

Linguistic Devices Reflecting Violence in Border Provinces of Southern Thailand on Front Pages of Local and Major Newspapers¹

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to analyze linguistic devices reflecting the violence in the south border provinces; namely Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkhla on 1,344 front pages of three local newspapers; namely Chaotai, Focus Phaktai and Samila Times and of two major newspapers, the Thairath and Matichon, between 2004 and 2005, and 2011 and 2012. The result shows that there are two important linguistic devices: 1) lexical choices, such as the use of verbs describing violence, the use of quantitative words and the use of words naming someone who has committed violent acts, and 2) metaphors, namely “**A VIOLENT PROBLEM IS HEAT**”, “**A VICTIM IS A FALLING LEAF**”, and “**A TERRORIST IS A FOX**”. Comparing linguistic devices between the two types of newspapers, shows that major newspapers choose to use more violent words than local newspapers do. They also create more negative images of the south of Thailand.

Keywords: Linguistic Devices, Local Newspapers, Major Newspapers, Violence

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Introduction

Study of violent acts in the southern border of Thailand via the use of the linguistic device will reflect the thought or ideology behind the linguistic product. Fairclough (1989:85) stated that something hidden in the text in terms of power and inequality may not be obviously seen, but it requires interpretation of the text to understand the hidden truth. This concept, with the use of linguistic device, can be used to interpret the southern violent acts.

Before analysis and interpretation of the text, the researcher needed to understand history or origin of the whole event. Violent acts in the south of Thailand have gained attention since 2004 because their number has soared rapidly. According to statistics, between 1993 and 2003, there were 748 violent acts in three border provinces of the south of Thailand as opposed to 3,546 violent acts between 2004 and 2005. The number shows that the percentage of violent acts increased dramatically by 374 % within 11 years. (Phiromsri, 2006) From the statistics, the number of violent acts has been considered a point of discussion. As a result, authorities in various fields have conducted different research projects in this issue.

Tejapira (2007) a violent act-studying academic, has explained there are four theories on the violent acts, i.e., meddler, a gang of succession, violent acts of government, and peasant rebel theories. The first theory holds the belief that violent acts have been committed by the other side, which is not the government or people in the area; therefore the group who believes this theory includes the government, the police, and some academics who claim that Malaysia or the CIA support these violent acts secretly etc. The second one is the gang of secession theory. It is believed that there are gangs of secession, such as the BRN, Plulo, Bersatu etc. The Thai army and retired soldiers in the south of Thailand believe this theory. The third one is violent acts of the government. It is believed that the government exercises their power to Muslim people, leading to structural violence. Mr.Jaturon Chaysang, a deputy P.M. at that time believed in this theory with which the Thai army disagrees, so finally the Thai government has rejected it. The last theory is peasant rebel, which

is attributed to Aiewsiwong Nithi's article, but there is not any evidence, therefore the theory has been rejected too.

Attempts to explain about the problems with the academics have been both responded and ignored by the government, if the theories proposed impact on the national security. This could show that no matter how many theories the violence have been categorized by the academics, the truth remains that the problems still exist and have not yet been resolved. The devastating disasters of violent acts have risen to a national problem. The reports of violent acts via various media sources have continued since 2004 especially in newspapers which are inexpensive and can be easily accessed by a great number of people.

A newspaper is a form of media reflecting the social situation at the time. The report of news is selected by the editorial department, hence some aspects of the truth are selected to be presented or abandoned. Phipitkun (2002) stated that not only do newspapers function as a mirror to reflect the societies truthfully but also produce a truthful news account.

Fairclough (1989) stated that the mass media has hidden ideologies because the producers have their own personal opinions which might influence the thoughts and behavior of the public. For example, crime news' pictures, showing death, continue to be published, so readers might be affected by them. This might lead the crime news content receivers to be familiar with violence in the news. Moreover, some of the public may solve their problem in the same way as reported in the news.

Newspapers in Thailand, according to their source, are divided into major and local newspapers. The former are produced for people in the whole country so the number of copies and circulation are high, but the latter is particularly produced for local people. Chawalathawat (1999) wrote that the differences between the two types are that major newspapers focus on current affairs, entertainment, advertising, and services in the center of the country, whereas local newspapers concentrate on public affairs and the same topics as major ones but on a local scale, with the exception of current affairs.

