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Does Newspapers' Political Alignment Influence the
Emotional Language in British Newspapers?
- An Analysis of Headlines about the Nuclear Accident in
Fukushima on 11 March 2011

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Abstract

The main aim of this essay is to examine the extent to which journalists choose certain emotional words in order to influence public opinion in a certain political direction. A number of headlines about the nuclear accident in Fukushima on 11th March 2011 in three British broadsheets with different political alignment form the basis of my analysis. To identify emotional language, I have used a method developed by Professor Friedrich Ungerer: the “emotional inferencing system”. There are emotional triggers in all the broadsheets. In most cases, the triggers in the different broadsheets are quite similar. There seem to be no clear connections between emotions, or the strength of emotions, and the political alignment of the newspapers. A larger corpus or a corpus on a different issue would possibly imply a different result.

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- An Analysis of Headlines about the Nuclear Accident in Fukushima on 11 March 2011

1. Introduction

Although newspaper articles are not normally included in the emotional genres, many of them do have an emotional impact on the readership (Ungerer 1997, p. 307). The emotion triggered in the reader might depend on the lexical choice of a newspaper journalist, which in its turn might be affected by the journalist's ideological standpoint (Wray and Bloomer 2006, p. 79). Thus, journalists may, depending on their ideological standpoint, consciously select specific words or grammatical features to try to invoke certain emotions in the readership and thereby also influence public opinion in a certain direction concerning different matters.

Considering this information, it would be of relevance to examine whether there are any differences regarding the choice of emotional language between newspapers with different political alignments. Results from such research might indicate to what extent journalists use certain words in order to influence public opinion. Below, I will try to establish whether there are any differences concerning emotional language between newspapers with different political alignments in relation to a specific topic with political significance, namely the nuclear accident in Fukushima on March 11 2011. I will examine some of the linguistic means in headlines from three British newspapers with different political alignments.

2. Literature Review

There are several approaches to discourse analysis. I will briefly describe three of the approaches that are relevant for examining if there is a connection between the emotional language in newspapers and the political alignment of the newspapers. I will also give an account of the main theoretical text that I will use.

2.1 Semantics

Semantics focuses on the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. It is not concerned with the context or the author's intended meaning. Within the area of semantics, it is above all the associative meaning of words that will be of relevance for my examination. In contrast to the conceptual meaning of words, which covers the basic meaning of a word, the associative meaning covers the various associations or connotations that different people might have to a word (Yule 2006, p. 100).

2.2 Pragmatics

There is not a clear line which marks the boundary between semantics and pragmatics. Both deal with meaning but, unlike semantics, pragmatics also considers the context, that is, the physical and social world (Peccei 2009, p. 1). The main concern of pragmatics is what the author of a text means rather than the meaning of words or sentences. Pragmatics studies the hidden meaning or what is communicated although it is not written down (Yule 2006, p. 112). Pragmatics will be of relevance for my examination since it deals with hidden messages in texts.

2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA is an approach that also concerns the context and not only the text. It approaches the relation between language and power. Structure, views of social actors, linguistic choices and discursive strategies are examples of textual elements that are analysed in relation to each other, to the meaning of the whole text and to the context. The context could be, for example, the political climate in different parts of society (Doyle 2011, p. 112, Wodak 2001, p. 2). CDA will be of relevance for my analysis since the main aim of my examination is to establish whether there is a relationship between certain words and political views.

2.4 The Emotional Inferencing System

There are several linguistic tools that can be used to identify linguistic emotional triggers and to analyse the emotional impact of these triggers. I have decided to use the emotional inferencing system developed by Friedrich Ungerer, since it especially

concerns news stories. The emotional inferencing system is developed especially to evaluate the reader's perspective. The method involves a number of inferencing principles that are based on certain maxims or news values. The emotional inferences are triggered by a number of linguistic means (Ungerer 1997, p. 307).

2.4.1. Newsworthiness Relevance

News values, also called "newsworthiness", include criteria for deciding why an event is regarded as news. Journalists and scholars have put together different lists, including various criteria for newsworthiness. Galtung & Ruge have presented one widely used list including ten criteria (Ungerer 1997, p. 311):

1. volume, size or large numbers
2. proximity
3. reference to persons
4. reference to elite nations or people
5. reference to the negative
6. predictability/unexpectedness
7. unambiguity
8. recency
9. continuity of the topic
10. composition of the newspaper

Only the first five of these ten criteria are emotionally relevant. Considering the news value of volume, size or large numbers, news will have a greater emotional impact the more violent an event is or the more people that have died. Regarding proximity, an event that has happened nearby is expected to have a greater emotional impact than events far away or in a different culture. News stories including a named person are considered to invoke more interest than stories lacking a named person. The same counts for news stories including elite people or persons. Lastly, it seems that the readership prefers negative news to positive news (Ungerer 1997, p. 310-312).

