The Influences of Loaded Words in Tragic News Headlines on Readers' Emotions
อิทธิพลของคำแฝงอารมณ์ในพาดหัวข่าวโศกนาฏกรรมต่ออารมณ์ของผู้อ่านข่าว

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ABSTRACT

In tragic news, the use of loaded words is one prominent device in constructing effective news headlines to draw interests and provoke readers' emotions. Nevertheless, with a dearth of research studies in this phenomenon, the aims of this qualitative study are to investigate 1) what word classes of loaded words are found in tragic news headlines, and 2) how these loaded words provoke emotions and reactions in news readers. First, 180 tragic news headlines were purposively selected from all news headlines on nine websites between July to October 2019 and analyzed. The findings revealed that nouns and verbs were the two most prominent word classes used as loaded words (48.18% and 33.64%, respectively). Moreover, these loaded words were found at both word and phrase levels. Second, to explore news readers' emotions, the two main instruments were used: 1) online questionnaire with 20 news headlines were uploaded, finally, 52 male and female respondents from 22 countries participated and 2) semi-structured interview with 4 (7.69%) interviewees was conducted with another 20 news headlines to explore more in-depth responses. Their overall reflections revealed that, with the impacts of loaded expressions, four related main factors helped provoke their emotions: 1) strong emotive meanings of loaded words, 2) textual context of a news headline, 3) news readers' experiences, and 4) news readers' cultural and social backgrounds. Overall, this seems to suggest that not the use of loaded words alone is a prominent language device in creating enough impacts in writing news headlines, but textual and socio-cultural contexts also play essential roles in provoking their emotions and influencing further reactions. That is, news writers should be aware that integrating these strategies together is very important in writing news headlines.

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บทคัดย่อ

ในข่าวโศกนาฏกรรม การใช้คำแฝงอารมณ์ (loaded words) เป็นเทคนิคหนึ่งที่โดดเด่นในการเขียนพาดหัวข่าวที่มี
ประสิทธิภาพเพื่อที่จะสามารถกระตุ้นความสนใจและอารมณ์ของผู้อ่านข่าว แต่โดยที่งานวิจัยในด้านนี้มีจำนวนไม่มากนัก
งานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพชิ้นนี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษา 1) ประเภทของคำที่ถูกนำมาใช้เป็นคำแฝงอารมณ์ในข่าวโศกนาฏกรรม
และ 2) คำแฝงอารมณ์เหล่านั้นกระตุ้นอารมณ์และปฏิกิริยาของผู้อ่านอย่างไร เพื่อตอบวัตถุประสงค์แรก ผู้วิจัยได้เลือกพาด
หัวข่าวที่เป็นข่าวโศกนาฏกรรม 180 ชิ้นจากพาดหัวข่าวทั้งหมดบนเว็บไซต์ข่าวภาษาอังกฤษ 9 เว็บไซต์ที่เผยแพร่ระหว่าง
เดือนกรกฎาคมถึงเดือนตุลาคม ปี 2562 และได้นำมาวิเคราะห์ ผลการวิจัยพบว่า คำนามและคำกริยา คือประเภทของคำสอง
อันดับแรกที่ถูกนำมาใช้เป็นคำแฝงอารมณ์ในพาดหัวข่าว (48.18% และ 33.64% ตามลำดับ) นอกจากนี้ยังพบว่าโครงสร้าง
ของคำแฝงอารมณ์ปรากฏอยู่ทั้งในระดับคำและวลี เพื่อตอบวัตถุประสงค์ที่สอง เพื่อสำรวจถึงอารมณ์ของผู้อ่านที่ถูกกระตุ้น
โดยพาดหัวข่าว ผู้วิจัยได้ใช้เครื่องมือหลัก 2 ชิ้น คือ 1) แบบสอบถามออนไลน์ (online questionnaire) ที่มีพาดหัวข่าว 20
ชิ้น (จาก 180 ชิ้นข้างต้น) ซึ่งส่งไปยังผู้อ่านในหลายประเทศ ท้ายที่สุด มีผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามนี้ทั้งชายและหญิง รวมทั้งหมด
52 คนจาก 22 ประเทศ และ 2) แบบสัมภาษณ์กึ่งโครงสร้าง (Semi-structured interview) ที่มีพาดหัวข่าวอีก 20 ชิ้น เพื่อหา
คำตอบในเชิงลึกต่อยอดจากผลวิจัยที่ได้ในขั้นต้นจากแบบสอบถาม มีผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ 4 คน (7.69%) จากผลการวิจัย พบว่า
การใช้คำแฝงอารมณ์มีผลที่จะกระตุ้นอารมณ์ของผู้อ่าน เนื่องจากปัจจัยสำคัญ 4 ประการ ได้แก่ 1) ความหมายของคำแฝง
อารมณ์เอง 2) บริบททางภาษาของพาดหัวข่าว 3) ประสบการณ์ของผู้อ่าน และ 4) ภูมิหลังด้านวัฒนธรรมและสังคมของ
ผู้อ่าน จึงสามารถเห็นได้ว่า โดยรวมแล้ว ไม่เพียงแต่การใช้คำแฝงอารมณ์อย่างเดียวเท่านั้นที่สามารถกระตุ้นอารมณ์และ
ปฏิกิริยาของผู้อ่าน แต่บริบทของภาษาและของผู้อ่าน ก็มีผลมากด้วยเช่นกัน ด้วยเหตุนี้ นักเขียนข่าวจึงต้องตระหนักว่า การ
คำนึงถึงปัจจัยทั้งหมดที่กล่าวมาข้างต้น มีความสำคัญอย่างมากในการเขียนพาดหัวข่าว

Introduction

A news headline seems to be the first thing we glance at in our hectic and information-overloaded lives these days. In order to grab readers' attention, the use of loaded words is one of the techniques employed in news headlines, especially in tragic news which usually brings about massive impacts on news readers (Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; and Reah, 1998). Moreover, Rocklage, Rucker, & Nordgren (2017) emphasize that an important technique used to construct effective tragic news headlines is creating emotions among readers. Therefore, it would be-advantageous for news writers and others who work in this field to understand and to realize how loaded words in tragic news headlines provoke readers' emotions. Since there is a dearth of research exploring this phenomenon, this study aims to investigate what word classes of loaded words are found in tragic news headlines and how these loaded words can provoke emotions and reactions in news readers.

Literature Review
News, News Headline, and Tragic News Headlines

News, consisting of a headline, a lead, and a news story, is a specific genre for communication in human society. Of all three components, the headline is the very first and most noticeable section of the news (Eldridge, 1995). Its two functions are to summarize the news content and to seek readers' attention (Ifantidou, 2009; Lindemann, 1990; and Van Dijk, 1988). To serve the latter function, several news experts have suggested various techniques in writing a headline. Among others, loaded words are one of outstanding features in news headlines since they are words which can influence the emotions of news readers (Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; & Reah, 1998).

One type of news headline which has a great impact on news readers is tragic news. Norris, Friedman*,* Watson, Byrne, Diaz, & Kaniasty (2002) categorize tragic events into three groups of disasters which are mass violence, natural disaster, and technological disaster. Considering the language use in these tragic news headlines, apart from the impacts of loaded words which strongly create the sense of tragedy and provoke news readers' emotions, Wainberg (2015) also claims that a news headline containing numbers can draw 15% more readers than other types. Moreover, Hawdon, Agnich, & Ryan (2014) suggest that tragic news headlines are normally hyped, biased, and oversimplified. These characteristics attempt to provide tragic news with excessive coverage serving people's need to keep up with tragedies or dramatic events. These updates are social perception and unfold the events (Settle & Lindsay, 2011).

