

Emotive Language in Political News Articles from The Star and The Washington Post

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Abstract: Emotive language is a powerful tool in reporting engaging and interesting reading material as it can evoke different emotions. However, the use of emotive language in media discourse varies according to culture and target readers. The variation between the use of this persuasion tool motivates this study to analyse the use of emotive language in two different news portals, The Star (Malaysia) and The Washington Post (the United States of America). This study scrutinised political news articles that were published between July 2022 and July 2023. Collectively, ten (10) online news articles that report on current political issues were selected for this study. This qualitative study utilised content analysis, anchored on Martin and White's Appraisal model (2005), in assessing the selected online news articles. The results revealed that the news articles from The Star encompassed a diverse range of emotive words related to affect, judgement, and appreciation, suggesting a greater emphasis on evaluating and critiquing various aspects of the news. Conversely, the selected online news articles from The Washington Post concentrated on the use of specific aspects of judgement and valuation. The attributing factors of the dissimilarities in the findings can be further dissected by future studies to enrich intercultural understanding. Therefore, the difference in the use of emotive language between these two media giants is notable and underlines the importance of knowledge in emotive language to foster a media-literate society.

Keywords: Emotive Language, Newspaper Articles, Political News, Appraisal Model

1. Introduction

The media industry has undergone a transformation in which traditional media outlets, which used to be the sole source of news, have been surpassed by the emergence of multiple platforms that now include digital versions of newspapers (Minami, 2011). It is reported that 57% of the world's population uses Internet-based media to obtain information, honing their receptive skills in the process (Absattar et al., 2022). With the shift of most news to online platforms and the increased accessibility of news to the public, the role of news media in shaping the population's perceptions and understanding of various

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topics and subjects has become increasingly significant. It is pivotal that media organisations or practitioners ensure accountability and responsibility in their coverage of political and social issues, which are vital for a country's development (Vraga et al., 2012). In line with this, the incorporation of emotionally charged language is a widespread technique in contemporary newspaper reporting for reasons such as politicians seeking to win elections, capturing the audience's attention, and stirring up controversy (Kadri et al., 2020).

The widespread use of emotive language in online news has the potential to manipulate public opinion and push certain agendas. Studies of online media content reveal how journalists employ the use of emotionally charged language to evoke strong reactions such as shock, fear, unease, and alarm in their audience (Anthony, 2018). The media presents the news in a negative light to profit from sensationalism (Kadri et al., 2020). In Malaysia, traditional media outlets are often seen as biased in favour of the ruling party in their news coverage (Alivi et al., 2018). The utilisation of such language in journalism may potentially have negative consequences, including the spread of false information and one-sided perspectives, which can ultimately result in a loss of trust in the credibility of news media. Therefore, two research objectives are formulated in this study whereby the first objective is to identify the types of emotive language used in political online news articles from *The Star*. The second research objective aims to determine the types of emotive language used in political online news articles from *The Washington Post*. Finally, this study compares the usage of emotive language in both *The Star* and *The Washington Post* online news articles.

1.1 Emotive Language

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the usage of emotive language in journalism. Tsitsanoudis-Mallidis and Derveni (2018) investigated the use of emotive language in headlines of 20 Greek online news articles from popular and widely read websites regarding the death of a three-year-old boy from Syria who was found on a beach in Turkey. Despite the negative image portrayed by the media towards refugees in Greece which many are among Syrians who flee their country to avoid war, the findings revealed that all the articles analysed had an emotional and humanistic tone, using a variety of emotional words and metaphors to tell their story. Absattar et al. (2022) examine the use of emotive language in Kazakh media discourse and its impact on the cognitive perception of readers. The study analysed the emotivity of media texts from the three largest online media sources in Kazakhstan and found that emotivity is expressed through lexical and syntactic means. The culture of the reader plays a significant role in the perception of the communication, and the use of emotive items in online media depends on the discourse content and writer's intention. The research found that online media sources with political content channeled negative emotions, while sources with entertainment content had a higher presence of positive emotions. The results show that the potential of online media content to influence and manipulate the audience varies based on the content of the coverage.