2.4.2. The Principles of Inferencing

The five news values with emotional impact on the readers form the base for the principles of inferencing.

The principles of inferencing are divided into two parts. The first part includes selection or relevance principles and the second part the emotional evaluation principles. The selection or relevance principles include the principles of proximity, animacy and rank or number. They are concerned with the emotional relevance of a word. In order to examine the emotional impact of a text, one must first decide on the emotional relevance of a word.

After the emotional relevance has been established, emotional evaluation can take place. This is the concern of the second part of the principles, the processing principles, which include the principles of emotional evaluation, intensity of presentation and emotional content.

Sometimes, triggers will be used just to arouse an emotion and not necessarily a specific emotion. The intention is just to invoke a thrill (Ungerer 1997, p. 324).

The Principle of Proximity

The principle of proximity focuses on what is close to the reader geographically or culturally.

Common linguistic triggers used in newspapers are, for example, various kinds of deictic items such as personal pronouns and determiners, locative adverbs, tense forms expressing immediate present time, the use of first names and their diminutive forms and endearing forms of address. An example of the principle is "My mother is dying", which includes both the personal determiner "my", the kinship term "mother" and the present tense progressive "is dying" (Ungerer 1997, p. 313-315).

The Principle of Animacy

The principle of animacy, or the “homocentric principle”, concerns what is life-endangering or life-generating for human beings and sometimes for animals.

Linguistic triggers or cues of emotional inferencing are often so-called “disaster” vocabulary, for example, murder, rape, assault, earth quake, casualties, kill and injure. Thus, the principle of animacy includes primarily words referring to the negative, but also words referring to the positive stages of life, for example, birth, weddings and anniversaries (Ungerer 1997, p. 315).

The Principle of Rank and Number

The principle of rank and number is about many and important people. It is linked to the news values volume and reference to elite persons.

Linguistic triggers or cues of emotional inferencing are numerals and other quantity expressions and titles, including both sporting titles and status provided by a certain social rank and power. This implies that the more people there are, the stronger emotional impact. The same applies to rank: the higher rank, the stronger emotional impact (Ungerer 1997, p. 315-316).

The Principle of Emotional Evaluation

The principle of emotional evaluation provides a possibility to make evaluations based on the norms of our culture.

The principle of emotional evaluation can be divided into two stages. During the first stage, one should ask whether the impact of a word is negative or positive. The emotions could, thereafter, be further specified and grouped into different categories.

Below, follows a number of emotional triggers that will help decide whether an emotion is positive or negative.

- adjectives and adverbs that express a positive or negative evaluation, such as “good” or “bad”
- adjective or adverb pairs that suggest that an evaluation is necessary, for example, adjectives expressing dimensions and physical properties like “old” or “new”, and adverbs like “regrettably” or “fortunately”
- interjections, such as “wow!” or “aha!”. They can be called “intrinsically emotional” words. They are rarely found in newspaper articles.
- loaded words, that is, verbs and nouns with positive or negative connotations, like “cop” or “bandit”. Loaded words also include words that might not have a positive or negative connotation, but the ability to trigger an assessment of taking sides like “guerilla” or “policeman”. Normally, a newspaper article on a controversial topic will contain more loaded vocabulary than an article on a non-controversial topic, see Crystal (2010, p. 170) on loaded language.

The second stage, a specification of certain emotions, is difficult to do, since there are usually very few such linguistic triggers in western press. One of the triggers used is naming a certain emotion as an attribute to a group including most of the readership, for example: “many football fans will like the news”. Another one is the use of vivid details, metonymies and metaphors from emotionally established domains, for example: “Doesn’t that make your blood curdle?”, which might trigger an emotion of fear (Ungerer 1997, p. 316-317).

The Principle of Intensity of Presentation

The principle of intensity is a secondary or supportive principle. Behind this principle is the idea that drastic presentation causes greater emotional impact on the readership.

The linguistic triggers or cues of emotional inferencing include, above all, drastic details such as details of an execution or of torture, and metaphorical links with areas whose exceptional emotional potential is generally accepted, for example, the Bible, battle, war

and chaos. An example is: “She died in this inferno”, which might refer to a person who died in a fire (Ungerer 1997, p. 317-318).

The Principle of Emotional Content

The strategy of the principle of emotional content is to mention emotional aspects of events explicitly. Such descriptions will not affect the readers much in some cases, while the readers will be positively or negatively affected in other cases. The brutality of a killer might trigger an emotion of disgust, for example (Ungerer 1997, p. 318-319).