Loaded Words

Loaded words are words or phrases which carry strong emotional implications, both positively and negatively (Reah, 1998). They are also called emotive words (Bourse, 2019, para. 26). Loaded words, especially in tragic news, are considered as having great impacts on drawing readers' interest and primary attention resulting in stimulating readers' emotions (Clark, 2007). However, Macagno & Walton (2014) and Charaudeau (2008) emphasize that emotive words (loaded words) and emotion words are different. The latter are the words which refer to explicit emotions such as anger, sadness, or joy, while the former are the terms that may not have explicit notion of emotion, but they trigger the audience's emotional responses and influence their perception of reality.

Considering the word classes as suggested by Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Savartvik (1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007), loaded words can be found in all word classes (i.e. noun, verb, adjective, and adverb). From a wide range of news headline analyses, experts have suggested that nouns are the most frequent word class of loaded words found in these texts, followed by verbs (Alzahrani, 2018; Brouse, 2019; Khodabandeh, 2 0 0 7 ; Moon, 2016; and Roohani & Esmaeili, 2010). Moreover, emotive or loaded expressions often appear in a phrasal structure, especially noun phrases. Clark (2007) and Mardh (1980) state that the use of noun phrases in headlines tended to be effective to provide needed information in a limited space for the text. More importantly, loaded words are heavily associated with culture and shared background knowledge which are important contexts to influence readers' emotions. With news readers' different cultural backgrounds, meanings of loaded words can be perceived differently (Hu, 1999). Some examples of loaded words and phrases are as follows:

Noun/Noun phrase – terrorist, death toll, hijack, tsunami, devastation

Verb/Verb phrase – explode, kill, violate, fatally shot, attack

Adjective – horrendous, unprecedented, chaotic, severe

Adverb – terribly, brutally, fatally

(Note: the items above were from the first 100 loaded words listed in The Writers for Hire, 2019)

Meaning Construction

To understand how loaded words create meanings and provoke emotions in readers, basic concepts about meaning construction are useful. Considering socio-cultural view, Fillmore (2003) explains that there are two main parts involved in every process of meaning construction: 1) the construction of direct meaning or word specific meaning, and 2) its background or frame setting of meaning. To illustrate, words do not only carry meanings but also background information with them. In relation to frame setting of meaning, the cultural background of the readers plays an important role in inferring the meaning of a word. When speaking about culture, experience must be taken into consideration. One's experience includes background knowledge, beliefs, and practices. Fillmore & Atkins (1992) emphasize that cultural background and experience play an important role in creating and understanding

meanings. Similarly, to comprehend a written text, readers derive meaning not only from actual words, but also from their context. Anderson, Collins, Schmitt, & Jacobvitz (1996) introduced the schema theory noting the importance of the interaction between the text and readers' background knowledge. In news reading, this affects the news readers' understanding of the messages in a news headline. Likewise, from a grammatical view, denotation and connotation are two main ways to describe the meaning of words. Denotation is the literal meaning of a word, whereas a connotation is a wide range of associations of meanings hidden in a word. This also emphasizes the word's emotional weight (Bashford, 2015 and Hornby, 2000).

News Responses: Readers' Emotions

According to Wirth & Schramm (2005), emotions can be considered complex interactive entities encompassing subjective and objective factors consisting of affective, cognitive, conative, and physiological components. They introduced the concept of seven dimensions of emotions including empathy, arousal/excitation, suspense, fear/anxiety, entertainment, mood regulation, and affective involvement. Nevertheless, considering the contents of tragic news, the dimensions of entertainment and mood regulation seem irrelevant to the investigation of this study. Thus, the basic concepts of only five dimensions are presented here. They also explain that these emotions can be expressed through different emotion words in a language.

Fear/Anxiety is the state when the human nervous system is aroused, or when people feel that they are being threatened. Examples of emotion words in this dimension are: scared, frightened, fearful, and worried (7ESL, 2018).

Suspense as defined by Borringo (1980, as cited in Wirth & Schramm, 2005) and Wulff (1996, as cited in Wirth & Schramm, 2005) is the feeling which occurs when recipients do not know what is going to happen next. Examples of emotion words in this dimension are: shocked, stunned, panicked, and insecure (7ESL, 2018).

Empathy is the understanding of how other people feel including how their responses are formed by taking over that person's perspective. Examples of emotion words in this dimension are: sympathetic, concerned, pity, and caring (7ESL, 2018).

Arousal/Excitation is usually interpreted as experiencing restlessness, excitation, agitation, or acuteness (Zillman, 1995, as cited in Wirth & Schramm, 2005). Examples of emotion words in this dimension are: aroused, excited, curious, and uncomfortable (7ESL, 2018).

Affective Involvement, as a metaconcept, includes various related feelings ranging from when its content occupies humans and how they respond to these contents in a cognitive, affective, conative, and motivational way afterwards (Salmon, 1986, as cited in Wirth & Schramm, 2005 and Donnerstag, 1996, as cited in Wirth & Schramm, 2005).

In addition to these five dimensions of emotion introduced by Wirth & Schramm (2005), Kühne & Schemer (2011) also discuss two other prominent frames of emotions the readers of tragic news normally have, which are anger and sadness.

Anger is a negative emotion caused when one's goal is obstructed or when one is intentionally harmed by somebody, but it normally ends when one is able to overcome those situations or wrongdoers are punished. Examples of emotion words in this dimension are: angry, hateful, irritated, and exasperated (7ESL, 2018).

Sadness is a negative emotion aroused when one experiences losses and fails to reach one's goals, physically and/or mentally. Examples of emotion words in this dimension are: sad, depressed, hopeless, and guilty (7ESL, 2018).

