

## Themes in South-East Asian Newspaper Headlines on Rohingya Issue: Critical Discourse Analysis

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**ABSTRACT**

*Language is regarded as a tool to present the ideologies of its users, including how media portray a particular issue in their headlines. Rohingya has gained much attention from media, including South-East Asian newspapers. The massive clearing done by Myanmar government triggers the attention of media. Headlines are regarded as the important element of news since their jobs are to attract the readers and frame the ideologies of the readers as well as the media themselves. This paper attempts at discussing how South-East Asian media present Rohingya in their headlines. Five newspapers were involved: The Jakarta Post from Indonesia, Malaysia Kini from Malaysia, Mmtimes from Myanmar, The Nation from Thailand, and Daily Star from Bangladesh, taken during 2017. The analysis was focused on the choice of Theme in the headlines as it is the departing message of the headlines. The approach conducted was Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis utilizing the textual function of language offered by Halliday. The analysis revealed that South-East Asian media had similarities and differences in portraying Rohingya issue. The similarities were seen from the reflected ideologies, responsibility and blame, and the types of employed Themes. The difference was found in the way each media portrayed the ideologies. However, all media agreed to show their responsibility to end and solve Rohingya crisis to achieve peace and harmony amongst South-East Asian countries.*

*Keywords: headlines, critical discourse analysis, Rohingya*

## INTRODUCTION

Rohingya case is one of the humanity issues that attracts media's attention, particularly in South-East Asia. News on Rohingya has been published for years since the case seems unfinished. The number of refugees keeps increasing and the clearing still happens until now. Rohingya's attempt to flee to Malaysia by sea are denied by Myanmar government, thus the government called them as Bengalis and refused them as a national race (James, 2006, p. 22). It is also reported that Rohingyas never have any type of citizen and ethnic group (Steinberg, 2010, p. 73). Furthermore, the clearing has sustained until early 2005, when "some 20.000 Muslim refugees from Myanmar still remained refugee camps in Bangladesh. Malaysia has offered political asylum to about 10.000 such persons" (Ganesan & Hlaing, 2007, p. 191). The facts mentioned previously triggers media to share information related to Rohingya in the form of news.

Online newspapers are chosen by people nowadays since they are easily accessed from their gadgets. "Newspapers function as a special tool of language to propagate agendas of different social, political, and economic pillars of power" (Lodhi, et al., 2019, p. 325). Hence, what is written in newspaper reflects not only the writers' or editors' ideologies but also the parties behind the media. Media news is described as "a news item or news report, i.e. a text or discourse on radio, TV, or in the newspaper, in which new information is given about recent events" (Dijk, 1988, p. 4). The term "news discourse" is thus preferred since media news involves the whole discourse: physical shape and its contents which has a more semantic nature (Dijk, 1988). What is interesting in "news discourse" is the choice of words as the title of news, called headlines. Reah defines headlines as "the story in a minimum number of words, attract the reader to the story and, if it appears on the front page, attract the reader to the paper" (Mapunda & Keya, 2015, p. 59). Thus, readers will catch the departing message of news from the headlines.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) facilitates news discourse analysis by considering how texts strive for social practice (Fairclough, 1995). Fairclough proposes that careful analysis of textual form, structure, and organization at all levels is needed for text interpretation. In news discourse, the existence of headlines cannot be ignored as they portray the news summary. The departing message in headlines is called Theme. Halliday defines theme as "the initial part of a clause which gives prominence to particular information and which, in CDA terms, is often an

indication of taken-for-granted or ‘common sense’ assumption about the nature of things” (Locke, 2004, p. 49). Finding out the Themes in news discourse can reveal newspaper’s ideology since ideology is found in the discursive event itself (Fairclough, 1995).