2.4.3 Emotions in Newspapers

The communicative framework of news stories includes the author or the editor and the readership. The author or the editor has two tasks in an article concerning emotions. The first one is to provide triggers for the emotional impact of a news story, and the second one is to describe the emotional aspects of a news story. The emotional aspects may be related to the participants or to the actions. The emotion can be described in the text or invoked by a described emotion or invoked even if no emotional words are included in the text. The described emotion does not have to be the same emotion as the emotion invoked in the reader (Ungerer 1997, p. 309).

Scholars have not been able to find a common definition for the concept of emotions. Frequent definitions have included emotions being regarded as basically subjective experiences related to the individual's goal. Ungerer (1997, p. 319) is of the opinion that emotions should be seen as culture-dependent and not as universal, which often has been a common view. Scholars have composed different lists of basic emotions. Such lists can be used as reference points for the description of emotional effects. Oatley and Johnson-Laird have composed one of the most commonly used lists in an Anglo-Saxon context. This list includes happiness, disgust, anger, sadness and anxiety or fear (Stenvall 2008, p. 1570-1572).

Other emotional terms primarily describe different degrees of intensity of the emotions included in the categories of basic emotions. Shame, embarrassment, pity, pride and admiration are included in a group of secondary emotions that seems to have a

particularly important role regarding the emotional impact of news stories. These emotions are specifically linked to cultural norms (Ungerer 1997, p. 319-320).

3. Method

The corpus that forms basis for my analysis would, preferably, include as many linguistic triggers as possible in order to enable an as thorough analysis as possible. A too limited corpus might imply an unreliable result. The scope of the essay necessarily limits the quantity of texts that it would be feasible to select and analyse. I have therefore tried to select texts with as many emotional triggers as possible.

In order to identify words that function as emotional triggers in the selected texts, I will use Ungerer's emotional inferencing system. Hereafter, I will analyse what emotions the triggers might have invoked in the readership and try to establish whether there is a connection between these emotions and the political alignment of the newspapers where the emotions were found.

3.1 Selecting Topic

Highly emotional news stories have the richest range of emotional triggers (Ungerer 1997, p. 320). Thus, the selection of a topic with high emotional impact is of importance to enable a survey of a wide range of emotional triggers and to have a good basis for a correct evaluation of the emotions.

One rather recent highly emotional event is the release of radioactive material in Fukushima on 11 March 2011. Radioactive material was released at Fukushima 1 nuclear power plant in Japan following the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. This release of radioactive material and the release of radioactive material on 26 April 1986 at Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine are the only events classified as level 7 events on the International Nuclear Event Scale (IAEA 2011).

The release of radioactive material in Fukushima is a highly emotive topic, because of the tragic effect that the release will have on people and nature. The emotional impact of events is stronger if they have taken place in the readers' home country (Pounds 2010, s. 113). Even if the release of radioactive material in Fukushima did happen far

away from Great Britain, this piece of news is highly relevant for the British public in general, since nuclear power forms part of the British energy production. Because of its highly emotional impact, I have decided to select the Fukushima nuclear accident as topic for my analysis.

3.2 Selecting Newspapers

There is a widespread opinion that broadsheets include less emotional language and are written with a larger degree of objectivity than tabloids (Ungerer 1997, p. 324). In spite of this, I decided to examine the emotional language in broadsheets. I presumed that even the broadsheets would include a significant number of linguistic triggers considering the highly emotional topic that I had chosen.

Once I had decided to examine broadsheets, I had to find broadsheets that were somehow affiliated with political parties with differing views on the question of nuclear power. I chose *The Sunday Times* to represent a broadsheet expressing political opinions in accordance with parties in favour of nuclear power. *The Sunday Times* has a centre-right political orientation. Then, I chose *The Herald* to represent the opposite view. *The Herald* is politically aligned with the Scottish National Party (SNP), which is against nuclear power. To get a third reference, I also chose *The Independent*. It is not supposed to be aligned with any particular party, but often shares the views of the Labour Party (Doyle 2011, p. 112).

3.3 Selecting Texts

The corpus had to consist of as many texts as possible to enable an observation of some kind of reliable pattern. Therefore, instead of just choosing one or two articles from each newspaper, I decided to pick out a number of headlines. For the scope of this essay, I decided that twenty headlines from each newspaper would be sufficient. Previous research has concluded that headlines of British newspapers usually exactly repeat the information of the lead, which in its turn often summarizes the most important facts of the story. The headline also often includes a value-laden synopsis of what has happened in the story (Thomson, White & Kitley 2008, p. 3-4, 7). Taking this into consideration, the headlines will presumably well represent the emotions conveyed in the article.