To note, not only can one's emotions be perceived and provoked through emotion words, but they can be perceived and provoked through emotive words or loaded words (words that carry strong emotional implications).
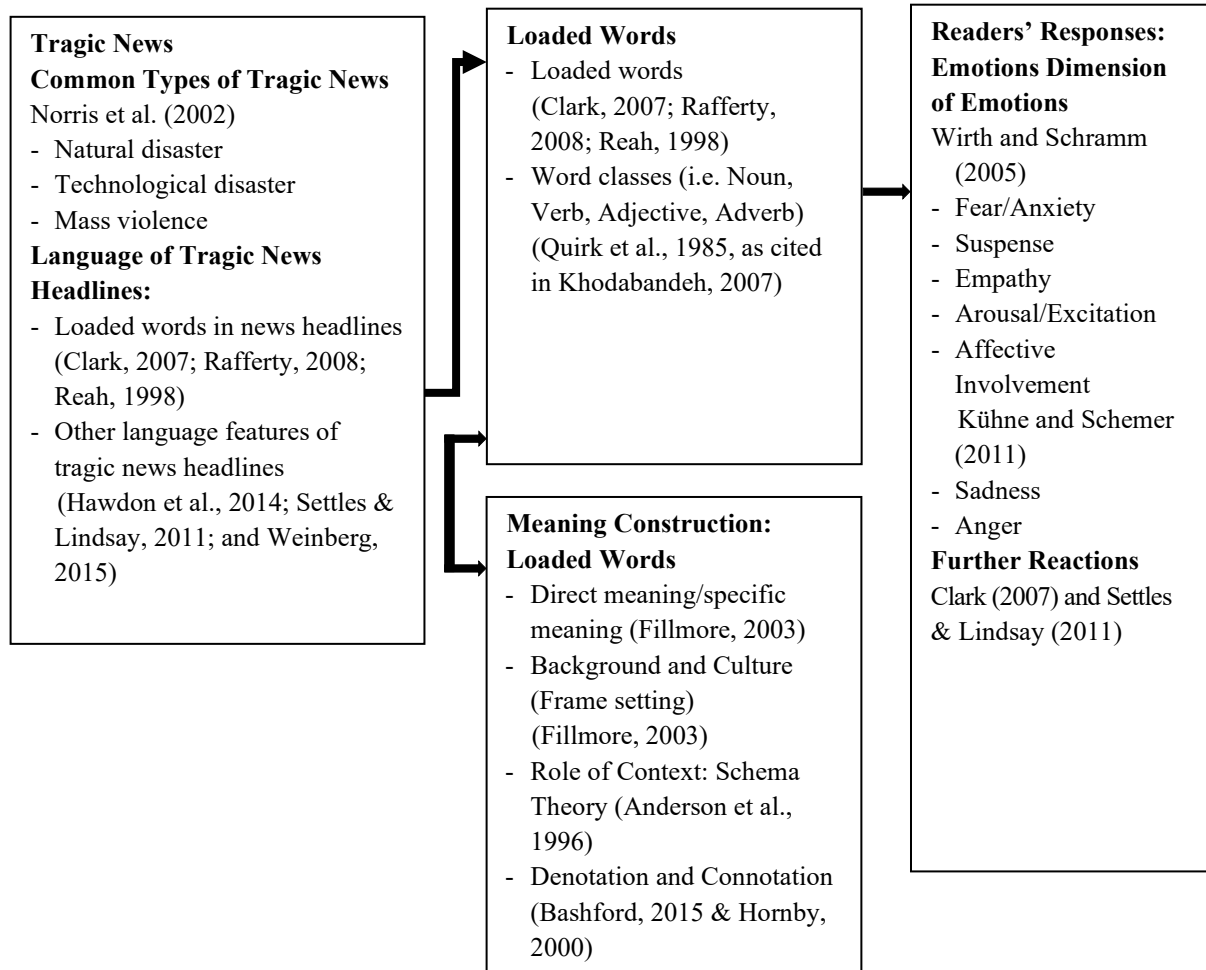
| Tragic News
Common Types of Tragic News
Norris et al. (2002)
- Natural disaster
- Technological disaster
- Mass violence
Language of Tragic News Headlines:
- Loaded words in news headlines (Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; Reah, 1998)
- Other language features of tragic news headlines (Hawdon et al., 2014; Settles & Lindsay, 2011; and Weinberg, 2015) | **Loaded Words**
- Loaded words (Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; Reah, 1998)
- Word classes (i.e. Noun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb) (Quirk et al., 1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007)

Meaning Construction: Loaded Words
- Direct meaning/specific meaning (Fillmore, 2003)
- Background and Culture (Frame setting) (Fillmore, 2003)
- Role of Context: Schema Theory (Anderson et al., 1996)
- Denotation and Connotation (Bashford, 2015 & Hornby, 2000) | **Readers' Responses: Emotions Dimension of Emotions**
Wirth and Schramm (2005)
- Fear/Anxiety
- Suspense
- Empathy
- Arousal/Excitation
- Affective Involvement
  Kühne and Schemer (2011)
- Sadness
- Anger
Further Reactions
Clark (2007) and Settles & Lindsay (2011) |

Figure 1 Framework of the Analysis of the Study

Previous Studies

In relation to the inquiries in this present study, two relevant studies are summarized below.

Since language in media significantly influences emotions, Bourse (2019) investigated a corpus of 13 political speeches on drug reform of 18 representatives from U.S. Republicans and Democrats. The basic concepts regarding frame and conceptual metaphor theory were mainly used in the analysis. She discussed the content words found in many aspects in a political context and revealed that storytelling, rhetorical devices, metaphor, and loaded words were usually employed to appeal to emotion. For example, the top 50 nouns, whose contents typically related to semantic field of drugs were loaded words and carried negative connotations. Moreover, some adjectives containing negative connotations could effectively provoke emotions.

Moreover, loaded words are one of language features playing a crucial role in human perception. Altakhaineh & Zibin (2014) conducted research entitled "Perception of Culturally Loaded Words by Arab EFL Learners". In their study, they investigated whether the understandings of culturally loaded words in seven fully contextualized English sentences of Arab EFL learners were similar to those of native speakers. Also, whether different levels of English proficiency played a role in their understanding of these sentences with culturally loaded words was investigated. There were three groups of participants, namely, 10 native speakers, 10 advanced EFL learners, and 10 intermediate EFL learners. They had the

participants rate the suitability of the uses of seven culturally loaded words. The results showed that both groups of Arab EFL learners had insufficient awareness of how these words should be used in certain cultural contexts. The English proficiency level also played an important role in learners' perceptions of culturally loaded words.

In conclusion, all reviewed major theoretical concepts and previous studies will be employed as a guidance for the analysis of this study.

Methodology

This qualitative study employed a content analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996 and Berg &Lune, 2012). Based on the theoretical framework of loaded words (Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; and Reah, 1998) and word classes (Quirk et al., 1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007), the first research question aimed to investigate word classes of loaded words found in tragic news headlines. To address this question, 180 tragic news headlines were purposively selected from nine English news websites; namely, BBC, CNN, ABC, Reuters, NHK, Xinhua, India Today, Bangkok Post, and The Nation Thailand between July and October 2019. The selected headlines covered all types of tragic events which is classified by Norris et al. (2002).

The second research question focused on how these loaded words can provoke emotions and reactions in news readers based on the frameworks of loaded words (Clark, 2007; Quirk et al., 1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; and Reah, 1998), meaning construction (Anderson et al., 1996; Bashford, 2015; Fillmore, 2003; and Hornby, 2000), language of tragic news headlines (Hawdon et al., 2014; Settles & Lindsay, 2011; and Weinberg, 2015), and emotions (Kühne & Schemer, 2011 and Wirth & Schramm, 2005). For the feasibility to address this question, 22.22% from the total of 180 news headlines was purposively selected. That is, 20 news headlines were selected for the questionnaire. This selection was aimed to cover all three tragic news types and various classes of loaded words. In addition, 20 news headlines were selected for the interview to further elicit respondents' emotions and reactions in more detail. (See Instruments)

Respondents

Because this study aims to investigate the emotions of news readers provoked by tragic news headlines, the researcher attempted to access any news readers who agreed to participate in the study. In doing this, the researcher created two links to two questionnaires, namely

1) https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScvl7dZ05C7egr5uAQ97_2rHnuNsj2p SOXg4vjCNZd2_PhVkg/viewform" and

2) https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSem5WGdSHyieH_Ln8gNro5qTyJ0m nTCAbqmD7yHvnhFqjAxpw/viewform"

and uploaded them on www.surveycircle.com, www.surveyswap.com, and on various networks of Facebook and Twitter. The two links were distributed to some preliminary volunteers in several countries from January to March, 2020. Subsequently, during this period of time, these volunteers further distributed these links to their peers. Finally, there were 52 male and female respondents from 22 countries (e.g. U.K., U.S., France, Bulgaria, Thailand, Indonesia, Korea, Israel, Russia, & Brazil; to note, the reflections from these 52 respondents were analyzed for a collective picture to address the investigation; however, without generalization of the findings, the number of the respondents was not considered as a reference to any certain population). After gaining the overall picture of the readers' emotions and reactions, 7.69% of the respondents whose preliminary data were analyzed and were willing to participate for further enquiries were contacted for a semi-structured written interview.