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) facilitates CDA by considering language as a vehicle to express people’s thoughts in various ways and purposes by means of wordings (Mathiessen and Halliday, 1997). Analyzing text covers not only the linguistic feature description but also ideologies brought by language use. The choice of text features “is regarded as potentially ideological, including features of vocabulary and metaphors, grammar, presuppositions and implicatures, politeness conventions, speech exchange (turn-taking) systems, generic structure and style” (Fairclough, 1995, pp. 1-2). Halliday figures out that language functions to ideationally represent the experience of the world, interpersonally constitute social interaction between participants, and textually put the parts of text together into a coherent whole (Fairclough, 1995, p. 6).

In the textual function, the linguistic features used to signpost the speaker’s meaning are Theme and Rheme. Theme is the initial part of a clause. It is the starting point for the message since it is what the clause is about (Halliday, 2004). Downing and Locke (2006) add that a Theme is the communicative point of departure of the message. Eggins (2004) summarizes three types of Themes: topical or experiential, interpersonal, and textual themes. A topical Theme is the clause element in which a transitivity function can be assigned in the first position in a clause (Eggins, 2004). Participants and Circumstances as Themes in a clause are categorized as topical or experiential theme. Interpersonal theme is in the form of “the unfused finite (in interrogative) and modal adjuncts (mood, vocative, polarity, and comment). Textual theme has a cohesive function to relate clause to its context, realized in the form of continuity and conjunctive adjunct (Eggins, 2004).

Newspaper headlines are chosen as the main data since headlines serve some functions, one of which is to present the truth (Metila, 2013). However, Turner (2009) mentions that “headlines can be notoriously misleading, inaccurate, or ambiguous” (cited in Metila, 2013). To avoid what mentioned earlier, CDA is seen as the appropriate way to conduct as it analyses the discourse to find the hidden meanings or ideologies (McGregor, 2003 as cited in Taiwo, 2007). This paper focuses on figuring out Themes employed by the South-East Asian newspaper regarding Rohingya issue. The dominance of Themes employed in the news discourse can

reveal how South-East Asian media regard Rohingya issue. As the case happens in South-East Asia, the researcher expects that there will be some similarities among the media. To prove the hypothesis, CDA is employed by focusing on the textual structure of text, or how the message is packaged by media.

Studies on CDA have been exercised by some scholars. Umami (2013) observed the discourse devices utilized in an opinion column title on Polycarpus case. The research employed the metafunctions analysis, including the appraisal and thematic analyses. The data were taken from news features in *The Jakarta Post* newspaper, analyzed in terms of their micro level and macro level of analysis. The employment of topic sentence, fullness development, and coherence among paragraphs are used in the analysis. In the textual analysis, the research paid attention to the use of conjunction and theme. The use of marked theme is benefited by the writers to make the readers easier grasp the meanings and plot of the articles (Umami, 2013).

Rohingya crisis also attracted the study by Afzal (2016) by concerning the media's strategies to frame Rohingya issue in the international stage. The data were taken from Pakistani, British and American editorial opinions. The research believes that frame may be used in a biased way to interpret different political events. *The Nation*, a Pakistani newspaper, criticizes the Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi for showing her dislike to the Muslims. The newspaper also encourages readers' emotions by framing Aung San Suu Kyi as a discriminative leader. The similar frame is also shown in *The Guardian* newspaper. Several emotional appeals (pathos) are used to frame Rohingya crisis. From the Western point of view, *The New York Times* keeps the readers on the side of Rohingya Muslims. The research found that Rohingya crisis itself is covered up by the readers' emotions framed by the media (Afzal, 2016).

Bolte & Keong (2014) involved Fairclough's CDA to observe the representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants (RASIM) in three Malaysian newspaper reports. The textual analysis covering Themes reveals three main attributes to RASIM: refugee protection, people smuggling and human trafficking, and policy and national security. The paper found that the discourse in the three newspapers is influenced by its situational context and ideological differences between newspapers. RASIM is represented in a positive supporting way as the media is on the side of Malaysian government, or pro-government. *Malaysia Kini* is concluded to have more balanced report since it fulfills the ethics of proper journalism (Bolte & Keong, 2014).