First, I entered the search words “Fukushima” and “nuclear” into the search engine of respective paper in order to omit any articles on Fukushima that did not deal with the radioactive release in Fukushima. Using these search words, I found more than 500 articles in *The Sunday Times* but only 14 articles in *The Herald* and none in *The Independent*. Then, I decided to omit the search word “nuclear”. Hereafter, *The Independent* presented over 500 articles and *The Herald* more than 100 articles of relevance to the topic that I had chosen to examine. I chose the first 20 headlines that appeared on and after 11 March 2011 to avoid any differences that a too great lapse of time might have caused. Among these headlines, I did not find any articles that did not deal with the release of radioactive material at the Fukushima power plant on 11 March 2011 and nor did I find any other reasons to omit any of the first 20 headlines in respective paper.

4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Emotional Triggers

The emotional triggers that I have found in the headlines are listed below. The headlines are listed in an appendix.

	The Sunday Times	The Herald	The Independent
Proximity		I father baby British rescue bid UK	we (2) British UK team Britons
Animacy	earthquake (4) quake (3) tsunami/s (4) devastation (2) devastates devastating dead (2) lost catastrophe nuclear power plant explosion radiation leak reactors overheating	earthquake quake tsunami power of nature disaster (2) destruction ruins threat quake deaths buried meltdown (2) survivors (2) tsunami survivors	earthquake (5) quake tsunami (2) earth moved nature’s destruction disaster state of emergency killed deadly die not to breathe the air explosion (2) nuclear leaks radioactive leak meltdown (2) evacuate

			help rescue efforts rescued fight back
Rank and number	hundred/s (2) thousands	two three Soames ¹	nine 1 000 thousands 2,4 metres experts official
Emotional Evaluation	huge massive giant remotest awful reactor core nuclear plants' quake protection nuclear wave Chernobyl swallops up shakes chaos	massive magnitude nuclear power plant nuclear power nuclear exclusion zone nuclear engineers reactor nuclear power stations radiation alert swept into oblivion	huge nuclear plants reactor safety Chernobyl day of horror vanish
Intensity of presentation		carnage doomsday death knell	
Emotional content	feared fears (2) panic	panic worries fear/s (3)	fears (2) paralysed scary

Using Ungerer's emotional inferencing system I have identified the words listed above as emotional triggers. Not all possible triggers in the corpus have necessarily been singled out. Some words cannot clearly be identified as emotional triggers, and in some cases it is not clear what principle they are most closely related to.

Ungerer (1997, p. 322) has listed some triggers included in the articles that he has analysed under more than one principle. He has, for example, listed "Nazi" and the German word "teuflich" (devilish) under both the principle of emotional evaluation and the principle of presentation. I have tried to list each word under just one principle

¹ Rupert Soames is the chief executive of FTSE-100 powerhouse Aggreko and the grandson of Winston Churchill.

because that will facilitate a comparison of the total number of linguistic triggers between the broadsheets. In most cases, the emotion invoked will be possible to define regardless of principle. Thus, for the result, it is more important to be able to identify whether a word is an emotional trigger regardless of inferencing principle than to be able to use a certain principle to define the trigger.

Even if the list of emotional triggers is not complete in relation to the present corpus from everyone's point of view, possible triggers missing or misplaced will plausibly be too few to significantly affect a result or imply that reasonable demands on objectivity is not fulfilled.

Words that are closely linked because of their meaning have been put next to each other in the list to facilitate an overview of the emotional triggers. The number in brackets behind the words show how many times they appear in the corpus. There is no number if they have appeared only once.

Below, I will explain more in detail what considerations I have made when identifying emotional triggers in accordance with Ungerer's inferencing principles. I will also discuss how the principles have been applied in the broadsheets.

The Principle of Proximity

It has been fairly easy to identify the words that could be referred to the principle of proximity. I did not find any words within this group to be ambiguous in the sense that they belong to another principle or that they would not be regarded as an emotional trigger at all.

Since Japan is far away from Great Britain, the principle of proximity might be applied by bringing Japan closer to Great Britain by, for example, reports on possible nuclear accidents in Great Britain. It might also be applied by bringing Great Britain closer to Japan by, for example, writing about fates of individuals (Ungerer 1997, p. 321).

The Sunday Times has not used the principle of proximity at all. *The Independent* (headline 14) has used the strategy of bringing Japan closer to Great Britain by using the

personal pronoun “we”: “The only lesson we can draw from Nature’s destruction”. *The Herald* (headline 12) has used the personal pronoun “I”, but it is not clear from only the headline that there is a connection with the Fukushima accident and Great Britain: “Why I will speak up for nuclear power”.