Instruments: Questionnaire and Semi-structured Interview

Regarding the feasibility of the online questionnaire, 20 headlines were purposively selected from 180 headlines in order to be used as the data to ascertain readers' reflections on their emotions. These included eight headlines from news about *mass violence* (40%), six headlines from news about *natural disaster* (30%), and six headlines from news about *technological disaster* (30%). From these 20 news headlines, with a total of 202 words, loaded words (25.74%) were drawn to elicit respondents' reflections on their emotions. This included 23 nouns (44.23%), 17 verbs (32.69%), and 12 adjectives (23.08%). In addition to the 25.74% of loaded words, 27 loaded noun phrases found in these 20 news headlines were also used.

The questionnaire was posted on the two links. On the first link (Part 1), to elicit readers' reflections on their emotions, there were 20 news headlines containing loaded words. With each news headline, the researcher asked the respondents to answer two main questions: 1) "From the given words/phrases, which of your emotion(s) are immediately provoked by after reading each headline?" and 2) "Give your reasons/explanations about the provoked emotion(s)." However, each respondent was allowed to choose to respond to any items. The emotion words relevant to the content of the news headlines (e.g. fearful, shocked, and depressed) were provided in the questionnaire. Moreover, the respondents could identify their own emotions and reactions in case there was not any in the given lists. (See Appendix)

On the second link (Part 2), the questionnaire aimed to inquire more about the influences of the respondents' experiences and cultural background or social values on the provoked emotions. Also, the questions aimed to obtain further responses on their interest in following the news and predictions about the news stories or events. The same set of news headlines was provided. With these 20 items, the respondents were asked to answer the three following questions. Similarly, each respondent was allowed to choose to respond to any items.

1. Do you think that your emotions and reactions to the news are influenced by your cultural background or social values? If so, how?

2. After reading these tragic news headlines, how do your emotions/reactions (as noted in Question 1) lead your interest in following the news?

3. What consequences do you expect or predict about the news stories or events?
(See Appendix)

For an in-depth analysis, a written semi-structured interview was conducted via email and LINE which allowed them to reflect on their emotions, attitudes, and reasons with more clarity and elaboration. After gaining the overall picture of the readers' emotions and reactions from the two parts of the questionnaire, 7.69% of the respondents were interviewed to explore into more detailed images regarding the impacts of loaded words in provoking emotions and reactions of the readers and their social and cultural backgrounds. To allow the respondents to express their emotions to different events other than the previous 20 news headlines already supplied, a new set of 20 news headlines was provided in case they were used to help answer the eight interview questions. (See Appendix)

To note, emotion words used in the questionnaire were grouped into each dimension and then validated by a native speaker. Moreover, after these two instruments were developed, they were validated by two experts in related fields and were tried out by ten respondents. Finally, based on the comments of the experts and respondents, further adjustments were made.

Data Analysis

The Analysis of the First Stage

1. Identifying loaded expressions found in 180 selected tragic news headlines.

2. Classifying common word and phrase classes of loaded expressions appearing in those headlines into four classes of loaded words and phrases.

3. Portraying the overall frequency of occurrences of each word class of loaded words and phrase and the frequency of loaded words and phrases found in each type of tragic news.

The Analysis of the Second Stage

1. Identifying and classifying the loaded words and phrases that the respondents reviewed in the 20 selected tragic news headlines and the emotions reflected by the respondents.
2. Interpreting readers' reflections on their emotions toward the identified loaded words and phrases appearing in the given news headlines.
3. Making further connections with reactions and consequences reported after reading the news headlines.
4. Summarizing the overall data from steps 1-3 and developing conceptual and theoretical concepts from the overall analysis regarding the connections between loaded words and phrases, readers' provoked emotions, and consequent reactions.

Findings

First research question: What word classes of loaded words are found in tragic news headlines?

Common Loaded Words Classes Employed in Tragic News Headlines

From all the 180 headlines, there were 75 headlines about *mass violence* (41.7%), 70 headlines about *natural disaster* (38.9%) and 35 headlines about *technological disaster* (19.4%). In these headlines, it was found that 440 of all 1,728 words were loaded words (25.46%). From these 440 loaded words, 202 loaded words were employed in the news about *mass violence* (11.69%), 151 loaded words appeared in the news about *natural disaster* (8.74%), and 87 loaded words were employed in the news about *technological disaster* (5.03%).

Based on the theoretical framework of classifying classes of words suggested by Quirk et al. (1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007), the findings showed that loaded expressions appeared in all four word classes (i.e. noun, verb, adjective, and adverb). In addition, they were found at both word and phrase levels. At word level, nouns were most commonly used as loaded words (48.18%), followed by verbs (33.64%), adjectives (17.27%), and adverbs (0.91%). At phrase level, there were 96.22% loaded noun phrases, 3.36% loaded verb phrases, and 0.42% loaded adjective phrases. To note, loaded noun phrases, which were found more than the other two phrase classes, were counted by identifying certain loaded nouns that were modified by various noun modifiers (e.g. adjective, modifying noun, and numeral quantifier). In this study, loaded words/phrases that appeared repetitively were all counted. Table 1 presents the use of different classes of loaded words/phrases employed in tragic news headlines from the nine different news websites.

Table 1. The Use of Different Classes of Loaded Words/Phrases Employed in Tragic News Headlines (from nine different news websites accessed between July and October 2019)

Classes of Loaded Words	Classes of Loaded Phrases	Percentage (%)		Remarks
		Word	Phrase	
- Noun e.g. death, fire, typhoon, explosion, collapse, protest, shooting, attack, bomb, gunman, terrorist, suicide, violence	- Noun phrase e.g. death toll, flash floods, knife attack, cliff collapse, unprecedented fire, mass burial, train fire, tanker explosion, 12 dead, 50 injured	48.18	96.22	Common loaded nouns were also found repetitively in loaded noun phrases.
- Verb e.g. kill, injure, wound, shoot, battle, destroy, hijack, kidnap, horrify	- Verb phrase e.g. fatally shot, severely injure, sweep away, flattens buildings, hunt killer	33.64	3.36	1. Various loaded verb phrases included both loaded verbs and loaded words of other classes (e.g. noun, adjective, adverb). 2. Some loaded verb phrases are emotive because of their connotations.
- Adjective e.g. dead, missing, deadly, devastating, destructive, massive	- Adjective phrase e.g. terribly and brutally predictable	17.27	0.42	
- Adverb e.g. severely, terribly, brutally, fatally		0.91	-	
	Total	100	100	

It seems to suggest that nouns and verbs in tragic news headlines, whose overall percentage was around 80, were two main word classes of loaded words which would be likely to create emotions on news readers. Also, expressions in noun phrases that appeared in a high percentage seem to play a great role in provoking readers' emotions.

Emotive Expressions including Loaded Nouns/ Noun Phrases

Loaded nouns (48.18%) and loaded noun phrases (96.22%) were found in all three types of tragic news: *mass violence, natural disaster,* and *technological disaster*. News headlines on *mass violence* (e.g. crime) commonly contained loaded nouns and loaded noun phrases which were about human actors or actions/events. For instance, they were employed in the following news headlines.

- **7** killed in West Texas **shooting** (CNN, Sept 1)
- Afghanistan: **Bomb** kills **63** at wedding in Kabul (BBC, Aug 18)
- Ohio **shooting** leaves **10 dead** and **26 injured**, including **suspected gunman** (ABC, Aug 4)

For news which told about *natural disaster*, most loaded nouns and loaded noun phrases referring to destructive incidents caused by nature were frequently found. These included the losses and damages resulting from the incidents. Examples are shown in the headlines below.