Furthermore, Kadri et al. (2020) emphasises the criticality of understanding tactics used in biased journalism, especially in Malaysia, where the media is strictly controlled by regulations and ethics. The study aimed to examine the usage of emotive words in news reporting in *Awani News*, a news channel in Malaysia. The data analysed were viral news articles on Twitter, which had a large number of engagements. The researcher found that generally, *Awani News* maintained objectivity in their news articles but not in the headlines. Out of 14 analysed news articles, 13 headlines contained emotive words and there were 32 emotive words within the articles. The usage of emotive words was not consistent, as some articles had many emotive words while others had none. A study by Ahmed (2020) also illustrated the essentiality of emotive language in newspapers to express distinct ideologies. Altogether, these studies have explored the use of emotive language in journalism and its impact on readers. The studies have found that the use of emotive language varies, with some articles using it heavily and others not using it at all. The tone of the articles and the content of the coverage play a significant role in the use of emotive language. Furthermore, the cultural background of the reader also influences the

perception of the communication. The findings highlight the importance of being aware of the use of emotive language in journalism and its potential to influence and manipulate the audience.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Martin and White's (2005) appraisal model was used in this study. This model looks at how writers and speakers convey emotions and how they aim to evoke emotions in their intended audience. This model is based on the Systemic Functional Linguistic approach developed by M.A.K. Halliday (2004), which outlines a lexico-grammatical framework that influences the language choices of users. Martin and White's model expands upon Halliday's theory of interpersonal meaning by incorporating three fundamental systems: (1) attitude, (2) graduation, and (3) engagement. However, the scope of this study will only be constrained to the attitude system as it is the most important of the three systems. The importance is attributed to its link to "our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things" (Martin & White, 2005; Tajvidi & Arjani, 2017). White (2011) stated that the appraisal model views emotions and attitudes in a more comprehensive manner compared to previous understandings and found this approach to be more useful. Extending this, Martin and White's model suggests that individuals assign emotional significance to events (positive and negative assessments) by evaluating them in terms of three broad semantic domains which include affect, judgement, and appreciation.

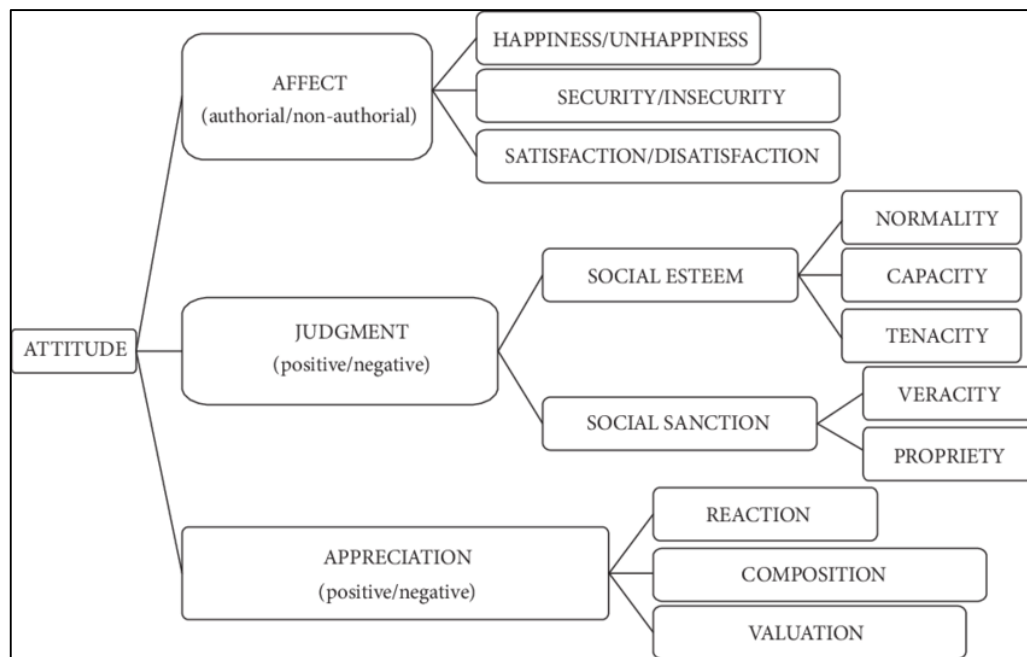


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

White (2011) defines affect in the appraisal model as a domain that concentrates on emotions, which can be expressed by either the speaker or the listener. Martin (1997, 2000) has identified five factors to help categorise these emotions, which include (1) enjoyment, (2) manifestation direction (behavioural or psychological), (3) source (reaction or undirected), (4) intensity, and (5) feelings towards the stimulus (realised or not). The affect domain is further divided into three sub-domains: (1) happiness/unhappiness (internal emotional state), (2) security/insecurity (social and ecological welfare), (3) satisfaction/dissatisfaction (fulfilment of purpose). The appraisal model provides a comprehensive understanding of how individuals assign emotional significance to events by evaluating them in terms of these various factors and sub-domains.