It is assumed that the same news on two types of newspapers may

be different in some aspects of the news account and that the differences can shape the thoughts of readers. As a result, the linguistic devices which reflect the violent acts news in the border provinces are analyzed in this study. In addition, it is assumed that local newspapers report news concerned with violence more than major newspapers do or focus on more complicated issues than major newspapers do.

Objective of the Study

To analyze the linguistic devices reflecting the violence in the border provinces of the south of Thailand, namely Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkhla, from the front pages of local and major newspapers.

Framework of the Study

According to Ross in 2007, the violence in the five border provinces of the south of Thailand, including attack or killing has been covered extensively by the media. The violence may occur because of racial, cultural, historical and political discriminations that alienate people in the area. Even language is an issue: the modern national' state wants to impose an official language. It chooses to use the language of the majority, therefore "the language" is chosen to be a cultural symbol of claiming an autonomous region. Centralizing local administration contributes to some problems or structural violence resulting in physical violence. Prolonged physical violence has been presented by the media, for example, daily newspapers not only reflect violent acts happening in the area, but also select to present the news as their attitude towards the violent acts.

Hongladarom's (2006) study on the discourse of violence in the south of Thailand and violence in society from Matichon newspapers in 2004 is in accord with my study. The study found that language use reflects the thoughts of violent problems conveyed via newspaper contenting secession, and the images of Malaysian Thais. Moreover, because the mass media's headquarters are in Bangkok, they present violence by calling terrorists with names of "southern terrorists" and "a gang of secession". The reports spread the images that Malaysian Thais are fierce and horrible,

and that the south of Thailand is an area in which one should not live or visit. This is in line with this research that aims to study linguistic devices used by major and local newspapers to show that the linguistic devices could reflect ideas or ideology of the media. Apart from terms referred to the terrorists, other devices are used such as use of verbs denoting horror such as ‘scattered body’ and ‘dispersed intestine’ and metaphor showing the writer’s idea of the terrorist as a fox with the use of ‘bite’ and comparison of the stated area to be as hot as hell signifying that it is not a good place to live. All these can also reflect violence in the area. Moreover, there are not only the linguistic devices reflecting the discourse of violence that the researcher studied, but also the various studies on the discourse adapted to analyze this study. However, the above research is very useful for analysis of language that is similar to this research. Consequently, I use this framework for conducting research into the discourse.

Methodology

Data were collected from the front pages of three local newspapers, namely the Chaotai, Focus Phaktai, and Simila Times and from two major newspapers: the ThaiRath, and Matichon. Furthermore, the data for examination was only cases of violence in the south of Thailand on the front page of both types of newspapers between 2004 to 2005 and 2011 to 2012. The number of newspapers examined consisted of 576 copies of local newspapers and 768 copies of major newspapers. The total number was 1,344 copies.

The qualitative method was used to analyze linguistic devices of journalists who wrote the front page stories on the violent news from the four border provinces in the south of Thailand. The linguistic devices presented in the study are lexical choices and metaphor. As regards to lexical choices, the journalists selected lexicons meticulously to describe the violence that occurs in the south of Thailand, such as เชือดคอ บีม บีม ป่วน เข็ม ถล่ม จ่อยิงหัว (“cut one’s throat swiftly”, “blast”, “bomb”, “sabotage”, “cruel”, “bombard”, and “point a gun at one’s head”). In terms of the use of metaphors, this shows the attitude of the writers towards violent affairs

according to society, culture and current affairs at that time.

Linguistic Devices

Important linguistic devices reflecting the violence in the border provinces in the south of Thailand on the front pages of local and major newspapers are lexical choices and metaphors.

1. Lexical Choice

Baker & Hengeveld (2012) stated that lexicons in any language contain their meanings and functions. As a result, writers can select lexicons as they like to make a statement. This shows that writers have their own power to choose their lexicons.

(1) The use of verbs

The use of verbs can be divided into three types

(1.1) Stative verbs

A stative verb is a verb describing the characteristics of nouns or noun-phrases. The reporter uses these verbs to describe the states or violent acts depicted in the news such as DupSaYong (die+horribly), KhatSaYong (torn into halves+horribly), ToomSaNun (blown up with a bang). The following are examples of this entry: however, some of these examples do not have literal translations in English.