Research on textual analysis, focusing Theme and Information parts of clauses in Arabic and English news reports was utilized by Potter (2016). The research compares how Arabic and English news presents Syrian refugees. Influenced by the different language target readers, English news reports present the ‘accusation’ against Syria and signpost the ‘evidence’ against Syria. On the other hand, Arabic news employs new information as Themes to emphasize Syria’s ‘cooperation’. Syria’s innocence is also shown in Arabic news reports. The paper concludes that Arabic news tends to be a pro-Syria by encouraging readers to perceive Syria as an innocent victim, whereas English news favors a negative representation of Syria and encourages readers to perceive Syria as the logical perpetrator of Hariri’s murder (Potter, 2016).

The papers reviewed above agree that ideology is embodied inside the wordings. The presence of news discourse welcomes linguistic scholars to criticize the representation of an issue, in this case is refugees, in various media. Headlines, analyzed in their textual functions, are designed in such a way that readers are grasped to read the news. The textual analyses of headlines, editorials, or news reports support Fairclough’s claim about language, ideology, and power. The presence of discursive and social practices cannot be ignored in the analysis. News media are also capable of framing an issue and encouraging readers’ emotions. Thus, the analysis of textual meanings of headlines is urgently needed. To be specific, this paper attempts at figuring out how Themes are exercised in five online newspaper headlines in South-East Asia regarding refugee case, Rohingya.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This paper employed Fairclough’s CDA as its approach. Fairclough argues that language is exercised to express ideology in various code, structure, system, or formation (1995, p. 71). In Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), meanings are represented into three functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. The textual function of language provokes the reading positions ‘inscribed’ in texts (Talbot, 2007, p. 46). It is about how the message is packaged. Fairclough proposes that wordings change or affect the ideological meaning embedded in the text. The lexico-grammar structures are ideologically chosen (cited in Bolte & Keong, 2014). Van Dijk adds that reports are expected to be highly topicalized and intertwined with the notion of positive US versus negative THEM construction (2000).

The data were taken from the online newspapers published by five South-East Asian countries: *The Jakarta Post* from Indonesia, *Malaysia Kini* from Malaysia, *Mmtimes* from Myanmar, *The Nation* from Thailand, and *Daily Star* from Bangladesh, taken during 2017. Those five countries were chosen due to the close border to Rakhine, the place where Rohingyans stayed. The headlines are coded as follows: INA refers to the Indonesia, H refers to headline, 1 refer to the number of headline. The same code is used for the other countries: MAL for Malaysia, THAI for Thailand, MYAN for Myanmar and BANG for Bangladesh. There were twenty headlines chosen for each country. Thus, the number used in the third code will range from 1 to 20.

Each headline was carefully analyzed and categorized into its type: experiential, interpersonal, or textual theme (Eggins, 2004). Since all headlines were experiential, each participant or circumstance in the headline was grouped in terms of its newspaper. Since five newspapers were included as the data, the variations of Theme are displayed in a table to figure out how the wordings in each newspaper similar to and different from the others. The participants performing as Themes were thus related to the social context in which the discursive event happened. This analysis is helpful to reveal the ideologies embodied in the text.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that the observed headlines have experiential Theme, meaning the Theme in which transitivity participants are involved. However, the participants chosen as the Themes are different. The table below depicts the participants in the headlines of the five newspapers.

**Table 1.** Summary of Participants in South-East Asian Newspaper Headlines

Theme	INA	MAL	MYAN	BANG	THAI
Actor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Goal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Carrier	✓			✓	✓
Token				✓	
Attribute					
Sayer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verbiage		✓	✓		
Patient		✓			

Circumstance      ✓      ✓

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The table above shows that Malaysian newspaper headlines have the most various participants. Indonesian and Bangladesh newspaper headlines have the same number of variants in their participants. Token is absent in Indonesian headlines, but present in Bangladesh newspaper headlines. On the other hand, Circumstance is found in Indonesian newspaper headlines, but not in Bangladesh. Myanmar and Thailand newspaper headlines employ the least variant of participants in their Themes. Both involve Actor, Goal, and Sayer. Carrier is present in Thailand newspaper headlines, but absent in Myanmar. Verbiage, on the other hand, is found in Myanmar newspaper headlines, but not in Thailand.