- **Earthquake** kills **22** people, flattens buildings and homes in northern Pakistan (ABC, Sep 24)
- As **desperation** rises, thousands in Bahamas flee Dorian's **devastation** (Reuters, Sep 8)
- **Six** dead as **flash floods** sweep away tour group in Kenya's Hell's Gate (CNN, Sep 2)

Next, regarding tragic news headlines describing *technological disasters*, loaded nouns found were commonly related to the accidents or destructive incidents on human made constructions and human inventions. These kinds of incidents included: 'explosion', 'fire', 'crash', and 'collapse'. Examples and contexts of these nouns are shown as follows:

- Taiwan *bridge* **collapse** crushes fishing boats, casualties feared (ABC, Oct 1)
- *Copter* **crash** kills **three** Thai business people and Czech pilot (The Nation, Sep 6)
- **73** killed in *train* **fire** in Pakistan (The Nation, Oct 31)

In these three types of tragic news headlines, various loaded noun phrases contained adjectives and/or numeral modifiers which illustrated vivid details and thus gave more impact to the expressions as shown in the examples below.

- Robert F Kennedy's granddaughter dies as **another tragedy** strikes family (ABC, Aug 2)
- US's most prolific **serial killer** has murdered at least 50: FBI (Bangkok Post, Oct 7)
- Authorities: **3 deaths** tied to Southern California wildfires (India Today, Oct 13)

Interestingly, in many loaded noun phrases, head nouns were omitted but numeral modifiers still appeared as shown below.

- **32** die in Iraqi pilgrimage stampede (NHK, Sep 11)
- **12** dead, **50** injured in chemical factory blast in western India (Reuters, Aug 31)
- **Hundreds** injured, **20** dead, after earthquake in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir (CNN, Sept 24)

For a lot of news headlines, loaded nouns and loaded noun phrases were both used in only one news headline, and this seemed to give stronger impact to provoke emotions as shown in the examples below.

- Suspect in Odessa **mass shooting** made 'rambling' calls to police, FBI before **rampage**: Officials (ABC, Sep 1)
- Egyptian police identify **terrorist** in deadly **car bomb attack** in Cairo (Xinhua, Aug 9)
- **Earthquake** hits PoK: **Death toll** rises to 26, over 300 injured (India Today, Sep 24)

In addition to a common noun phrase structure, compound nouns were commonly found. They also seemed to have strong impacts in attracting readers. Moreover, compound nouns in which both words were loaded nouns seemed to be more provoking as can be seen in the following examples.

- Texas Walmart shooting: El Paso **gun attack** leaves 20 dead (BBC, Aug 4)
- **Suicide bomber** kills six in attack on Mogadishu mayor's office (BBC, Jul 24)
- California beach **cliff collapse** in Encinitas leaves three dead (ABC, Aug 3)

In conclusion, loaded nouns and loaded noun phrases seemed to be the most important elements which contained the core contents of news headlines. Therefore, they made the headlines very powerful. There were various styles of employment of loaded nouns and loaded noun phrases in these news headlines. First, there was a use of one or more loaded nouns in each headline. Second, loaded noun phrases commonly appeared in the form of one loaded noun and adjective(s) or numeral modifier(s) and compound nouns. Furthermore, both loaded nouns and loaded noun phrases were also occasionally used in one news headline. These different styles of loaded expressions employed in these news headlines seem to impact readers' emotions strongly.

Emotive Expressions including Loaded Verbs/ Verb Phrases

The second most popular kind of loaded words was verbs (33.64%). Loaded verb phrases were also employed (3.36%). Regarding tragic news about *mass violence*, loaded verbs and loaded verb phrases employed referred to many different actions of humans committing crimes which caused negative impacts on human lives. Examples of these loaded verbs and loaded verb phrases are as follows:

- At least 4 people **killed** in knife attack at Paris police headquarters (ABC, Oct 3)
- One dead, nine **wounded** in France after suspected knife attack (Reuters, Aug 31)
- 'Terribly, brutally predictable': Police response to mentally ill under spotlight after man **fatally shot** (ABC, Aug 1)

As for news headlines on *natural disaster*, loaded verbs and loaded verb phrases causing damage to human lives by nature were commonly found. Moreover, in most news, there were also loaded verbs describing actions of the cause(s) or the victim(s) of these particular natural disasters as shown below.

- 6 **killed**, over dozen **wounded** as 6.5-magnitude quake hits eastern Indonesia (Xinhua, Sep 26)
- Nearly 100,000 ordered to **evacuate** in CA wildfires (NHK, Oct 12)
- Fires **destroying** one of the world's most important ecosystems (ABC, Aug 26)
- Earthquake kills 22 people, **flattens buildings and homes** in northern Pakistan (ABC, Sep 24)

Loaded verbs telling stories about *technological disaster* were popularly used. Specifically, being similar to those of *mass violence* and *natural disaster*, the loaded verb 'kill' was also commonly employed. However, the causes of these actions tended to be human-invented facilities such as a factory, flight, bridge, and boat. Examples of these headlines are shown below.

- India *factory explosion* **kills** 13 people (NHK, Aug 31)
- Turbulence on Spanish *flight* from Mauritius **injures** 14 (Reuters, Aug 21)
- 7 dead, 14 rescued as dragon *boat* **capsizes** in Philippines (Bangkok Post, Sep 25)

In these three news types, some headline news possessed more than one loaded verb. Among these words, there was always the loaded verb 'kill' as one of them. It often appeared with the verbs 'injure' or 'wound' since it can be observed that these words, semantically, reflected a high degree of losses, and they could easily provoke readers' emotions. Examples are as shown below.

- Iraq: 31 **killed**, 100 **injured** in stampede during Ashura rituals in Karbala city (India Today, Sep 10)
- West Texas gunman **killed** seven and **wounded** 22, including toddler (Reuters, Sep 2)
- 19 **killed**, dozens **wounded** as Pakistan jolted by shallow 5.2 quake (Bangkok Post, Sept 24)

At phrase level, some loaded verb phrases were found and they could make the news headlines provoke readers' emotions strongly. These loaded verb phrases could be seen in different structures. Firstly, one loaded verb and a noun phrase as the object were used. In this example, the loaded verb '*kill*' itself was influencing normally. However, when it appeared with the object 'his mother', it is highly probable that it could have easily provoked shock and sad emotions in the readers as shown below.

- Delhi: Man arrested for hiring 3 people to **kill his mother** in Paschim Vihar (India Today, Oct 11)

Secondly, there were both a loaded verb and a loaded noun as the object of the verb. This seemed to create a greater impact on readers' emotions as seen in the example below.

- Australian police **hunt killer** of giant crocodile (The Nation, Sep 22)

Next, a loaded adverb was used to modify a loaded verb to emphasize the degree of the severity of a tragic event. They both seemed to work well in provoking readers' attention.

- 'Terribly, brutally predictable': Police response to mentally ill under spotlight after man **fatally shot** (ABC, Aug 1)

In some contexts, verb phrases were used with their connotations to make them carry emotive meanings.

- Earthquake kills 22 people, **flattens buildings and homes** in northern Pakistan (ABC, Sep 24)
- Six dead as flash floods **sweep away tour group** in Kenya's Hell's Gate (CNN, Sep 2)
- Bahamas hurricane survivors tell of children **swept away**; death toll reaches 30 (Reuters, Sep 6)

Lastly, interestingly, there were some verb phrases that sounded emotive although they did not contain any loaded words as shown below.

