

THE RELATION OF LAOS AND OTHER COUNTRIES FROM NEWSPAPER'S HEADLINES

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1. Abstract

The newspaper headlines show what happens in society particularly the news in first page. Lao's newspapers do not be permitted to present the news without being controlled by the government. The news should consist whatever is the government's policies including foreign news. This article illustrates how Lao PDR. has the relation to other countries by sociolinguistics concept that is linguistic structure related to social structure. The country name in foreign news headlines of Vientiane Mai Newspapers published in 2013 will be analyzed as the data of this research.

The research finding was found that there are 39 names of countries appeared in 230 headlines. The headlines were divided into 3 categories following its frequency; high frequency, moderate frequency and low frequency. For types of appearing, they are divided into 3 types; one name, Laos and another name, and over than 3 names respectively.

The names in high frequency are the Asian countries particularly in South East Asian. For the type of appearing was found that 'one name' is mostly appearing in headlines. Since 1975, Laos has changed the regime to be Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos) or communist state similarly to China and Vietnam. They have close relationship to Laos; therefore, both countries appear in headlines more than other countries.

Keywords: headline, newspaper, Laos, sociolinguistics

2. Introduction

Language and society closely influence to each other. Seemingly, the relation between language and society or culture was claimed by Sapir and Whorf hypothesis or Whorfian hypothesis. It is extensively referred in terms of language and culture as Sapir (1929b: 207, cited in Wardhaugh, 1986: 212) showed clearly summarized that

Human being do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society.

Language is not only medium of communication for society but it also plays crucial role to politic. The headlines in any country imply what is interested in people and government. Sociolinguistic concept discloses relation between newspaper headlines and its society. Spolsky (2006:3) states that

Sociolinguistics is the field that studies the relation between language and society, between the user of language and the social structures in which the users of language live. It is a field of study that assumes that human society is made up of many related pattern and behaviors, some of which are linguistics.

The concepts of influence between language and culture, and sociolinguistic above are the framework in this article to reveal how Lao PDR. has an interest in other countries by which countries were named in headlines as the newspaper is medium of politics to publish their foreign policy.

The number of time of appearing the country's name has significant to imply that Laos set out the relation to each country. Seemingly, the names appear frequently relate to Lao's history. Evans (1999:21-23) briefs the culture and society of Laos before and after change regime in 1975 by relate to France, Thai, Cambodia, and Vietnam in different point. When French asserted over Laos in 1983, they created the rudiments of a modern state such as the colonial education system, however, it was small area. At this time, Laos was been trained in the ways of thought of the modern world and modern national history. In the same time, Lao linked with Khmer (Cambodia) and Vietnam as French colony, and they are linked by Buddhism influenced in Indochinese. After 1975, it seems that Laos has closer relation between China and Vietnam as the similarly regime. After the 'Open door policy' launched in 1990s, the aid from foreign countries and international organization contribute Laos.

Mansfield (1997:26-33) states that

The aid vacuum left by the withdrawal of the Soviets is being rapidly filled by such donors as the IMF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and a number of NGOs. Japanese, Swedish and Australian governments are the biggest development aid donors in Laos. Over a quarter of Laos's GDP-double the nation export earnings-now come from foreign aid, much of which finances the import of essential foreign goods...while Thais is the largest investor in Laos.

In addition, the Asian Economic Community (AEC) in 2002 to merge 10 Southeast Asian countries becomes one community in 2015. This strategy transmit Laos has much more relation with AEC countries particularly Mekong sub-region countries.

The important change of regime in Laos took place in 1975 become Lao's People Democratic Republic (Laos) under the Lao's People Revolutionary Party. Laos's mass media were controlled by government including newspapers. The news should be shown what is the successfulness of government policies or presented what agree with government as well as foreign news. Most news appeared in newspaper headlines show the government's activities; foreign policy, politics, economic and social development. In terms of language and power, it is known that newspaper is a media has an in crucial role to broadcast what happen in

their society. The foreign news discloses only co0rporation between the government and other countries or international organizations. The headlines of foreign news, therefore, involve the reader's emotion and attitude toward those countries. The countries frequently were named in headline implied sign the relationship between those countries and Lao government under various points.