There are two main ideological perspectives shared by the observed media: responsibility and blame. In general, the South-East Asian newspaper headlines portray Rohingya issue as “responsibility” that they have to fulfill. The conflict in this region is seen as a serious one, thus the media choose particular linguistic features to show their responsibility to put it as the departing message in the media. The table below shows the representation of responsibility and blame by the South-East Asian media.

**Table 2.** Summary of Ideologies in South-East Asian Newspapers

	“Blame”	“Responsibility”
Indonesia	9	11
Malaysia	8	12
Myanmar	2	18
Bangladesh	6	14
Thailand	7	13
Total	32	68

The table above displays that all of the headlines in the five countries are dominated by “responsibility” as the Theme. However, the linguistic choice in the headlines is different from one newspaper to the others. The discussion below shows proof.

***Responsibility***

Responsibility is the dominant ideology reflected in all media. The table below shows the type of Theme which shows responsibility.

**Table 3** Summary of Theme Showing Responsibility

South-East Asian Media	Type of Theme	Examples
Indonesia	Actor, Goal, Sayer	Indonesia, Jokowi-Suu Kyi, More Rohingyans refugee
Myanmar	Actor, Goal, Sayer	Government, refugee deal, ministry, a strong commitment
Malaysia	Actor, Sayer, Patient	A mercy mission, Najib, DPM, Malaysia
Bangladesh	Actor, Sayer	Bangladesh, Home minister, Bangladesh-Myanmar
Thailand	Actor, Goal, Sayer, Carrier	ASEAN credibility, ASEAN, Thailand, ASEAN minister

The first Theme revealing responsibility is the employment of Actor which refers to government as the Theme. The examples are as follows.

INA.H.2      **Indonesia** urged to initiate conflict resolution for Rohingya

INA.H.16     **Jokowi, Suu Kyi** discuss Rohingya crisis

In the data above, the use of Indonesia and Jokowi-Suu Kyi indicates that the newspaper intends to show the responsibility to solve Rohingya crisis. Jokowi and Suu Kyi are the leaders in Indonesia and Myanmar. Their statement and action regarding Rohingya issue are important to represent the position of the country. The involvement of the Actors above strengthens the responsibility which is seriously conducted by Indonesian and Myanmar government.

Another existence of Actor in Indonesian media takes “Indonesia” as Actors. Below are the examples.

INA.H.2      **Indonesia** urged to initiate conflict resolution for Rohingya

INA.H.10     **Indonesia** carries out intensive diplomacy on Rohingya

The above headlines employ “Indonesia” as the Actor. In the first datum above, Indonesia is presented to have the power to initiate the conflict resolution for Rohingya. As one of ASEAN initiators and Moslem country, Indonesia shows its responsibility to overcome the issue. The previous analysis is supported by the second headline shown above. Instead of initiating the discussion, Indonesian media also spreads the country’s concrete action to carry out intensive diplomacy.



Responsibility is also seen in Myanmar newspaper headlines. However, the Themes used in the headlines which reveal responsibility are different from Indonesian headlines. In Myanmar newspaper, Goal and Sayer are also chosen to show the government responsibility. Below are the evidence.

MYAN.H.11 **Government team** to visit Bangladesh to discuss refugee repatriation

MYAN.H.7 **Ministry** vows speedier info release on Rakhine crisis

MYAN.H.8 **Peace, stability** restored in northern Rakhine, some troops withdrawn

MYAN.H.9 **Plans to repatriate refugees** agreed

The use of Actor as the Theme in the first datum above signifies the Myanmar government's responsibility in relation to the crisis. By choosing an Actor, Myanmar media aims at emphasizing the action done by the Actor. Bringing similar ideology, headline 7 above is represented in different Theme. The use of Sayer as Theme signals responsibility in terms of saying. Myanmar government is represented in different Themes shown in headlines 8 and 9 above. The Themes in headlines 8 and 9 are Goals. In addition to mentioning the references of Myanmar government, the media also picks the results of what the government did as seen in headlines 8 and 9.