White (2011) explains that judgement is the domain of understanding in which attitudes are formed regarding human behaviour, based on whether it is deemed socially acceptable or not, and the

assessment of a person's character in relation to societal expectations and norms. He gave several criteria to determine if a situation falls within the domain of judgement. These criteria include the approval of behaviour based on established social norms and the assessment of a person's character based on societal expectations. In the model, these criteria are divided into two sub-domains, which are judgements of social sanction and judgements of social esteem. The two domains of judgements of social sanction and judgements of social esteem are each further divided into two sub-domains. Judgement of social sanction involves two sub-areas: veracity (the truthfulness of a person) and propriety (their morality). As for judgement of social status, it involves three aspects: normality (the typicality of a person), capacity (their capability), and tenacity (their dependability).

The appreciation model is characterised as the understanding of evaluations of human creations like artworks, structures, written works, and even natural phenomena and circumstances. White emphasised that the domain of appreciation is based on the evaluation of attractiveness. From both statements, the field of appreciation is focused on the enjoyment derived from things, circumstances, surroundings, and others. The appreciation domain is also separated into specific sub-domains. These are reaction in the form of impact (whether it grabbed me), the reaction in the form of quality (whether it likable), composition in the form of balance (whether it was integrated), composition in the form of complexity (whether it was accessible), and valuation (whether it was meaningful). Therefore, this study utilises the appraisal model which provides a comprehensive understanding of how individuals assign emotional significance to events by evaluating them in terms of these various factors and sub-domains.

2. Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach in identifying and comparing the emotive language used in online news articles from The Star and The Washington Post. A qualitative approach was deemed suitable for this study as a thorough and in-depth manner was necessary to gain insight into the use of emotive language by the two online newspapers (Hammersley, 2014). This study employed content analysis in evaluating the selected online political news articles. The goal of this analysis is to understand the meaning behind text-based materials, including written scripts, pictures, symbols, and audio recordings (Gheyle & Jacobs, 2017). Stemler (2001), similarly viewed content analysis as a useful tool in exploring prevalent tendencies and patterns in written materials. Taking these factors into consideration, it appears that content analysis is the most appropriate method as the goal of the study is to examine and comprehend the utilisation of emotive language in online news articles from two distinct news portals.

Homogenous purposive sampling was utilised in this study. Omona (2013) defines homogenous sampling as when, individuals, groups, or settings are chosen because they share similar characteristics. The first criterion was that the news article must be from the political genre. Next, the second criterion is that articles that were published between July 2022 and July 2023. In order to compare the emotive language usage, the selection of the companies was made based on the country in which they are headquartered which are Malaysia (The Star) and the United States of America (The Washington Post). Collectively, a total of 10 articles (5 articles from respective newspapers) were analysed in this study. The selection of the sample (online news articles) from The Star and The Washington Post is dependent on two criteria. The data analysed using the guideline was organised into relevant domains, using different coloured markers to differentiate between various types of emotive language words, based on the appraisal model by Martin and White (2005). The study focuses on one specific domain of the appraisal model, the domain of attitude. The definitions listed in Table 1 are adopted from White (2011).

Table 1: Coding scheme for data analysis (White, 2011)

Domain 1: Affect	Scheme
a. Happiness and Unhappiness <i>Emotions related to the heart</i>	U1

b. Security and Insecurity <i>Emotions related to social well-being</i>	U2
c. Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction <i>Emotions related to the pursuit of goals</i>	U3
Domain 2: Judgement of Social Esteem	Scheme
a. Normality (Is the person's behaviour unusual, special, customary?) <i>Standard, every day, standard, odd, unfortunate</i>	U4
b. Capacity (Is the person competent, capable?) <i>Strong, powerful, clever, stupid, slow, weak</i>	U5
c. Tenacity (Is the person dependable, well disposed?) <i>Brave, heroic, reliable, cowardly, rash, unreliable</i>	U6
Domain: Judgement of Social Sanction	Scheme
a. Veracity (Is the person honest?) <i>Honest, truthful, credible, deceitful, honest, bogus</i>	U7
b. Propriety (Is the person ethical, beyond approach?) <i>Good, moral, virtuous, bad, immoral, corrupt</i>	U8
Domain: Appreciation	Scheme
a. Reaction: Quality (Did I like it?) <i>Lively, beautiful, appealing, plain, ugly, repulsive</i>	U9
b. Reaction: Impact (Did it grab me?) <i>Engaging, fascinating, moving, boring, tedious, dry</i>	
c. Composition: Balance (Did it hang together?) <i>Balanced, harmonious, unified, unbalanced, irregular, flawed</i>	U10
d. Composition: Complexity (Was it hard to follow?) Simple, pure, elegant, ornate, extravagant, byzantine	
e. Valuation (Was it worthwhile?) <i>Penetrating, profound, deep, shallow, reductive, insignificant</i>	U11