The Herald and *The Independent* have each included one headline that describes the fate of an individual. *The Herald* has used kinship terms in its story about an individual fate. In addition, Great Britain is brought closer to Japan by mentioning British help in Japan. The reader will understand that it is a concern for British people to help the Japanese. Headlines dealing with British help actions are found twice in *The Herald* and twice in *The Independent*.

The Principle of Animacy

In most cases, it is not very difficult to identify the words included by the principle of animacy, for example, such words referring to the negative as “earthquake”, “tsunami”, “dead” and “disaster”. I have also identified a few words referring to the positive as belonging to the principle of animacy, for example, “survivors” and “rescued”. I also put such words as “radiation leak”, “reactors overheating”, “radiation alert”, “meltdown” and “Chernobyl” under the principle of animacy. They might also be considered to be loaded words and to belong to the principle of emotional evaluation. In my view, to place them under the principle of animacy is more suitable because of the words’ very strong connection with nuclear accidents. Words referring to nuclear power but not to nuclear accidents are listed under the emotional evaluation principle. The words “doomsday”, “death knell” and “carnage” refer to disasters, but they are more closely linked to the definition of the principle of intensity of presentation because of their metaphorical link to the Bible and armed conflict, in my view. The word “panic” also refers to disasters, but since the word explicitly describes an emotion, I have placed it under the principle of emotional content.

Words included in the principle of animacy are the most common linguistic triggers in all the broadsheets. Most of the words under this principle refer to the negative and often to the death of people. All the broadsheets include headlines mentioning explicitly or implicitly how an earthquake or a tsunami devastates, destroys or ruins nature and

buildings and kill people. All of them also mention serious nuclear problems. *The Sunday Times* mentions nuclear problems explicitly in three headlines: “radiation leak”, “power plant explosion” and “reactors overheating” and implicitly in a few more. *The Herald* mentions nuclear problems only implicitly and *The Independent* explicitly three times: “nuclear leaks”, “explosion at nuclear plant” and “meltdown”. *The Herald* has fewer triggers referring to the nuclear accident than the other broadsheets. The nuclear power accident in itself is not explicitly connected with death in any of the broadsheets.

There are some differences between the papers regarding references to the positive in connection with the animacy principle. *The Sunday Times* includes no words referring to the positive, while *The Herald* mentions “survivors” three times, and *The Independent* includes a few words referring to people having escaped dangers by being rescued or, in one case, by their own actions.

The Principle of Rank and Number

It is clear that numbers and reference to elite persons belong to the principle of rank and number. It could be argued that such words as “huge”, “massive” and “giant” are quantity expressions because they are adjectives referring to size. However, since they are words that demand evaluation, they belong to the principle of emotional evaluation. Some expressions, for example, “deaths rise”, “shares climb”, “stock markets plunge” and “temperatures plummet” refer implicitly to numbers. Since numerals are not mentioned explicitly in connection to these expressions, I have decided to omit them from the emotional trigger list under the rank and number principles and instead list them under the emotional evaluation principles.

All the broadsheets refer to the rank and number principle. *The Sunday Times* and *The Independent* refer to number mainly by mentioning how many people that have died. *The Herald* writes about how many days a baby has been buried in rubble before being rescued. *The Independent* also refers to rank by writing about one unnamed expert’s and one unnamed official’s views. *The Herald* is the only broadsheet that mentions an elite person by name, namely Soames, a grandson of Winston Churchill and chief executive of the temporary power generation company Aggreko.

The Principle of Emotional Evaluation

In addition to the adjectives discussed under the rank and number principle, I have also included, as stated above, words connected to nuclear power but not to nuclear accidents in the principle of emotional evaluation. These words do not have a positive or negative connotation. However, they will trigger an assessment depending on a person's political views on nuclear power.

Here, I have also put some metaphors that are not linked to the Bible or armed conflict. The word "wave" is a metaphor for "tsunami", and "power of nature" is also a metaphor for "tsunami" or for "earthquake". "Swallops up" and "swept into oblivion" are metaphors for "destruction".

The Principle of Intensity of Presentation

As discussed above, I have listed some metaphors linked with the Bible and armed conflict under the principle of intensity of presentation. Triggers included in the principle of intensity of presentation are present only in *The Herald*.

The Principle of Emotional Content

In the principle of emotional content, I have included emotions that have been expressed explicitly in the broadsheets. Of these, the most common word in all the broadsheets is "fear".