Similar to Myanmar newspaper headlines, the Malaysian newspaper also employs Goal to show its government responsibility.

MAL.H.2 **A mercy mission** to the Rohingya refugees

There is an ellipsis found in the above headline. However, the preposition *to* above indicates that the first phrase can be regarded as the Patient. The headline can be paraphrased into A mercy mission is given to the Rohingya refugees. The second phrase above, the Rohingya refugees, performs as the Goal. The use of lexical choice "mercy" above is to emphasize the good deeds by the government to help Rohingyans. The media put action to help the refugees as something "mercy". In other words, praise is also attached to Malaysian government.

Another type of Theme showing Malaysian responsibility is the employment of Actor. In the Malaysian newspaper headline, the Actor is attached to the government official to show their responsibility in accordance with Rohingya crisis. Below is the datum.

MAL.H.18 **Najib** came through for Rohingya, give credit where due

The use of material verb “came through” marks the material process. The action done by Najib is a portrayal of Malaysian government responsibility. The media intends to choose Najib as the Theme in order to emphasize responsibility made by the government.

The other distinctive participant in the Malaysian headline is Circumstance of place as seen below.

MAL.H.7      **From Malaysian backrooms**, Rohingya send what little they can to fleeing relatives

The Theme in the above headline is in the form of prepositional phrase “from Malaysian backrooms”. In transitivity process, it is categorized as Circumstance of place. Instead of displaying Rohingya as the Actor who sends their expectation, Malaysian media chose to put the circumstance as the Theme. The effect inferred from the structure is readers can pay more attention to Malaysian backrooms as the place in which Rohingya seeks helps.

Bangladesh newspaper headline also uses Actor which refers to its government to show responsibility dealing with the Rohingya crisis. Below are the examples.

BANG.H.6      **Bangladesh** draws global attention to Myanmar Rohingya crisis issue

BANG.H.8      **Rohingya Refugees: Govt** plans big to ease plight

The use of Bangladesh and government explicitly in the headlines signifies responsibility by the Bangladesh government. An actor is presented as the clause constituent which conducts an action. The use of verbs “draw” and “plan” in the data above refer to the government’s concrete deeds to help Rohingyans. In Bangladesh newspaper headlines, other Actors found in the data are “Home Minister” and “Bangladesh”. The systematic actions done by the government refer to their responsibility to Rohingyans since they are located near the area where Rohingyans live. Moreover, the label that Rohingyans are Bengalis also triggers Bangladesh’ actions.

Different from the previous linguistic features showing responsibility, Thailand newspaper headlines show their neutral commitment towards Rohingyans. In the headlines, Thailand media choose ASEAN and ASEAN ministers as Actors in the Themes to show responsibility. Below are the proofs.

THAI.H.7      **ASEAN** has an obvious role in Rohingya crisis

THAI.H.17     **Asean ministers** express concern over Rohingya crisis

The involvement of ASEAN and ASEAN ministers as the Themes in Thailand newspaper headlines show that Thailand as one of the founders of ASEAN is involved in showing

responsibility toward the Rohingya crisis. The indirect involvement in the decision can be interpreted that Thailand is in a neutral position.

**Blame**

Despite the responsibility represented in various linguistic features in South-East Asian newspaper headlines, “blame” is also found from the employment of linguistic features in the data. The table below points out the type of Theme showing “blame” in the headlines.

**Table 4** Summary of Theme Showing Blame

South-East Asian Media	Type of Theme	Examples
Indonesia	Actor, Carrier, Goal	Rohingya crisis, Rohingya refugee influx, 600,000 Rohingya children
Myanmar	Verbiage	Illegal immigration, terrorism new global threats; over 70
Malaysia	Actor, Verbiage	Goal, At least 6,700 Rohingya; at least 100 Rohingya; Suu Kyi
Bangladesh	Actor, Carrier	Nearly 90,000 Rohingyas; Rohingya; 1992 criteria
Thailand	Actor, Carrier	Both Myanmar and Bangladesh, Rohingya forced from Myanmar

In Indonesian newspaper headlines, “blame” is represented in the form of Actor, Carrier, and Goal as the departing messages in the headlines. Below are the examples.