- Mexico violence: Nine bodies **found hanging from bridge** (BBC, Aug 9)

Originally, none of words in this phrase were loaded. However, since the verb 'hang' appears with the noun 'bridge' illustrating details of the incident, this verb phrase may lead the news readers to easily imagine the picture of this cruel incident and, thus, provoke their emotions.

In summary, since loaded verbs and loaded verb phrases are so powerful, they were used by news writers in various styles of news headline writing. Firstly, there was a use of one or more loaded verbs in a news headline. Next, news writers employed various structures of loaded verb phrases. Apart from the denotative meaning of a verb, its connotative meaning was sometimes employed. Finally, even if there was not a loaded verb in a phrase, the overall meaning of the news headlines could sound emotive in a certain context.

Emotive Expressions including Loaded Adjectives/ Adjective Phrases

Apart from loaded words appearing in the forms of nouns and verbs, loaded adjectives were also found (17.31%). Usually, nouns and verbs contain most of each news headline's content. This leaves limited space for other word classes. Nevertheless, it seemed that, when the news writers wanted to emphasize the details (e.g. the degree of the severity) of those nouns, loaded adjectives or loaded adjective phrases were employed. These adjective phrases consisted of an adjective modified by one or more adverbs. Furthermore, some news headlines possessed more than one loaded adjective. Despite its small proportion, loaded adjective expressions were employed in all three types of tragic events.

A large number of loaded adjectives and loaded adjective phrases were found in news headlines about *mass violence*. These expressions were used to display the degree of human crimes or any incidents whose actors were human. This seems to lend negative effects of those events more vividly. Examples of those news headlines are as follows.

- Texas Walmart shooting: El Paso gun attack leaves 20 **dead** (BBC, Aug 4)
- Over 250 **dead** in Iraq protest (NHK, Oct 31)
- At least 20 killed in **deadly** rampage at Texas Walmart (The Nation, Aug 4)
- Death toll rises to 38 in Iraq's **violent** protests (Xinhua, Oct 4)
- Iraq death toll rises to 44 as **chaotic** protests spike (Bangkok Post, Oct 5)
- '**Terribly, brutally predictable**': Police response to mentally ill under spotlight after man fatally shot (ABC, Aug 1)

Regarding news headlines telling stories about *natural disaster*, loaded adjectives were used to modify the degree of the severity of these natural disasters and the consequent losses. Examples are shown below.

- Hundreds injured, 20 **dead**, after earthquake in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir (CNN, Sep 24)
- **Massive** iceberg breaks off Antarctica -- but it's normal (Bangkok Post, Oct 1)
- **Devastating** earthquake shatters people's life in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (Reuters, Sep 8)
- Factbox - Florida's most **deadly** and **destructive** hurricanes (Reuters, Aug 29)

The common loaded adjectives found in the news type of *technological disaster* included 'dead', 'missing', 'feared', and 'trapped' as can be seen below.

- Two **dead** in Taiwan bridge collapse (NHK, Oct 1)
- 7 **dead**, 8 **missing** after boats sink in central Philippines (Xinhua, Aug 3)
- Hopes fade for six **feared trapped** after Taiwan bridge collapse
  (Bangkok Post, Oct 1)

In summary, most loaded adjective expressions contained contents to emphasize the high degree of severity and losses from the events. This could effectively trigger news readers' emotions.

Emotive Expressions including Loaded Adverbs

The loaded adverb was the word class that was found the least frequently (0.91%). This might be due to the fact that other word classes are prior choices to convey enough content of a headline. In this study, loaded adverbs were found only in *mass violence* and *technological disaster*. It can be observed that one or more loaded adverbs were used when a news writer needed to emphasize the degree of the verb and verb phrase expressing severity of actions or events in the news as shown below.

- **'Terribly, brutally** predictable': Police response to mentally ill under spotlight after man **fatally** shot (ABC, Aug 1)
- Six **severely** injured as bridge collapses in Taiwan (Xinhua, Oct 1)

All in all, in this study, four classes of loaded words were commonly employed in the selected news headlines. Nouns and verbs appeared more frequently than adjectives and adverbs. Loaded expressions in each class were employed at both word and phrase levels. Interestingly, these loaded expressions were employed in various styles in order to grab readers' attention which could arouse their emotions.

Second research question: How can these loaded words provoke emotions and reactions in readers?

How Loaded Words in Tragic News Headlines Influence Readers' Emotions: Reflections from Readers

According to the questionnaires eliciting emotions from 52 readers as described in the methodology part, firstly, it was found that the emotions provoked were in five substantial dimensions; namely 76.92% of fear/anxiety, 75% of empathy, 63.46% of suspense (Wirth & Schramm, 2005), 69.23% of sadness, and 44.23% of anger (Kühne & Schemer, 2011). To note, the percentage of each dimension of emotion was counted separately because one respondent reflected more than one dimension of emotion. Various experts (e.g. Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; Reah, 1998) suggested that provoked emotions resulted from the impacts of loaded words (e.g. scared, shocked, concerned, exasperated, and depressed). This phenomenon was also reflected in this study. Secondly, when the respondents read the news headlines, along with the occurrences of loaded words, four main factors were also reported to provoke their emotions. It should also be noted that one loaded word or phrase can provoke more than one emotion.

The following section presents various interesting connections illustrating how loaded words affect emotions.

The Four Main Factors Provoking Readers' Emotions

Interestingly, the overall reflections of the readers from both the questionnaire and the in-depth interview indicated that, with the impacts of loaded expressions, four related main factors helped provoke their emotions: 1) the strong emotive meanings of loaded words, 2) the textual context of a news headline, 3) news readers' experiences, and 4) news readers' cultural and social backgrounds. To sum up, these four factors can be mainly classified as linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The reflections of these four factors can be summarized as shown in the diagram below and discussed in the following sections.
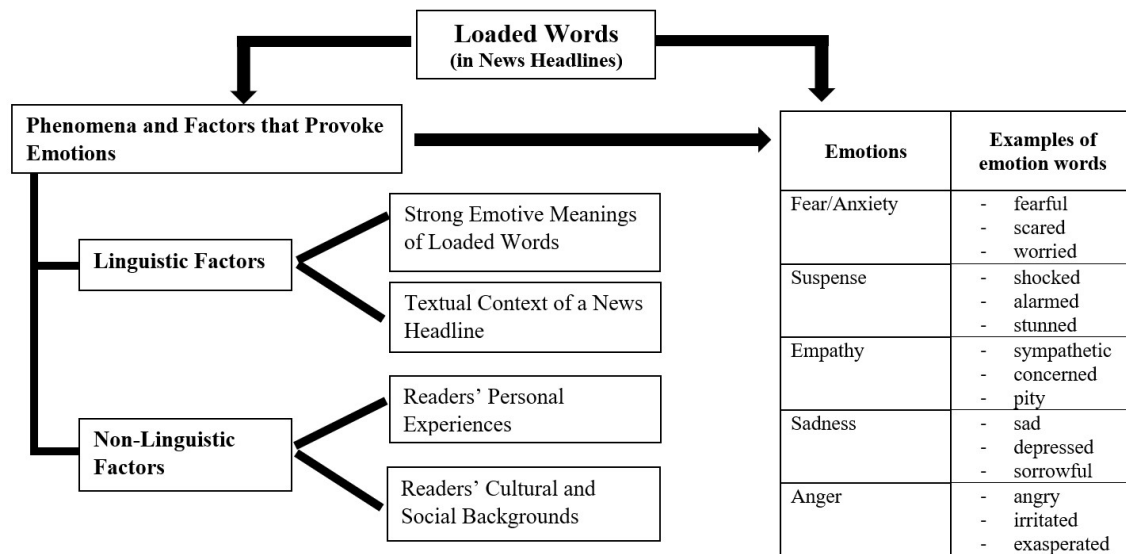
Figure 2 The Four Factors Influencing Readers' Emotions

