rohingya. However, there were some difficulties to understand the meaning of interpersonal function as news editorials are written texts. It is available for one-way communication. It can be concluded that there were different functional uses of language found in the collected news editorial discourse. All of them provides critical meaning to the readers. Each news editorial from different presses has its own stylistic use of language to convey its viewpoint.

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