4.2 Invoked Emotions

After having identified the linguistic means that trigger emotions and established emotional relevance of the text, the next step is to evaluate and suggest the emotional impact of the triggers.

For the scope of this essay, I will not discuss emotions more in depth since this belongs to the field of psychology. I, therefore, think it is reasonable to limit the emotions discussed here to the primary emotions according to Oatley and Johnson-Laird (Stenvall 2008, p. 1570-1572): happiness, disgust, anger, sadness and fear, and the secondary

emotions that, according to Ungerer (1997, p. 320), are particularly common in news stories: shame, embarrassment, pity, pride and admiration.

Some triggers might not invoke a specific emotion in the readers, but their intention is rather to trigger any emotion (Ungerer p. 324). I will not deal with such triggers here, since the aim of the essay is to examine the relationship between certain emotions and the political affiliation of certain broadsheets.

The most common triggers under the emotion evaluation principle are words referring to nuclear power. These triggers will probably invoke less negative emotions in a person in favour of nuclear power than in a person against nuclear power. However, put in their context, that is, an article about a nuclear accident and its effects, the majority of the triggers in all the broadsheets suggest that the reader will make a negative evaluation. Still, there are some headlines that speak up for nuclear power and, therefore, will more likely imply a positive evaluation, at least for those who are already in favour of nuclear power. *The Herald* includes the following headlines (6, 20 and 12): “Experiences of Japan may yet endorse nuclear power”, “There are two reasons why it is wrong for people to write off the future of nuclear power stations” and “Why I will speak up for nuclear power”. The same statements might be provocative to those against nuclear power and, therefore, have a negative effect.

Furthermore, all the broadsheets include adjectives, for example, “huge”, to intensify disaster words and consequently also the negative implication of these words.

The next step, after having regarded the evaluation principles, is to suggest what kind of emotions are invoked in the reader by considering the relevance principles.

The headline about a rescued man in *The Independent* and the story about a rescued baby in *The Herald* both related to the principles of proximity and animacy and will possibly invoke a feeling of happiness. However, the same stories will probably also invoke an emotion of pity for the people who have experienced a disaster before being rescued.

Moreover, the trigger “survivors” might imply an emotion of happiness. However, put in its context, it is not so clear that the emotion implied would be happiness: “hunt for survivors...” (*The Herald*, headline 5), “Tsunami survivors face new threat...” (*The Herald*, headline 13) and “...hopes of finding survivors fade” (*The Herald*, headline 14). The last examples rather invoke an emotion of pity than of happiness.

The emotion of pity is further supported by the principle of proximity in *The Herald* and in *The Independent*. All the headlines dealing with British rescue actions in Japan and explicitly or implicitly suggesting that people are in need invoke an emotion of pity. In all the broadsheets, the emotion of pity is supported by the triggers of the animacy principle. All of them refer to earthquake, tsunami, dead people, destruction or devastation. All of these triggers will invoke an emotion of pity in the readership. The emotion of pity is further supported by the rank and number principle in *The Sunday Times* and in *The Independent*. Numbers referring to the deaths of people are found in both of these broadsheets. The emotion of pity is also supported by numbers in *The Herald*, but by mentioning how many days a baby has been buried in rubbles. It is further supported in *The Independent* by mentioning how far away a man on his house has been washed away out to sea.

The same triggers of the animacy principle that has triggered an emotion of pity, that is, deaths and destruction, will probably also invoke an emotion of sadness in the readership.

Fear is the most common trigger included in the emotional content principle in all the broadsheets. I believe that this emotion would have a greater impact on the readership if the nuclear accident was brought closer to the British readers by referring to nuclear power in Great Britain, or by suggesting that a nuclear accident also might happen in Great Britain. None of the broadsheets has this focus. There are explicit links between the nuclear accident and dangers for people only in *The Independent* (headline 1, 5, 11, 19): “Japan to evacuate residents near nuclear power plants”, “State of emergency declared over fears of nuclear leaks”, “We’re told not to breathe the air; it’s scary”, “Residents queue to be tested, but experts say this is not a Chernobyl”.

It is difficult to draw any conclusion about what emotions are intensified by metaphors only by reading the headlines. “Carnage” is used to intensify the word “quake” and might possibly be used to intensify the emotion of pity. “Doomsday scenario” refers to a future risk of a nuclear accident why it might be used to intensify the emotion of fear. “Death knell” is possibly only intended to be used as an emotional arousal.