The Strong Emotive Meanings of Loaded Words

First of all, various emotions of readers were triggered because of the power of the loaded words and phrases used that had strong emotive meanings. These loaded words and phrases (e.g. *terrorist*, *tsunami*, *death toll*, *kill*, *batter*, *dehumanized*, and *dead*) led the readers to plainly perceive the tragic events caused by humans, by nature, and by human inventions. Most of them displayed the negative consequences, unexpected tragic events, or even notorious human intended actions. To illustrate, words relating to human death could especially provoke their emotions more easily. These reflections seemed to make sense since death is normally considered to be a huge loss to human beings. Besides human death, some news headlines indicating the death of numerous animals are also perceived as a great loss. For example, the respondents reflected that they were fearful from the emotive meanings of some words and phrases including '*genocide*', '*death toll*', '*unprecedented fires*', and '*explosion*'. Moreover, the respondents' sadness resulted from the meanings of '*quake-tsunami*', '*suicide bomber*', etc. To note, apart from their denotative or direct meaning, many of the provoked emotions resulted from the words' connotative or indirect meanings. Some respondents reflected that connotations of the word 'sweep' in the phrases 'sweep away tour group' and '*flatten*' in 'flatten buildings' provided the sense of the natural power that was beyond human control which led them to feel empathetic.

Textual Context of News Headlines

The second textual factor that could influence readers' emotions was the overall context of a news headline. As above mentioned, some respondents and interviewees reflected that they followed the news because of the emotions provoked by a sense of tragedy within the loaded words. However, they also noted that the impacts of news headlines on their emotions did not result from the employment of loaded words alone. There were still other elements in a news headline that attracted news readers. These included linguistic factors such as a big number and the use of superlatives, other surrounding words or phrases, and overall context. These influenced the creation of tragic images in the readers' minds. For instance, some respondents reported that the phrase 'every 40 seconds' in the news headline, *"Suicide kills one person every 40 seconds, says WHO"* emphasized the cruelty of mankind, and it resulted in them feeling the emotions of fear, suspense, and empathy. Some respondents also added that appearances of words and numbers in the news headline, *"Used and dehumanized: Dozens of*

boys found chained in Nigeria" made them frustrated. In the news headline, *"Mexico violence: Nine bodies found hanging from bridge"*, without any loaded words, the respondents reflected that its overall context still helped create a vivid tragic picture in their minds.

Readers' Experiences

Interestingly, besides the impacts of the strong emotive meanings of loaded words themselves and the textual context of news headlines, two non-linguistic factors were found to contribute to the provoking of readers' emotions.

The connection between the readers' experiences and news headlines which could arouse their emotions were reflected. This connection made the headlines sound more tragic. In brief, when news headlines reminded them of their experiences, it led to their empathy for the victims. For example, the respondents revealed that the loaded words and phrases '*quake-tsunami*', '*floods*', and '*mudslides*' reminded them of their emotional life experiences. These readers would likely foresee the negative consequences, especially the ones from natural disasters. Also, when one male respondent read about the issue of mental problems portrayed in the news headline, *"Suicide kills one person every 40 seconds, says WHO"*, he paid much attention to this issue because he had experienced a similar mental problem.

Interestingly, people with different life experiences reported having different reactions to a certain word. To illustrate, one Thai male respondent reported that the loaded noun '*shooting*' could trigger his fear because this incident rarely happened in his life. However, one British female respondent argued that this kind of incident was common in her country; therefore, she felt quite indifferent to this word. Instead, she reported that she was rather fearful of the loaded verb '*hijack*'. It is possible that the different reactions could be because western people seem to have more concern about hijacking than eastern people do.

Readers' Cultural and Social Backgrounds

Emotions of the readers were reported to be provoked because of the connection between the news headlines and readers' backgrounds of knowledge, culture, beliefs, and expectations. Most respondents insisted that cultural and social backgrounds (e.g. experience of violence and terrorism in their society) did affect their emotions. For example, for the news headline, *"Egyptian police identify terrorist in deadly car bomb attack in Cairo"*, one Iranian female respondent said that she was quite concerned and alarmed about terrorism since she lived in the Middle East. Also, some Thai respondents reflected their worries since the incident reminded them about similar situations in southern Thailand. Secondly, many respondents also felt worried after reading the news headline, *"Suicide kills one person every 40 seconds, says WHO"*, as they could observe an increasing chance of this kind of mental problem among people in society these days.

Moreover, the readers' beliefs or values relating to social, political, religious, and ideological issues, were reported to trigger their emotions. For instance, for news headline, *"Used and dehumanized: Dozens of boys found chained in Nigeria"*, the respondents expressed their insecurity provoked by the loaded words '*dehumanized*' and '*chained*' because their beliefs in human rights and children's rights were violated. Moreover, the word '*chained*' strengthened the readers' empathy. They believe that everyone deserves the right to live their lives and not to be hurt by other human beings. Interestingly, in different societies, social beliefs and social values can influence readers' emotions differently. Furthermore, some interviewees revealed that if the news headline clicked with their world interest and their sensitivity to certain social values/beliefs, they would pay more attention to the news.

News readers also have expectations. For example, firstly, after reading the news headline, *"7 dead after small plane and helicopter collide on Spanish Mallorca"*, one Thai respondent said that he/she felt very angry after seeing the words '*dead*' and '*collide*' because they had the expectation that pilots should be skillful. After reading this news headline, the sense of disappointment was strongly provoked by this unexpected situation. As another

example, three respondents reflected that with their prior expectations that nature should be well-protected by everyone, when they read the news headline, *"Fear spreading as unprecedented fires burn through the Amazon"*, they felt very concerned about the damaged nature. Lastly, the expectations of several respondents made them feel angry when they read the news headline, *"Suicide kills one person every 40 seconds, says WHO"*. They considered that this incident should not have occurred. In summary, reading the news headlines about the tragic events that were contrary to their expectations, strengthened serious concerns and emotions of the readers.

Readers' Further Reactions after Reading Tragic News Headlines

Apart from the inquiries regarding why some certain emotions were provoked by loaded expressions in the news headlines, the survey questionnaire and interview incorporated the questions which aimed to elicit more details about the readers' reactions toward the news headlines caused by factors beyond language features. Questions on the readers' interests in following the news after reading the tragic news headlines were asked. The respondents had various reactions. Some of them expected to read more in detail, while others expected to follow more news reports on the same issue. In addition, some respondents were curious and wondered why those issues occurred. To exemplify, one interviewee explained that the phrase 'flash floods sweep away', in the news headline, *"Six dead as flash floods sweep away tour group in Kenya's Hell's Gate"*, persuaded her to read more news reports on this event because she loved traveling and wanted to know how it happened. She also wondered if there was any warning before the events. Additionally, after reading a news headline about terrorism in the Middle East, one female Iranian respondent urged the world fellows to solve the problem. Another respondent, a 30-year-old German female called for a stricter gun law to prevent any kinds of shooting after reading the news headline on Texas mass shooting.