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Emotive Language in The Star Political News Article

The first objective of this study is to analyse the emotive language in political news articles from The Star. Referring to the appraisal model by Martin and White (2005), Table 2 presents the emotive language analysed from five political news articles from The Star. Further interpretations of the identified emotive language are also provided.

Table 2: Analysis of political news articles from The Star

Article Headlines	Phrase	Discussion
Article 1	History was made at the Sabah assembly on Thursday (May 25) as it passed a law to stop party hopping that has seen governments fall and rise through defections over the last 60 years.	This phrase falls under the affect domain, specifically the domain of happiness (U1). To make history means to accomplish something significant that has not been achieved before and will be publicly recorded and remembered for an

	<p>extended period. By using the word "history" and stating that a significant event was made, the journalist evokes a sense of happiness and positive sentiment to emphasise the importance of the decisions made at the Sabah assembly.</p>
<p>Article 2 It was a massive crowd, the mood was fantastic, people were pushing to take pictures of the Prime Minister with their handphones and, most of all, there were many young people. It was quite a charm offensive because no other prime minister in recent times has drawn such an animated crowd in the PAS state.</p>	<p>The words "massive" and "fantastic" fall under satisfaction in the affect domain, specifically satisfaction (U3). In this article, "massive" is used to describe the size of the crowd and create a positive impression of the reception and support for Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's event. "Fantastic" portrays a highly positive sentiment and suggests a high level of enthusiasm and excitement among the attendees.</p> <p>The words "charm" and "offensive" are used together in a phrase. A "charm offensive" is defined as a public campaign, typically carried out by politicians, aimed at highlighting their charisma or credibility. This falls under the judgement of the social esteem domain, specifically capacity (U5). This choice of words suggests a deliberate and strategic approach by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to win over and appeal to the audience, indicating a positive valuation of his capability to accomplish such an achievement.</p>
<p>Article 3 It was politically surreal to board a flight filled with politicians from almost all the political divides in Sabah. Saturday, and most on the flight were heading for the maiden unity government national convention at UMNO's headquarters in Kuala Lumpur the following day.</p>	<p>The word "surreal" implies that the situation of politicians from different parties coming together is unusual or extraordinary while "unity" indicates that the unification will have a positive impact. This falls under the judgement of social esteem domain specifically normality (U4).</p>
<p>Article 4 The Deputy Prime Minister said this at a low-key event to celebrate UMNO's 77th anniversary where he also defended Umno's role in the Unity Government.</p>	<p>The term "low-key" can be used in an informal manner which translates to undertaking actions or achievements without actively seeking or receiving substantial attention or recognition from others. The reason for using this word choice is to emphasise that the event was held in a controlled or restricted manner rather than being openly held. This falls under the judgement of social esteem, notably, the normality domain (U4) because it indicates that the event was a special gathering for UMNO's members.</p>

	<p>Some have alleged that the mastermind is Bersatu secretary-general Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin although he would be the first to deny it. This is coming from people who are familiar with the way Hamzah works, how his mind ticks and his art of psywar.</p>	<p>In the domain of judgement of social sanction, the word "mastermind" falls under the category of veracity (U7), which assesses the honesty or truthfulness of a person's actions or intentions. In this context, the journalist uses the term "mastermind" to imply that there is someone influential and manipulative behind the plot or conspiracy being discussed. It suggests that this person is secretly orchestrating events and manipulating political situations, which may lead to certain actions or outcomes.</p>
<p>Article 5</p>	<p>It cuts both ways: Anwar is damned if he helps to pardon Najib, and damned if he doesn't.</p>	<p>The word "damned" expresses a strong negative evaluation and emotional intensity. In this context, it indicates that Anwar faces unfavourable consequences, regardless of whether he chooses to help pardon Najib or not. This word falls under the domain of affect, in particular the insecurity domain (U2) because it conveys a sense of insecurity and difficult circumstances surrounding Anwar's decision, reflecting potential risks and challenges he may encounter due to the situation.</p>

3.2 Emotive Language in The Washington Post Political News Article

The second research objective intends to analyse the emotive language used in the online political news articles from The Washington Post. Content analysis was used to scrutinise the selected five articles based on the appraisal model postulated by Martin and White (2005). Table 3 depicts the results of the analysis and presents further interpretation.