Extract 1) โจรได้ชุกบีม จยย. 2 ตร.และ ร่างแหลกสยอง (07/01/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *Two police officers' bodies gruesomely torn in pieces in Southern insurgents' motorbike bomb blast. (07/01/2004, Thairath)*

Extract 2) โจรได้ยิงกระบอกมือฆ่าไม่เลือก ประทบยิง 3 นัดเจาะกะโหลก นักศึกษาหนุ่ม มอ.ปัตตานีลูกชาย ผกก.โรงพักเมืองตรัง (10/10/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *Southern insurgents fired three shots at close range piercing a skull of the young student of Prince*

Songklanakarin, Pattani Campus, - who is the son of Trang police station's Pol. Colonel. (10/10/2004, Thairath)

Extract 3) อาก้าไล่ถล่มไล่ไหลทะลัก (23/07/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: Southern insurgents chase to shoot horribly with an AK 47 assault rifle, intestines sprang quickly. (23/07/2004, Thairath)

Extract 4) สปาก้าอาละวาดไม่เสร็จฟันหัวเลือดกระชูด 2 ราย (21/02/47 ชาวใต้)

Translation: Southern insurgents still ran wild, cutting two heads swiftly with a Spata knife, blood gushing out. (21/02/2004, Chaotai)

The above examples of stative verbs which suggest violence, such as แหกสของ (gruesomely torn in pieces), เจาะกะโหลก (pierce a skull), ไหลทะลัก (spring quickly) and กระชูด (gush out) and describe the horrible and frightful sights of corpses. Descriptive narration of damage or loss of life creates a feeling to readers much more than normal words. 'Bleeding intestine' (ไล่ไหล) and 'gushing intestine' (ไล่ไหลทะลัก) or 'bleeding' (เลือดออก) and 'splashing blood' (เลือดกระชูด) will create different feelings.

(1.2) Action verbs

An action verb is a verb showing people's actions, which can indicate violent acts such as Alawat (be rampant), SapKho (chop one's throat), Funkho (hack one's throat), Puan (sabotage), Uk At (sabotage openly). The following are examples of this entry:

Extract 5) โจรไล่ไล่ฟันพระ-เณรรายวันมรณภาพ2เจ้าบ1 “จิว” รับสถานการณ์ “วิกฤต” (25/01/2547 มติชน)

Translation: Southern insurgents, intending to hack monks and Buddhist novices daily; two monks died, a Buddhist novice was injured “Jew” said it was the crisis. (25/1/2004, Matichon)

Extract 6) โจรได้ฆ่าตัดคออีกอึดคีตครูปัตตานี “มท.1” รับห่วงแก้แค้นสะปะสะปะ (16/06/48 มติชน)

Translation: Southern insurgents cut an ex- Pattani teacher's throat again. “The Minister of Interior ’said he had been concerned about random revenge. (16/06/2005, Matichon)

Extract 7) บึ้ม ตร.เผาอด 2 ร.ร.เตือนถังแก๊สหายถี่พิลึก (06/01/48 ชาวใต้)

Translation: Bombing policemen and burning down two schools, warning that LPG drums have been lost frequently (06/11/2005, Chaotai)

The examples of action verbs of the terrorists, which suggest types of violent acts such as ไล่ฟัน (chase to hack), ฆ่าตัดคอ (cut throat) and เผาอด (burn down). These violent acts of the terrorists show cruelty and horror to the lives and properties of people who live in the border provinces of the south of Thailand.

(1.3) A verb describing behavior

A verb describing behavior is a verb used by journalists to show terrorists' behaviors in order to provoke readers' emotions and feelings as though they were in situations such as Yeuy (commit acts of terrorism defiantly), Khamhang (viciously proud), Heumkreum (commit acts of terrorism wantonly), Kamreup (challenge seriously). The following are examples of this entry:

Extract 8) “โจรใต้” ก้านเหง กำระเบิดโดคซาร์จทหาร (22/08/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: Southern insurgents were viciously proud, carrying a bomb and jumping at soldiers. (22/8/2004, Thairath)