To sum up, it can be observed that after news headlines have provoked news readers' emotions, there are always some reactions/consequences that follow. From the reflections, the further reactions include the interest in news following, some action callings, and the asking for problem solving. Therefore, the use of loaded words, which is one of the news writing strategies, does have impacts on provoking readers' emotions. Moreover, this study found that it is not a loaded word alone that influences this connection, but textual contexts of news headlines and readers' contexts (i.e. experiences and cultural/social backgrounds) also do play a great role.

Conclusions and Discussions

This present study aims to investigate what word classes of loaded words are found in tragic news headlines and how those loaded words can provoke emotions and reactions in news readers. To address the first research question, this study revealed that all four classes of words (i.e. noun, verb, adjective, adverb) suggested by Quirk et al. (1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007) were found as loaded words used in the 180 tragic news headlines analyzed. Some of these news headlines were purposively selected to develop the questionnaire and semi-structured interview - the two main instruments for this survey – in order to explore the connection between these loaded words and readers' provoked emotions and reactions.

Among the four classes of loaded words, nouns and verbs were the two most prominent word classes used in news headlines at 48.18% and 33.64% respectively. It seems to suggest that these two word classes contain most of a news headline's core content and have great impacts on news readers. Similarly, this corresponds to the findings of various studies (e.g. Alzahrani, 2018; Brouse, 2019; Khodabandeh, 2007; Moon, 2016; and Roohani & Esmaeili; 2010). In addition to loaded words, quite a large number of loaded expressions are also employed at phrase level (e.g. 96.22% of phrases were loaded noun phrases and 3.36% were loaded verb phrases). Clark (2007) and Mardh (1980) suggest that loaded noun phrase is used

especially to provide more necessary information in a limited space as. Furthermore, when loaded words were employed in various styles in news headlines, it seems to be another strategy to attract news readers' attention more effectively in news headline writing. These findings correspond to the attention-seeking strategies implemented in constructing meanings in news headlines (Clark, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; and Reah, 1998). However, the impacts on emotions may not result from only the denotative meanings of loaded words, but they can also result from their connotative meanings (Bashford, 2015 and Hornby, 2000).

Additionally, to address the second research question, based on the frameworks of loaded words (Clark, 2007; Quirk et al., 1985, as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007; Rafferty, 2008; and Reah, 1998), meaning construction (Anderson et al., 1996; Bashford, 2015; Fillmore, 2003; and Hornby, 2000), the language of tragic news headlines (Hawdon et al., 2014; Settles & Lindsay, 2011; and Weinberg, 2015), and emotions (Kühne & Schemer, 2011 and Wirth & Schramm, 2005), this study has explored how loaded words and phrases provoke readers' emotions and reactions. The analysis was mainly based on the reflections of the readers from the questionnaire and semi-structured written interview.

When considering the classes of words employed in the 20 selected from the 180 news headlines, the readers reflected that nouns and verbs, the two prominent word classes, could trigger their emotions strongly. However, other word classes also have impacts on readers' emotions. It should also be noted that, often, one loaded word or phrase can trigger more than one tragic emotion (e.g. sadness, fear, shock). These emotions were aroused integrally. Importantly, most emotions, such as fear/anxiety, empathy, sadness, and anger that occur after reading tragic news headlines, were provoked because of various factors. In this study, with the impacts of loaded expressions, four important factors, both linguistic and non-linguistic, can be summarized: 1) the strong emotive meanings of loaded words, 2) the textual context of a news headline, 3) news readers' experiences, and 4) news readers' cultural and social backgrounds.

The readers reflected that they could clearly perceive the consequences of those tragic events reported in the news headlines such as the severity, unexpectedness, and negative effects because the choices of loaded words in a news headline contain strong emotive meanings. Moreover, apart from the words' denotative meanings, their connotative counterparts seemed to be used to make the news headline more attractive and dramatic. This reflected the concept suggested by Hawdon et al. (2014) that tragic news headlines normally hype and bias news readers' emotions. Moreover, strong emotive meanings of loaded words in headlines sometimes oversimplifies the facts of the events. In summary, this factor plays a great role in provoking emotions.

Not only do the strong emotive meanings of loaded words have impacts, but also the overall textual contexts and sociocultural context matters. In this study, the readers reflected their emotions resulted from loaded expressions with both dependent(connotative) and independent(denotative) meanings (Bashford, 2015, Hornby, 2000, and Stevenson, 1944). This was because they also connected these words with the textual contexts, their experiences, and life backgrounds (world knowledge, culture, beliefs, and expectations). Therefore, news writers need to realize the importance of the illustration of the context of a particular tragic event to make the perception of the resulting tragic images more vivid. Similarly, Weinberg (2015) also suggests the supporting roles of textual contexts in news headline writing. In addition, the idea that the reader's experience or schema plays an important role in shaping the context for understanding meanings of texts is suggested by Anderson et al. (1996) and Fillmore (2003). Hu (1999) also suggests that a news headline may have different impacts on different social groups of readers. Whether words or expressions of news headlines are emotive depends on how they connect with the readers' social and cultural backgrounds.

After readers' emotions are provoked, they usually have some further reactions toward the news (Clark, 2007). These reactions included the readers' interest in following the news and having further reactions toward their society such as raising questions of concern or asking for a solution to the problems in the news. The fact that news readers had various reactions supports the principles that media, including news, need to promote readers' attempts to keep up with the information provided in the news. These interests in the updates and unfolding of news events fulfill a primary aim of media to engage readers in what is occurring in their society (Settles & Lindsay, 2011).

The Implication of the Study

The findings from this study have various interesting implications for professionals, novice news writers and learners of news writing or even general news readers. First of all, the findings obtained provide a better understanding about the effective use of loaded words in news headline writing, especially in tragic news, and their impacts on news readers' emotions and further reactions. In summary, this study can provide some guidelines regarding the use of loaded expressions in news headline production as follows:

1. This study confirms the theoretical concepts that the use of loaded words (especially loaded noun, loaded noun phrase, and loaded verb) is one effective way to provoke news readers' emotions. The more they are used, the more the news headline can yield a greater impact to provoke readers' emotions.

2. In addition, the textual context (e.g. other elements including numbers, words, and phrases) and socio-cultural context (e.g. readers' experiences and backgrounds on world knowledge, culture, beliefs, and expectations) of a news headline do play an essential role in the employment of loaded words in provoking news readers' emotions. Thus, news writers should take the role of context into consideration when writing news headlines.

3. Since the news readers reflected that their emotions resulted from making connection between the language devices in the news headlines and their contexts, news writers should consider this when choosing choices of loaded expressions, whether to use words with dependent (connotative) or independent (denotative) meanings, to create impacts in a news headline.

4. Last but not least, when news readers have emotions and interest in the news headlines, they will eventually have further interests in following the news and have further reactions to the news events and their related societal perception.

5. All in all, linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors always interplay in meaning construction in news headlines. Ultimately, the connection between the use of loaded expressions and their contexts is one important strategy contributing to the overall success of news headline production in provoking readers' emotions.

Recommendations for Further Study

Since it was reported in this study that strong emotive meanings of loaded words, overall textual contexts of news headlines, and readers' contexts interplayed a great deal in the perception of news headlines, with more time permitted, future studies can explore more in-depth on how these three factors interplay in this phenomenon. Moreover, other elements of news headlines (e.g. metaphor, pun, word play) or non-linguistic factors (e.g. organization policy, power behind media) can be taken into consideration.

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