Put in their context, some of the triggers suggesting an emotion of pity or fear will actually weaken these emotions. The effect of the two headlines “Analysis: while the reactor core is intact this is not a Chernobyl” and “Fears ease over nuclear power plant explosion” in *The Sunday Times* (headline 11,12) is a weakened emotion of fear. Also *The Independent* (headline 9, 19) includes headlines whose effect is to weaken the emotion of fear: “Meltdown ‘unlikely’: experts on explosion at Japan nuclear plant” and “Residents queue to be tested, but experts say this is not Chernobyl”.

Thus, the most common emotions invoked are pity, sadness and fear. The emotion of fear is weakened in different ways described above. An emotion of anger might be invoked in the readers not sharing the positive views of nuclear power that are expressed in some of the texts. The only positive emotion in the text is possibly an emotion of happiness.

I have not found any triggers that can be argued to invoke the positive emotions of pride or admiration. Nor have I found any triggers that clearly relate to the negative emotions of disgust, shame or embarrassment.

4.3 Emotions and Political Affiliation of the Newspapers

The final step of the analysis is to examine whether there is a link between the emotions invoked in the readers and the political affiliation of the broadsheets.

The Herald is the only broadsheet that is aligned with a political party that opposes nuclear power. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the emotion of fear will be more strongly expressed in *The Herald* than in the other broadsheets. Fear of nuclear accidents and dangers that nuclear power might imply for future generations are common arguments against nuclear power.

According to my findings, *The Herald* includes several triggers that invoke an emotion of fear, but this emotion is somewhat weakened by defending nuclear power. On the other hand, it might be a means to provoke the readership or to encourage the readers to start a debate. It can be argued that it is quite provocative to defend nuclear power right after a nuclear accident and a means of invoking an emotion of anger. Surprisingly, *The Independent*, but not *The Herald*, invokes an emotion of fear by explicitly mentioning that the nuclear accident is dangerous for the welfare of human beings. It is also surprising that *The Herald* uses fewer triggers referring to nuclear problems than the other broadsheets. Thus, I have not found that the emotion of fear is more present in *The Herald* than in the other broadsheets.

The emotion of pity might be argued to be less present in *The Sunday Times* than in the other broadsheets because of the lack of the proximity principle. As seen above, the emotion of pity is still present to quite an extent by the triggers of the animacy principle, for example, earthquake, tsunami, devastation and dead.

The differences described above are the main differences that I have found in the broadsheets concerning emotions invoked in the readers. All the broadsheets invoke the emotions of pity, sadness and fear. I have not found any significant differences in the strengths of the emotions. The most notable difference is that the effect of nuclear problems for people is clearer expressed in *The Independent* than in the other broadsheets. That the emotion of pity is less present in *The Sunday Times* than in the other two broadsheets can be seen to be in line with its political affiliation with the Conservative Party. The support for nuclear power found in *The Herald* is opposed to its political affiliation, but can also be seen as a means to encourage a debate.

5. Conclusion

It is clear that emotional language is present in broadsheets. Applying the inferencing principles I have not been able to find any significant differences between the choice of emotional language between broadsheets with different political alignments, at least not in line with their political alignment. My conclusion is therefore that the political alignment of broadsheets does not significantly influence their emotional language.

Consequently, the conclusion is that no political opinions are reflected in the emotional language of the broadsheets, but that there are other aspects involved when journalists choose certain words that might have an emotional impact on the readers. However, since the corpus has been rather limited it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions from the results that I have found. Using a larger corpus, or a corpus dealing with a different issue, the differences that I have found might have disappeared or, contrary, become more significant.

Another factor that might have affected the results is the analysis of emotions. The inferencing principles offer quite a tangible method to identify emotional triggers, especially used together with methods considering the context. To suggest what emotions are invoked in the reader is a much more difficult part of the method involving knowledge of emotions. Considering emotions from a psychological point of view might have enabled a deeper analysis of the emotions involved, but psychology is not within the scope of this essay. Thus, interdisciplinary research using a larger corpus offers a broader set of analysis tools and might have produced different results from my research.

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Appendix: Corpus

The Sunday Times

1. Tsunamis follow huge Japan quake (11 March 2011)
2. Hundreds feared dead as massive earthquake shakes Japan and unleashes tsunamis into Pacific (11 March 2011)
3. How the day unfolded: Hundred confirmed dead after earthquake (11 March 2011)
4. A quake in tweets (11 March 2011)
5. Japan to cancel sports this weekend (11 March 2011)
6. Japan in chaos (11 March 2011)
7. Japan fears radiation leak after devastating earthquake (12 March 2011)
8. Giant wave swallows up cars, houses, everything in its path (12 March 2011)
9. One of Japan's remotest areas destined to be remembered as place of catastrophe (12 March 2011)
10. Awful devastation revealed with Japan's dawn (12 March 2011)
11. Analysis: while the reactor core is intact this is not a Chernobyl (12 March 2011)
12. Fears ease over nuclear power plant explosion (12 March 2011)
13. Eyewitness: Panic buying as Japan grinds to a halt (12 March 2011)
14. Japan as it happened: March 12, 2011 (12 March 2011)
15. Thousands lost to Japanese earthquake and tsunami (12 March 2011)
16. Picture story of the week: Tsunami devastates as quake strikes Japan (13 March 2011)
17. Japan's day of devastation (13 March 2011)
18. Expert told Japan nuclear plants' quake protection 'too lax' (13 March 2011)
19. Engineers can't stop reactors overheating (13 March 2011)
20. Cloud still hangs over nuclear (13 March 2011)