INA.H.1      **Rohingya crisis** could affect ASEAN stability: Jokowi

INA.H.4      **Rohingya refugee influx in Bangladesh** now 507,000: Report

In the Indonesian newspaper, “blame” is shown in the form of Actor and Carrier. The Actor in the first datum displayed above shows the ability of the crisis to affect ASEAN stability. The serious issue which happens in Myanmar is seen as blame towards the crisis. The solid and intimate relationships among ASEAN countries is not stable due to the crisis. Here, Jokowi as the president of the Republic of Indonesia shows his political statement regarding Rohingya issue. As one of the founders of ASEAN, Indonesia takes its responsibility to keep stability among ASEAN countries. The similar “blame” is shown as Carrier in the second datum above.

The huge number of refugees in Bangladesh shows the failure of Myanmar government to solve the crisis. Bangladesh is seen as the affected country which has to provide place for Rohingyans.

The other linguistic features showing blame by Indonesian media is shown as a Goal in the headline. Below is the datum.

INA.H.14     **Rohingya lives and limbs** shattered by mines at Myanmar frontier

The existence of the Goal above also shows “blame” since Rohingyans become the participants directed to by the Actor, Myanmar frontier. The presence of Goal instead of Actor above signifies that the media intends to portray Rohingyans as the victim of the action. Herewith, blame is shown by the media. The choice of the name Rohingya instead of refugees also shows that Indonesian media acknowledges the existence of the race.

Unlike Indonesian media which show blame and responsibility in almost equal existence, Myanmar media only put a few headlines which show blame. Below is the datum.

MYAN.H.13   **Over 70** killed in Rakhine after militants attack

The participant bold above is the Theme, represented as the Goal. The number of people shown as the Goal above shows “blame” to the militants. What the Actor did, militants, results in more than 70 people died. Myanmar media blames the militant to kill more than 70 people in Rakhine. The choice of Rakhine instead of Rohingya shows Myanmar’s decision to follow the government. The word “Rohingya” is prohibited to mention in Myanmar, meaning they never acknowledge the existence of the race. Instead of showing the enormous number of Rohingyans suffering from the clearing, Myanmar media intends to share the news about what militants did in Rakhine. The “blame” has different reference in Myanmar media. While other media blame Myanmar government, Myanmar media blames the militants which refer to Rohingyans who fought for their rights to stay in Rakhine.

In Malaysian media, the choice of Goal and Actor as the Themes in the headlines is to show “blame” to the Myanmar government. Below are the data,

MAL.H.6     **At least 100 Rohingyas** drowned fleeing Myanmar last 2 months: UN

MAL.H.17    **Suu Kyi** condemns all rights violations in Rakhine state

Goal as the Theme is shown in “at least 100 Rohingyans”. The use of the number as the departing message in the headline is to blame Myanmar government. The Sayer in that headline is the UN. The involvement of what UN utters also shows global attention toward the crisis. The number of Rohingyans who were drowned when fleeing Myanmar is the responsibility of Myanmar. The ignorance and clearing by the government result in the violation of human rights.

It is also strengthened by the second headline above. Malaysian media chooses the name “Suu Kyi” as the Actor who is responsible for the crisis. Blame is shown strongly in Malaysian media, referring to Suu Kyi.

In Bangladesh's newspaper media, domination is also responsibility to solve the crisis. However, “blame” is also found in the headlines. Below are the examples.

BANG.H.1 **Nearly 90,000 Rohingyas** escape Myanmar violence as humanitarian crisis looms

BANG.H.2 **Rohingya refugee crisis: Thousands** take shelter in no-man's land

The use of the number as shown in Malaysian media also appears here. Furthermore, the use of Actor as the Theme in Bangladesh headline also shows “blame” to Myanmar government. The number of refugees escaping and suffering from the crisis is repeated in Bangladesh headlines, which signifies that the crisis creates serious problems. To save themselves, Rohingyans are represented as the Actor who conducts material actions. The only way for them to keep alive is by escaping from Rakhine. Despite died, they choose to look for protection by the neighboring countries. Bangladesh is the first country they choose since they are given camps and food by Bangladesh government.