Extract 9) โจรใต้ยังผยอง กราดเอ็ม 16 กับ 11 มม. ไล่ยิงถล่มฆ่า (16/08/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: Southern insurgents still committed violent acts

willfully, raking with an M.16 assault rifle and chasing a policeman with an 11-caliber pistol. (16/08/2004, Thairath)

Extract 10) โจร ลองของ ถล่ม ตชด.เอ็ม 79 ด้านยิงสวนแผ่นดิน (16/04/47 ชาวใต้)

Translation: *Southern insurgents challenged, bombarding frontier policemen with M 79 grenades, but misfiring, they returned gunfire and ran away. (16/04/2004, Chaotai)*

The examples of verbs describing behaviors such as กำแหง (viciously proud), ผยอง (being willful) and ลองของ (challenging), are the reporters' point of view reflecting terrorists' adverse behavior as being supercilious. All these negative verbs show the terrorists' defiance against the government's authority showing two sides opposing each other completely. One side is in power and the other, the so-called opposite side or terrorists dare to challenge state power. Although this selection of words indicates that the government has power, it can also empower the terrorists that possibly causing them to be more confident and continue to commit crimes.

(2) The use of quantitative words

The use of quantitative words is selecting words that show a number or quantity, such as the number of victims, of terrorists, and of methods used to solve problems. The following are examples of this entry:

Extract 11) ครูนราฯ นับพันย้ายหลบภัยโจร (11/01/47ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *Thousands of Narathiwat's teachers out in order to take refuge because of the insurgents. (11/01/2004, Thairath)*

Extract 12) ทหารพรานแขนขาดสยอง บาดเจ็บอีก8-ฝีมือโจรใต้ โจรใต้ปฏิบัติการป่วนเมืองอีกระลอก ลอบวางระเบิด “จยย.บอมบ์” ถล่มหน้าธนาคารกลางเมืองสุโขทัย โท-ลก ตูมสนั่นตาย 2 ศพ บาดเจ็บ ประนาว 8 คน (26/12/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *The field army's arms have been horribly broken, and over eight people were injured by southern insurgents. Southern insurgents sabotaged again, planting a bomb. Consequently motorcycles exploded. Bomb in front of a bank situated in the center of Su-Ngai-Ko-Lok city. Loud bomb explosion led to 2 deaths and 8 seriously injured. (25/12/2004, Thairath)*

Extract 13) “ผบช.ภ.9” แถลงรอบปี 2547 เกิดเหตุใน จว.ชายแดนใต้ 919 ครั้ง (08/01/48 มติชน)

Translation: *Commander in chief at the Police Section 9 stated there had been 919 violent acts in the border provinces of the south of Thailand in 2004. (08/01/2005, Thairath)*

Extract 14) แฉแผนร้ายโจรใต้ส่งกลุ่มโจกว่าร้อยมุ่งวางระเบิดในเมือง (04/08/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *Unfold a conspiracy theory: southern insurgents ordered over 100 hoodlums to plant bombs in the town. (04/08/2004, Thairath)*

Extract 15) เบาะแสบีมได้จ่ายทันที 1แสน (20/02/2548 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *If given a clue to terrorists who bombed in the south of Thailand, pay 100,000 Baht at once. (20/02/2005, Thairath)*

Extract 16) สิบบน 1ล.ชี้เบาะแส “โจรใต้” จับ “โต๊ะอิหม่าม” รบ.สั่งปิดปากให้ข่าวลับสน (09/01/2547 มติชน)

Translation: *Bribing one million Baht if giving a clue, southern insurgents caught imam (Islam's spiritual leader). The government ordered “media silence” because it did not want to confuse the public. (09/01/2004, Matichon)*

Extract 17) รว.กลาโหมเร่งตั้งหน่วยทหารพิเศษถาวรดูแลปัญหาชายแดนใต้ ตามคำรณนายกฯ เล็งตั้งเป็นกองพลใหม่ แบ่งเป็นกรมละ 1 จังหวัด จังหวัดละ 3 กองพัน... (06/01/48 มติชน)

Translation: *The Ministry of Defense hastily set up a permanent special detachment in order to control the border problem of the border provinces of the south of Thailand. According to the P.M., there was the intention to deploy a new troop divided into a department in each province, consisting of three battalions. (06/01/2005: Matichon)*

The extract of the use of quantitative words in entry 11 shows the number of victims; therefore the figures cause concern. Extracts 12-13 show the number of victims. This indicates that the media focus on reporting the amount of the loss which stimulates the emotions and feelings of readers, especially extract 14. The number of terrorists presented by the media seems to be frightening because it can stir up fear of the people in the area. Moreover, it contributes to readers being increasingly interested in the news while extracts 15-17 show the amount of money and the great number of soldiers used to solve the problems.