viewed 10 September 2012,

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/public/sitesearch.do?querystring=fukushima&x=42&y=7§ionId=2&p=sto&bl=&pf=all#/sto/public/sitesearch.do?querystring=fukushima&offset=25&hits=25&sort=old§ionId=2&_id=1347308681494&p=sto&service=searchframe&y=7&pf=all&x=42>.

The Herald

1. Tsunami hits Japan after massive earthquake (11 March 2011)
2. Nothing can prepare for a disaster of this magnitude (12 March 2011)
3. Swept into oblivion by power of nature (12 March 2011)
4. Radiation alert as quake deaths rise (12 March 2011)
5. Hunt for survivors in quake carnage (14 March 2011)
6. Experiences of Japan may yet endorse nuclear power (14 March 2011)
7. Baby is reunited with her father after three days buried in rubble (15 March 2011)
8. Aggreko shares climb after disaster in Japan (15 March 2011)
9. Stock markets plunge again as insurers put price on destruction (16 March 2011)
10. Plea for calm as panic grows among the ruins (16 March 2011)
11. FTSE-100 is hit by worries over Japanese plant (16 March 2011)
12. Why I will speak up for nuclear power (17 March 2011)
13. Tsunami survivors face new threat as snow falls and temperatures plummet (17 March 2011)

14. British rescue bid called off as hopes of finding survivors fade (18 March 2011)
15. Soames weighed up job as binman (18 March 2011)
16. UK extends nuclear exclusion zone as meltdown fears grow (18 March 2011)
17. Nuclear engineers plan for doomsday scenario (19 March 2011)
18. Fresh meltdown fear in fight to stabilize reactor (23 March 2011)
19. Green shoots to nurture from nuclear's death knell (24 March 2011)
20. There are two reasons why it is wrong for people to write off the future of nuclear power stations (25 March 2011)

viewed 10 September 2012,

<<http://www.heraldscotland.com/search?s=Fukushima&page=13>>.

The Independent

1. Japan to evacuate residents near nuclear plants (11 March 2011)
2. Japan: Earthquake aftermath at a glance (11 March 2011)
3. 1 000 killed as tsunami slams into Japan (11 March 2011)
4. Leading article: The only lesson we can draw from Nature's destruction (12 March 2011)
5. State of emergency declared over fears of nuclear leaks (12 March 2011)
6. Japan paralysed as deadly quake triggers tsunami in day of horror (12 March 2011)
7. Japan requests British help over earthquake (12 March 2011)
8. Japan earthquake: latest developments (12 March 2011)
9. Meltdown 'unlikely': experts on explosion at Japan nuclear plant (12 March 2011)
10. Huge explosion at nuclear plant (12 March 2011)
11. 'We're told not to breathe the air; it's scary' (13 March 2011)
12. Fears of radioactive leak after blast rips through complex (13 March 2011)
13. Towns vanish, thousands die; but a nation begins to fight back (13 March 2011)
14. Q&A: The day the Earth moved, and a nation's east coast shifted by 2,4 metres (13 March 2011)
15. Nuclear reactor meltdown 'likely' says official (13 March 2011)
16. UK team joins Japan earthquake rescue efforts (13 March 2011)
17. Fears for Britons after Japanese earthquake (13 March 2011)
18. Leading article: Japan's disaster must prompt a new look at reactor safety (14 March 2011)
19. Residents queue to be tested, but experts say this is not Chernobyl (14 March 2011)
20. Rescued nine miles out to sea, the man washed away on his house 14 March 2011)

viewed 10 September 2012,

<<http://www.independent.co.uk/search/simple.do?useHideArticle=true&searchString=Fukushima&sortString=publishdate&sortOrder=desc&useSectionFilter=true&destinationSectionUniqueName=search&pageLength=10&publicationName=ind&articleTypes=news§ionId=506&startYear=2010&startDay=1&startMonth=1&pageNumber=53>>.