In the headlines, Carrier is also selected as the Theme in Bangladesh media to show blame. Below are the examples.

BANG.H.18 **1992 criteria** not realistic now

BANG.H.20 **200,000 Rohingya children** at risk in Bangladesh camps: Unicef

The employment of “1992 criteria” as the Carrier above is attached to the attribute “not realistic now”. This signifies “blame” to the Myanmar government since the number of Rohingyans who died and escaped from the country keeps increasing. It is proven in the following headlines which mention the massive number of Rohingya children who are now at risk. The camps and food provided by Bangladesh government are no longer able to provide healthy life to the children. Camps are not the best place for children as they need clean environment to grow as healthy children. The limitation in the camps is portrayed as the result of the clearing by Myanmar government.

In Thailand newspaper headlines, Patient is the only participant found among South-East Asian media. It is shown in the datum below.

THAI.H.14 **Myanmar beauty queen** dethroned 'after posting Rohingya video'

What Myanmar beauty queen accepted, being dethroned, is a result of her action posting Rohingya video. Thailand media portrays that event as blame to the government. The strict rule which forbids its citizens to mention Rohingya is experienced by the beauty queen. She is portrayed as the affected participant because of the rule.

Another participant revealing blame is Sayer, the participant who says. The Sayer in Thailand media refers to Rohingyas as seen below.

**THAI.H.18    Rohingya forced from Myanmar** say army redoubling push to clear villages

As the Sayer, Rohingya forced from Myanmar utters their experience of clearing by the army. Thailand media portrays that event as blame to the Myanmar army since Rohingyas experience unpleasant treatment by the government. The systematic clearing has continued and become more severe. The employment of “redoubling push” emphasizes the sad witness by Rohingyas. They do not have another choice but leave the area.

Thailand newspaper media also shows its fair view of the crisis. The employment of Carrier which involves both Bangladesh and Myanmar below is the proof.

**THAI.H.19    Both Bangladesh and Myanmar** are responsible for the Rohingya Blame is not only directed to the Myanmar government but also Bangladesh. The initial conflict regarding the occupation of Myanmar territory by Bangladesh is regarded as the initial conflict of Rohingya crisis. Thailand newspaper media sees this as the blame of both countries. The negotiation which should have been done a long time ago never happened. That is, why the media put both countries as the Carrier which is attached to the responsibility they have to make.

The five newspapers analyzed above reveal similar ideologies, responsibility and blame. That finding can be understood since the South-East Asian newspapers are produced in the same spirit as ASEAN members. The presence of society cannot be ignored in discourse analysis. Rohingya issue is seen as a shared problem by South-East Asian countries, thus the headlines presented in five newspapers reveal similar ideology. This supports Fairclough’s argument that CDA can be employed to describe, interpret, and explain the language and power. CDA regards language as creating ideology and revealing concealed agendas in language that may be ideological (Montejo & Adriano, 2018). The language choice in the headlines is powerful to show the countries’ responsibility and arise their readers’ emotion in the form of blame.

In South-East Asian newspaper headlines, the Themes are represented in different linguistic features. In Indonesian media, the employment of Actor, Goal, Carrier, Sayer, and

Circumstance is to represent different messages the readers should pay attention to. The involvement of Indonesia and its government as the dominating Theme is to show responsibility toward Rohingya issue. The media also share some activities held in Indonesia to show its people's responsibility as human beings who feel sympathy for the victims. Indonesian newspaper presents as a pro-government organization to support what the government conducts to solve the crisis. The finding supports Bolte & Keong (2014) research on how media is influenced by its situational and ideological context. As the biggest Muslim country, Indonesian newspaper attempts at showing its government responsibility to protect Rohingyans. Though the readers' sympathy is not obviously inscribed in the headlines, the readers are grasped to observe their government action regarding Rohingya issue. Nevertheless, the choice of Actor referring to Myanmar is used by Indonesian media to show "blame" toward Myanmar. The employment of "Myanmar troops" and "Myanmar army" are some examples.