Table 3: Analysis of Political News Articles from The Washington Post

Article Headlines	Phrase	Discussion
<p>Article 1</p>	<p>The visits are giving top supporters more face time with the Republican governor as he prepares to launch his presidential campaign following criticism that he's neglected the personal side of politics.</p>	<p>The word "neglected" in the context of the news article can be categorised under the domain of affect, specifically under the dissatisfaction domain (U3). It implies a sense of dissatisfaction or criticism towards Ron DeSantis, suggesting that he has not given enough attention or focus to the personal side of politics, as stated in the article. This word reflects a negative evaluation of DeSantis's actions or lack thereof, indicating a level of dissatisfaction with his approach.</p>
	<p>While he boasts a staunchly conservative record and a decisive</p>	<p>The journalist uses the words "staunchly" and "boasts" to indicate the</p>

reelection win, he is just starting to introduce himself to voters outside of Florida, has shown flashes of **awkwardness** and has come across as aloof to some donors and power brokers.

high level of conservativeness of DeSantis and how he takes great pride in his beliefs and principles. This falls under domain of appreciation, in particular the valuation domain (U11) because it shows a negative valuation and presents DeSantis's style as arrogance.

The use of "awkwardness" in this news article conveys a sense of insecurity and unease associated with DeSantis's interactions and personal presentation. Aloof: This word implies a lack of warmth or approachability, indicating a potentially negative perception of DeSantis's style.

He also faces an opponent in Trump who has a record of **exploiting** his opponents' weaknesses in deeply personal ways.

This word "exploiting" relates to the domain of Judgement of Social Sanction, Veracity (U7) which assesses whether a person is honest or deceitful. In this context, the journalist is implying that Donald Trump tends to manipulate and take advantage of his opponent's weaknesses, suggesting a lack of honesty or fair play in his actions.

Article 2 The **storming** of the Capitol by a pro-Trump mob intent on stopping the certification of Joe Biden's electoral college win and the democratic transfer of power resulted in five dead, injuries to 140 members of law enforcement and the ransacking of parts of the Capitol.

The journalist uses the word "storming" in the article to describe the event as the "storming of the Capitol" by a pro-Trump mob during the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection. This falls under the domain of affect, notably the insecurity domain (U2). The word "storming" conveys a sense of forceful entry and aggression during the event.

Article 3 There's a lot of **nonsense** in there but pick out the throughline: He "won two [e]lections" and yet people like DeSantis "say I can't win."

The word "nonsense" falls under the domain of affect, specifically the unhappiness domain (U1). It is used by the journalist to express a negative evaluation of the content of Trump's argument. In this context, the use of this word suggests that the journalist views Trump's claims as lacking sense or rationality. The use of "nonsense" may not be an exaggeration, as it is a subjective assessment of the validity of Trump's claims based on available evidence.

And why not? Beyond Trump simply **hammering** on this (**silly**) idea that he won both of his presidential contests (when he in fact lost the popular vote both times), Republicans have viewed

In the context of the article, the word "Silly" is used to describe Trump's idea that he won both of his presidential contests, despite losing the popular vote both times. By labelling the idea as "silly," the journalist is expressing a

	<p>the 2020 results as suspect from the outset.</p>	<p>negative evaluation of Trump's claim, suggesting that it is foolish or lacking in seriousness. This evaluation falls under the appreciation, particularly valuation (U11), as it pertains to the assessment of worth or significance.</p>
		<p>The adjective "hammering" is also used figuratively to describe Trump's persistent and forceful efforts to promote the idea that he won both of his presidential contests, despite evidence to the contrary. This aligns with the judgement of the social esteem domain, specifically the tenacity domain (U6) in the coding scheme, as it portrays Trump as being determined and persistent in his claims, regardless of the evidence presented.</p>
	<p>Setting the politics aside, this poll finding should be deeply dispiriting to anyone who likes to believe that the truth will out.</p>	<p>The poll finding that a significant number of Republicans still believe in the illegitimacy of the 2020 election despite lack of evidence is described as "deeply dispiriting" for those who value truth and accuracy. The word "dispiriting" expresses a negative emotion which would fall under the domain of appreciation, notably valuation (U11). The adjective "deeply" is used to intensify the emotional impact of the statement. It emphasises that the poll finding is not just dispiriting but significantly and profoundly dispiriting.</p>
<p>Article 4</p>	<p>And more than anything, he is rather deliberately making a mockery of the legal system.</p>	<p>The word "mockery" falls under the domain of judgement of social sanction, particularly the propriety domain (U8). "Mockery" suggests a disrespectful and derisive attitude towards the legal system, which can be seen as an evaluation of ethical conduct or propriety. It implies that Trump's actions are not in line with the expected standards of behaviour within the legal context.</p>
<p>Article 5</p>	<p>This is fiction. FBI interviews revealed that the arrangement came about because Clinton, a technophobe who, according to aides, never learned how to use a desktop computer, did not want to give up her BlackBerry device.</p>	<p>The word "fiction" falls under the domain of judgement of social sanction, notably the veracity (U7) domain, which deals with judgements related to honesty and truthfulness. In this context, "fiction" is used to question the accuracy or truthfulness of Donald Trump's statements, implying that they may not be based on factual information.</p>