(3) Naming Someone Committing Violent Acts

Naming, or labeling, someone committing violent acts means selecting words to call people who commit violent acts in the border of the south of Thailand. This naming shows the underlying attitudes of journalists towards people who commit violent acts such as Jontai (Southern insurgents), DenManutJaiBap (human scums who are sinister), JonChuaYoungMaiSinRit (vicious insurgents being still powerful), HuaJokTai (Southern ringleaders), KlumJon (a gang of insurgents), JonNarok (vicious insurgents) etc. The following are examples of this entry:

Extract 18) *โจรใต้เหี้ยม! วางบึ้มซ้อน (16/02/2548 ไทยรัฐ)*

Translation: *Merciless insurgents planted double bombs. (16/02/2005, Thairath)*

Extract 19) วิงหัวโจกอาร์เคเคมี้อฆ่าตัดหัวทหาร (21 /11/ 54 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *The ringleader of RKK who slaughtered by cutting soldier's heads was extra-judicially killed. (21/11/2011, Thairath)*

Extract 20) โจรสมองฝ่อบึ้ม-เผาซ้ำซาก 39 จุดปราบเซียน (21/03/47 ชาวใต้)

Translation: *Brainless- insurgents bombed and repeatedly burned: 39 sites were burnt with difficulty (21/03/2004, Chaotai)*

The examples of labeling someone committing violent acts such as โจรใต้ (southern insurgents), หัวโจก (ringleaders), โจรนรก (vicious insurgents) and modifiers used to class terrorists such as โจรใต้เหี้ยม (cruel southern insurgents), โจรสมองฝ่อ (brainless insurgents), and เคนมนุษย์ใจบาป (human scums who are sinister) etc. collectively mean terrorists. These words have defined the attitudes of writers towards terrorists, which show condemnation, disparage and insult. Naming or labeling terrorists obviously reflects the writers' negative attitude. In fact the media should report as the facts of the matter, but actually it garnishes the reports with phrases that evoke emotions and feelings. How does this affect the readers? When the reader receives news tainted with negative attitude, it is certain that the readers will detest terrorists. Moreover, they would share their emotions in news and acts of violence. In addition, newspapers keep reproducing the event report with insulting or reproaching terms. The evidence is frequency of terms used shown in at the end of the chapter showing that the readers become familiar with violence, considering it a common matter. This can lead to not creating trust, conflict and dissension of people in the area because the news has been reported or reproduced with negative attitudes.

Another interesting point is that the major and local newspaper use different terms for the terrorists; the major newspapers call them 'southern terrorists' while the local counterparts call them merely 'terrorist'. The researcher assumes that normally, people will not call themselves by area, for example, the local newspapers belong to the south and southern people, they will not call the terrorist 'southern terrorist' since it deviates from

normal practice. We will not call anyone who lives in the same area with a name that identifies the area. This is also true for the world ‘terrorist’. The southern reporter will not call the terrorist ‘southern terrorist’ since they live in the same area. However, with the influence of the major newspaper, the local media also use ‘southern terrorist’ but at less frequency than the major counterparts. Use of a word to identify the origin or area like this is another interesting point. When the national media use the word ‘southern’, the whole southern region or people possibly get negatively impacted, although the violence takes place only in the four border provinces.

2. Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson in 1980 stated that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. (Goatly, 1997: 5, cited in Wagner and Wodak, 2006: 403) states that “Metaphor... is not a mere reflection of a pre-existing objective reality, but a construction of reality, though a categorization entailing the selection of some features as critics and others as non-critical... metaphors can consciously be used to construct... reality.”