Malaysian newspaper headlines are rich in linguistic features put in the headlines. The domination of Actor in the headlines at the same time show responsibility and blame. The responsibility shared by the media is represented by government official who shows its power to take particular decision toward Rohingya issues, such as the choice of "Najib, DPM, and Shahidan". To show blame, Malaysian media repeats the choice of "Suu Kyi" as the Actor behind the clearing. The representation of Suu Kyi as the Actor is in line with Afzal's (2016) analysis of how Pakistani media frames Suu Kyi as a discriminative leader. This also arouses the readers' emotional appeals (pathos) toward Rohingya crisis. It emphasizes that media produced in Muslim countries share similar attitude toward Rohingya case.

Bangladesh's media has different referents of Actor though Actor also dominates the headlines. Bangladesh chooses the number of Rohingya to be the Themes in order to show how Rohingyans make effort to save themselves, which results in "blame" shown by the Theme. However, Bangladesh's media also shows responsibility by means of Actor shown in the word "Bangladesh". Similar to Indonesian newspaper headlines, Malaysian and Bangladesh newspapers are pro-government media. What their government and its representatives conduct regarding Rohingya issue is signposted in their headlines. Malaysia is also a country dominated by Muslims, while Bangladesh shares its solidarity due to the close border to Rakhine. "Blame" is embodied in Malaysian and Bangladesh media to encourage readers' emotions toward the

actions done by Rohingya refugees. What triggers Rohingya crisis is covered up by the emotions framed by the media (Afzal, 2016).

Different from the four media mentioned above, Myanmar newspaper headlines are dominated by the Theme referring to responsibility by the Myanmar government. The choice of Goal refers to things done by the Government to recover Rohingya crisis, such as “refugee deal, peace, stability, and plans to repatriate refugee”. The media intends to share the good points Myanmar government makes. The use of Actor and Sayer referring to the government also shows its responsibility. Similar to the other three newspapers discussed previously, Myanmar newspaper is also on the side of its government, seen from the absence of the word “Rohingya”. The newspaper intends not to acknowledge Rohingya as a national race (James, 2006). The neglect of race is intentionally and systematically conducted in Myanmar.

In the last media, Thailand newspaper headlines, it is found that the media also shows its responsibility and blame toward the Rohingya crisis. However, blame is not only directed to Myanmar government, but also Bangladesh. Thailand newspaper headlines also involve ASEAN as the official association among South-East Asian countries to solve the crisis together. What is concerned in the media is the stability amongst South-East Asian countries. The readers are encouraged to recall the spirit of ASEAN which can unite them. The conflict happens in South-East Asia is the countries’ responsibility. The “neutral” position Thailand newspaper headlines show is influenced by the socio-political context in Thailand, as a country that is not affected directly by the crisis. As one of the founders of ASEAN, Thailand government is portrayed as the one mediates the conflict. The analysis emphasizes that newspapers propagate agendas of different social, political, and economic pillars of power (Lodhi, et al., 2019)

## **CONCLUSION**

This research concludes the choice of wordings in the headlines can create different discursive effects to the readers. Even though the textual structures of the headlines are represented in the same type, they can bring different ideological perspectives depending on how the texts are distributed. The language choice in the headlines is capable of revealing the position of the media, whether they are pro-government or not. Language is also benefited to exercise power and encourage the readers’ emotions. The event behind the case may be hidden by the emotions and actions signposted in the headlines. This emphasizes that language choice



in media is socially and politically influenced by the social context. This research invites future scholars to enrich the present findings so that the studies on how media bring Rohingya issue in the world.

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**Note:** Some parts of this article were presented in LOOW 6 by Petra Christian University, entitled "Rohingya in Media: Critical Discourse Analysis in Myanmar and Bangladesh Newspaper Headlines"