There are not much daily newspapers published on time in Laos particularly on website. Vientiane Mai Newspaper (VMN) is daily newspaper by Lao language as a popular one in Laos. Newspaper not only presents daily news but it also plays an important role to readers because the language power being hided. Taiwo (2007:218) presents that the newspaper headlines of Nigerian have hidden ideological meanings, emotion-inducing strategy of editor used in order to initiate and sustain discourse and shape the views of the readers on nation issues. The surface structure of headlines presents the content of news while the deep structure implies the attitude of editor or newspaper owner. In the same point, headlines of foreign news of Laos newspapers in which are covered by their government will disclose the relation between Laos and other countries.

3. Research Design

This research consists in linguistics perspective focusing on sociolinguistics that is linguistics and social structures influence to each other. This concept adapted to explain how the foreign news in newspaper headlines demonstrates the relation between Laos and other countries by appearing the country's name. The headlines as the data were grouped from the daily newspaper, Vientiane Mai Newspaper (VMN), of Lao's People Democratic Republic (Laos) published in 2013, as popular newspaper. Headlines were divided into 2 types that is first type appear only one name of country and second type appear more than one name. The second type divided into 3 groups; 2 countries (Laos and another country), 3 countries, and 4 countries respectively. The name will be counted by appearing frequency to understand which country is distinguished by Laos and what is the news content revealing the relationship between Lao and other countries.

4. Research result

The finding consist 2 issues that is the first issue showing the list of country's name in headlines. The first issue is how the name frequency appeared. This part was divided into 3 types; often appearing, moderate appearing and rare appearing. The second issue is the country's names being grouped by appearing type. There are 3 types; only one name, Laos and another one, and over 3 names appeared. The last part of this result will be linked to how Lao has the relation and coordination with other countries by drag on both issues.

4.1 Country's name

There are 39 names of countries in 230 foreign news's headlines being divided into 3 groups; high frequency, moderate frequency and low frequency. They are in the table 1 bellows.

Table 1 Frequency of country's name in headlines

No.	Name	Frequency	No.	Name	Frequency
1	Vietnam	35	18	Newzeland	2
2	China	27	19	Philippines	2
3	Thailand	26	20	Timorese's	2
4	Japan	19	21	Czech's Republic	2
5	South Korea	11	22	Covet	2
6	France	11	23	Slovakia	2
7	Cambodia	11	24	German	2
8	Singapore	9	25	Island	1
9	Russia	9	26	Denmark	1
10	Belarus	9	27	Brazil	1
11	USA.	6	28	Venezuela	1
12	Australia	5	29	Luxemburg	1
13	Myanmar	4	30	Maldives	1
14	Brunei	4	31	Switzerland	1
15	England	4	32	Argentina	1
16	India	4	33	Austria	1
17	Canada	3	34	Ecuador	1
	35	Serbia	1		

Table 1 Frequency of country's name in headlines (conts.)

No.	Name	Frequency	No.	Name	Frequency
	36	Columbia	1		
	37	Hungary	1		
	38	Mongolia	1		
	39	Mexico			
	Total	230			

The names of countries above were arranged in 3 groups following its frequency appearing in the headlines.

The first group, high frequency, is the numbers 1-4; Vietnam, China, Thailand, and Japan. They have *high frequency* that is in 107 headlines appeared being **46.5%** of all headlines or almost half of all. That means, this countries have close relation to Laos, in terms of Vietnam and China have similarly regime. They, moreover, share long border area to Laos as well as Thailand. Conventional transportation and similar language

and culture, bring about Thailand and Laos communicate easier and people of them travel to each other. In case of Japan is important one of which is main contribution to Laos.

The second group, moderate frequency, is numbers 5 -17 being 13 countries. This country *moderate frequency*: South Korea, France and Cambodia being the same appearing. The first second countries assist Laos in various social activities while Cambodia is set as neighbor country having shared activities and bordered area. Singapore, Russia, and Belarus occur the same frequency but less than three countries before. The United state of America (USA.), Australia, Myanmar, Brunei, England, India and Canada appear not much frequency respectively. This country group is in 85 headlines being 36.9% of all headlines.

The last group, low frequency, is the numbers 18-39 having 22 countries. They *are rare frequency* in 28 headlines being 12.4 % of all. They are named 1-2 times in headlines. Mostly countries are in Europe, South America, Southeast Asia and Scandinavian countries. It seems that Philippines and Timor-Leste as Southeast Asian countries as same as Laos are classified far from other countries.