These two approaches reflect metaphors that are daily used by ordinary people; therefore it is common that metaphors have been used in the headlines. However, the writers will not be aware that metaphors come from some hidden attitudes. Moreover, the studies on metaphor have found that “the so-called conceptual metaphor” or the inner thoughts of people who use metaphors are (in the context of the study) ideologies that reflect acts of violence in the southern border provinces. The following are examples of the entries.

(1) “A violent problem is heat”

Extract 21) ได้ยังเดือดปุดเผาว่าดอีกสลาหวิดวอด (04/02/47ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: The situation in the south of Thailand is boiling;

*burning temples again so preaching halls were burnt down.
(04/02/2004, Thairath)*

(Boiling means the problem in the south of Thailand remains horrible).

Extract 22) ชุดเฉพาะกิจทหาร-ตำรวจ เดินหน้าไขว้ผลงานเทียบดับไฟใต้ลากคนคนจับรถขนปืน(11/01/47ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *an Ad hoc unit of soldiers and policemen showed their masterpiece of extinguishing Southern Fire, catching a driver who drove a pickup loaded with guns. (11/01/2004, Thairath)*

(Extinguishing southern Fire means settle the problems of the south of Thailand)

Extract 23) บรรยากาศ 3 จังหวัดชายแดนภาคใต้ยังร้อนระอุต่อเนื่องไม่เว้นวันล่าสุดกลุ่มคนร้ายออก...(09/02/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *The atmosphere of three border provinces of the south of Thailand continued to be extremely hot; a gang of terrorists recently started to... (09/02/2007, Thairath)*

Extract 24) ไต้ยั้งเคือครระอุ 4 คนร้ายสวมชุดดะวะห์บุกยิง อป.พร.สายตำรวจดับคั้นหน้าบ้านแต่เช้าตรู่ ส่วนนายดาบ ตชด.เหยื่อระเบิด (26/04/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *The south still boiled; four terrorists shot in front of the house; a policeman's informant died earlier in the morning while Pol. Warrant officer of the field army was a victim of exploding. (26/04/2004, Thairath)*

Extract 25) หัวัน “ไฟใต้คุโชน” ระลอกใหม่เหตุทหารพรานจับตายหนุ่มชาวบ้าน ลูกนายก อบต.เกาะมาวี เมืองปัตตานี (10/9/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *“Terrified” “The southern fire was smoldering” field army caught a male villager, a son of the leading figures of the local administrative organization of MaoMaWee, Pattani province. (10/09/2004, Thairath)*

Extract 26) ไฟได้ลามลำพะยาสับคอพ่อต่อหน้า 2 ลูกน้อย กราดเอ็ม 16 ฆ่า
ดาบ ตร.(16/04/47 ชาวใต้)

Translation: *The Southern Fire spread Lamphaya far and wide,
chopping the father's neck in front of his two little children and
killed Pol. Warrant officer; gun firing with M 16. (16/04/2004,
Chaotai)*

Extract 27) แพ้ภัยไฟใต้นักวิชาการหายหัว (1-7/05/47 สมิหลาใหม่)

Translation: *Harm is present because of the southern fire,
academics disappear from sight. (1-7/05/2004: Samilatimes)*

The words found most in the examples of the metaphor “ปัญหาความรุนแรงคือความร้อน” (A violent problem is heat) and the term “ไฟใต้” (The southern fire) especially in major newspapers contributes to the readers’ understanding that the acts of violence of the south of Thailand are “ไฟใต้” (The southern fire). In addition, the terms “เดือด ระอุ คุโชน” (boil, smolder, blaze) convey the meaning of heat or compare the violent acts to “heat” Compared with heat or fire, the readers perceive the emotions and feelings of violent acts in the south of Thailand as terrifying.

(2) “A victim is a falling leaf”

Extract 28) ที่นราธิวาสกับปัตตานีในแผนร้ายใบไม้ร่วง (08/02/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *A Conspiracy theory: Falling leaves in Narathiwat
and Pattini Provinces. (08/02/2004 Thairath)*
(Falling leaves represent “being dead.”)

Extract 29) โจรใต้ยิง คต.ร่วง (23/07/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *Southern terrorists shot a policeman to fall.*
(27/07/2004, Thairath)
(Fall represents “shoot someone to death”).

The examples of the metaphor “ประชาชนหรือชีวิตผู้ถูกกระทำคือใบไม้ร่วง” (a victim is a falling leaf) show that terrorists consider killing people or innocents as a simple act or they can kill as many people as they want as if people’s lives are falling leaves. When the readers know the violent plans, they are terrified. Moreover, this reflects that their lives are in danger if they live in the risky areas.

(3) “A terrorist is a fox”

Extract 30) โจรลอบกัดสังท้ายบีม-สนามเด็กเล่น ภายในโรงพักยี่งอ

(10/05/47 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *Backbiting* terrorists blast the playground around the police station in Yi-ngo.

(10/05/2004, Thairath)

(Backbiting in this point means ambushed secretly and represents the action of foxs.)

Extract 31) เบนเป้ากัดคะไล้ถล่มครู “ซี7” (24/09/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *A target has been distracted, biting without choosing and chasing to bombard a teacher who is seventh in rank.*

(24/09/2004, Thairath)

(Biting without choosing means to kill thoroughly and represents fox’s behaviors)

Extract 32) โจรได้ไล่กัดไม่เลือก ประทศยิงอดีต อส.ขณะที่รถจักรยานยนต์ กลับจากส่งเมียไปกรีดยางพารา (01/02/2548 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: *The southern insurgents chase and bite without choosing any targets, shooting ex-volunteer at close range while he came from sending his wife to cut hevea plants. (01/02/2005, Thairath)*

Extract 33) โจรได้ลอบกัด ยิงสายข่าวตำรวจ-รักษาการ ผอ.บ.ในพื้นที่ยะลา เสียชีวิต 2 ศพ เปรารถแบ็คโฮบริษัทในกรือเซะพ่นพิษจวกยับไอ้โจรลอบบีม

โรงพัก (06/08/2547 ไทยรัฐ)

Translation: Southern insurgents backbit, shooting a policeman's informant and acting village headman in Yala to death. Burning the backhoe truck of the company in Krue-Se was in trouble, being scolded because of ingratiating insurgents who bombed a police station (06/08/2004, Thairath)

The examples of metaphor “ผู้ก่อการร้ายคือสุนัข” (a terrorist is a fox) contain words which compare the behaviors of terrorists with those of foxes such as terms “ลอบกัด กัดคะ ไล่กัด” (backbite, bite without choosing, and chase to bite) etc. The metaphor that a terrorist is a fox reflects that in Thai society the behaviors of fox are repulsive. Moreover, The Thais use “fox” as words to scold vicious people.

Language devices from two kinds of newspaper

The important linguistic devices in the study are lexical choices and metaphors that are selected by the journalists to write the headlines, sub-headlines and short news on the front page. Three words were randomly selected in each type of lexicon in order to count the number of stative verbs, action verbs, verbs describing behaviors, of quantitative words, and words naming someone who committed violent acts. The examples are DupSayong (die horribly), Toom (blown up with a bang), Laek (torn into many pieces), SupKho (chop one's throat), Puan (Sabotage), Phaowhot (burn down by fire), Yeuy (commit acts of terrorism defiantly), Heumkreum (commit acts of terrorism want only). In respect of metaphors, it is used to show violent problems that occur in the south of Thailand. Metaphors found are “**a violent problem is heat**”, “**a victim is a falling leaf**” “**a terrorist is a fox**”. The numbers of linguistic devices that occur in the front pages of newspapers present in percentages. The statistic results are shown in the table:

Table 1: Linguistic devices on the front page of the two types of newspapers

Linguistic Devices	Local Newspapers	Major newspapers
1. Lexical Choice		
1.1 The Use Of Verb		
1) Stative Verb	11.53	88.46
2) Action Verb	14.62	85.37
3) Verb Describing Behaviors	25.92	74.07
1.2 The Use Of Quantitative Words	31.03	68.96
1.3 The Use Of Naming Terrorists	21.61	78.38
2. Metaphor		
2.1 A Violent Problem Is Heat	19.70	80.29
2.2 A Victim Is A Falling Leaf	33.34	66.67
2.3 A Terrorist Is A Fox	0	100

In respect of a statistical approach, although the numbers of two kinds of newspapers chosen for the research project are not equal, the percentages can reflect the attitudes of writers or the media towards acts of violence. Data, as shown in the table reflects that local newspapers intensely focus on victims, not terrorists, while major newspapers place emphasis on terrorists and the state of the victims. However, this shows that local newspapers might not have more influence on the readers than major newspapers because the readership of local newspaper readers is less than that of major newspapers, but lexical choices or language use of the media might unfavorably affect the duty of the media.