4.2 Appearing in headlines

All 39 country names in 4.1 were divided into 3 types of appearing in headlines. The first type (A), there is only one country's name. The second type (B) is Laos and another country appeared. The last type (C) has Over 3 country's names in the headlines. There are 37 headlines in the first group next 23 headlines in second group and only 6 headlines in last category. The table 2 was shown the name of countries in 3 types.

Table 2: Type of appearing

Type	Name
Only one name: (A = 16)	Singapore, Brunei Maldives/ England, Australia, Slovakia German, Island, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Austria/ Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina/ Denmark /Canada
Laos – an another name: (B = 19)	Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Malaysia, Indonesia/China, Japan, South Korea, India/ France, Russia, Belarus, Czech's Republic/ USA /Covet
Over 3 names: (C = 4)	Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia / France, Laos, Cambodia/ Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar

The first type (A), is the only one name of country appearing in the headline. There are 16 names being Asian countries: Singapore, Brunei and Maldives. Europe countries are England, Australia, Slovakia, German, Island Luxemburg, Switzerland and Austria. South America is Brazil, Venezuela and Argentina, next Denmark and Canada. Most contents of this type present the relation between Laos and these countries in terms of welcome the ambassador of these countries as follows example 1 bellows.

Example 1:

ທ່ານຮອງນາຍົກຕ້ອນຮັບທູດສະວິດຄົນໃໝ່. (16/01/13)
 /tha:n¹ ho:ŋ⁴ na:⁴-yok¹ to:n⁴ hap¹ thu:t³ sa-wit¹ khon⁴ mai¹ /
 ‘the Vice President welcomed the new **Switzerland’s** ambassador’

The second type (B), is the appearing of Laos and another name. There are 19 names mostly in Southeast Asian; Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Timor-Leste, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Asia; China, Japan, South Korea, India. In addition, the Europe countries are France, Russia, Belarus and Czech’s Republic, and United States of America and Covet. The content in headline of this type mostly shows the cooperation between Laos and another country such as in the example 2.

Example 2:

ຂະແໜງແຮງງານ ລາວ-ຈີນ ເສີມຂະຫຍາຍການຮ່ວມມື. (06/09/13)
 /kha¹-ne:ŋ⁵ he:ŋ⁴ ŋa:n⁴ la:w¹chi:n² so:m⁴ kha² ŋa:j⁵ ka:n² huam¹ muu:¹ /
 ‘Department of Labor, Lao-China promote and expand cooperation’

The third type (C), is the appearing name of Laos and other countries. There are 6 headlines of 5 names; France, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia and Thai. This name implies the relation of Lao, Vietnam and Cambodia as French colonial while the relation between Laos and Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia being in Mekong-sub region so they share Mekong River, therefore, they have activities link to each other. The example 3 shows that Laos, Cambodia and Thai cooperate the activity together.

Example 3:

ລາວ-ກຳປູເຈຍ-ໄທ ຮ່ວມມືພັດທະນາທ່ອງທ່ຽວສາມຫວ່າງມຸ່ມລະກົດ. (18/02/13)
 /Laos¹-Kambujia - tai⁴ huam¹-muu:¹ pat¹-tha¹-na⁴ thon¹ sa:m⁵ liam¹ mo:-la-kot⁵ /
 ‘Laos-Cambodia-Thailand cooperate to develop the Samliammorakot’

5. Conclusion

It cannot be known how many countries have formal visited Lao’s government a year and whether there are other countries or only 39 names in this research. The headlines, however, consist what happen between Laos and other countries in 2013.

As Taiwo (2007) presented that language in headlines has also power in deep structure to disclose the attitude of editor or newspaper’s own. Laos newspaper publish the news to be in line of their government, therefore, the activities between the government and countries also cover by foreign policy of Laos government.

The names of Vietnam and China have more frequency than other countries because they also have more relation than others. Thai and Japan are the next below. Thai is the most investor in Laos while Japan is the main aid in Laos such as JICA, Japan foundation. The headline structure appearing in type A, B and C imply the cooperation of Laos and others. Seemingly, the countries in type A have cooperation activities less than the countries in types B and C. Since, the linguistic structure of both types begins the name of Lao and adds another name in order to present what is the cooperation of them. The newspaper headlines of Laos, therefore, sketch how the relation between Laos and other countries in foreign news.

Biography

Assistant Professor Rattana Chanthao, PhD in Linguistics, is a lecturer of Thai and Laotian languages at faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khon Kaen University [KKU], Thailand for 15 years. The interesting areas are Tai Language Family in Thailand and Laos; dialectology, sociolinguistics, semantics.

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