Conclusion

The results of the study show that there are two linguistic devices used which are lexical choices and metaphor. When comparing data as shown in the table, the findings are that local newspapers use less lexicons than major newspapers do because they are not daily newspapers. However, one interesting finding is that major newspapers choose more violent words than local newspapers do. For example, the former used 23

words as opposed to three words in the latter. With regard to metaphors: “A TERRORIST IS A FOX” is only found in major newspapers. This might create violent images of what happens in the south of Thailand in order to provoke readers to share their feelings and emotions.

Not only do lexical choices reflect the attitudes of the journalists, but also they might provoke readers’ perceptions without stopping to pose any questions. For example, major newspapers selected “southern insurgents” 385 times while the metaphor was only used 13 times in local newspapers. Conversely, the latter used “insurgents” 117 times as opposed to two times in the former. The findings show that local newspapers use a modifier “southern” less than major newspapers do. This is because “southern” means the whole region of the south of Thailand that covers 14 provinces, but violent acts happen in only four border provinces of the south of Thailand. Collectively using the label “southern insurgents” might create horrifying and negative images of the whole region. This can lead to outsiders forming the impression that the south of Thailand is not suitable for living or that southern people are cruel.

Discussion

For news reports by every newspaper in this research, although each of them has uniqueness in news reporting, as media, whether in national or regional level, they should strictly follow media ethical by reporting what happens naturally and avoiding creating conflicts. However, in fact, the study shows that lexical choices selected by the newspapers shows cruelty of the terrorists such as ‘hack’, ‘behead’ and negative behaviors and characteristics such as ‘viciously proud’, ‘commit violent acts willfully’, ‘cruel’, ‘brainless’ or metaphor of the terrorists as foxes. This is because words like ‘backbite’, ‘bite without choosing’ and ‘chase to bite’ have been used to show not only cruelty of the terrorists but also bias and hate of the reporters.

Reporting events with the terms ‘thousands of teachers will move out’ or ‘loads of injured’ can stimulate the readers’ imagination of exaggerating volume while a comparison of the event with hellish heat

connotes that the area is unpleasant. Choices of words used are not only for news reporting, they connote bias, personal feeling, fear and hate. If the government desires to solve the problem in the area with peaceful resolution, this is not a way to do so since the majority of the readers will share the feelings created by the media.

As a whole when newspapers, paint a negative image of southern Thailand by use of lexical choices and metaphors which reflect strongly negative attitudes towards terrorists, this might not serve to decrease the acts of violence. On the other hand, the use of vehement lexical choices might increase violence and the level of fear or conversely announce the success of acts of terrorism.

Regarding reporting news in a peaceful way, the reporters or the media are supposed to avoid presenting the picture of conflict in the way that the two opposing sides want to defeat each other — there must be a winner and a loser. Nevertheless, the media should classify the two sides into many groups which have different aims in order to avoid the segregation of “They” and “Us” and in order to avoid bias. Actually, the media are supposed to understand it is natural that human beings are intrinsically good and bad. Whoever is interested in reporting news in a peaceful way can browse at the website: [transcand.org/ pjmanual.htm](http://transcand.org/pjmanual.htm) (Chanchitfa, 2006)

The demand for reporting the news in a peaceful way is in accordance with the studies now on violence in the educational circle. A research project which is similar to my study is *The Discourse of Violence in the South of Thailand and Thai society* written by Hongladarom in 2006. The Hongladarom’s research highlights that whoever controls the media should realize the power of language and that it affects the readers’ thoughts. However, although major newspapers have an influence on the local newspapers’ ways of reporting, the standing point of local newspapers does not denounce the southern area as major newspapers ones do.

In addition, the data sources were different from those used by the Hongladaroms (1996). In this research, major newspapers, both mass- and quality-oriented, were sampled, yielding a diversity of violence-related

linguistic classifications. Statistics were also used to capture the differences between linguistic devices used to construct violence in the two types of newspapers.

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