3.3 Comparison of Emotive Language in The Star and The Washington Post Online Political News Articles

This section answers the third research question of this study which is to compare the usage of emotive language used in political online news articles by The Star and The Washington Post. The tabulation of type and frequency of analysed news articles from The Star and The Washington Post are tabulated in Table 4 and Table 5 respectively.

Table 4: Tabulation of emotive language in political news article from The Star

Items	Affect		Judgement		Appreciation	
	Type	Frequency	Type	Frequency	Type	Frequency
Article 1	Happiness (U1)	1				
Article 2	Insecurity (U2)	1	Capacity (U5)	1		
	Satisfaction (U3)	1				
Article 3			Normality (U4)	1		
Article 4			Normality (U4)	1		
			Veracity (U7)	1		
Article 5	Insecurity (U2)	1				

Table 5: Tabulation of emotive language in political news article from The Washington Post

Items	Affect		Judgement		Appreciation	
	Type	Frequency	Type	Frequency	Type	Frequency
Article 1	Dissatisfaction (U3)	1	Veracity (U7)	1	Valuation (U11)	1
Article 2	Insecurity (U2)	1				
Article 3	Unhappiness (U1)	1	Tenacity (U6)	1	Valuation (U11)	2
Article 4			Propriety (U8)	1		
Article 5			Veracity (U7)	1		

Tables 4 and 5 show the results of the types of emotive language used in news articles from The Star and The Washington Post based on the Appraisal Model (Martin & White, 2005). A comparison between the political news articles from The Star (from Malaysia) and The Washington Post (from the United States) demonstrates a significant use of emotive language. The Star includes a diverse range of emotive words related to affect and judgement domains. The analysis in Table 4 highlights that Article 2 from The Star utilised various domains of emotive language in comparison to the remaining four articles. It is also notable that no phrases or sentences that are aligned with the appreciation domain were observed in the selected articles from The Star. This is incongruent with the findings from The Washington Post as the analysis reports that the online political news articles from The Washington Post utilised all three domains in their reporting. This study observes that the political writing in The Washington Post focuses on specific aspects of the judgement and valuation domains in evaluating and critiquing various aspects of the news in order to spark interest among readers by establishing credibility (Armstrong & Collins, 2009). The judgement-inclined observation in this study is corroborated by Fadhil (2021) who reported that Donald Trump predominantly utilised judgements in his political speeches. Despite these differences, this study established that both newspapers employed emotive language to convey and assess information, reflecting their respective journalistic styles and reporting priorities within their cultural contexts.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Emotive language is a popular technique employed by media practitioners to create an emotional connection with their readers, evoking strong reactions and influencing their perspectives on various issues (Macagno & Walton, 2010). This emotional manipulation can sometimes lead readers away from objectively evaluating the facts and truth behind the news, as they might be swayed by their emotions rather than relying on evidence and unbiased reporting. Therefore, this study analysed the prevalence of the emotive language in political online news articles. This study identified that there are differences in the use of emotive language in political newspaper articles between *The Star* (Malaysia) and *The Washington Post* (the United States of America). This conclusion mirrors Ma'yuuf and Kareem (2022) who observed that there are varying differences in the emotive language of terror between the Arabic and American newspapers.

Malaysia, a nation that practises a more constrained culture, may emphasise social harmony and avoid overtly critical or negative portrayals that could potentially disrupt the prevailing order. Journalists in Malaysia may navigate a more delicate balance when reporting on sensitive topics and political issues, leading to a preference for conveying a positive impression in their news articles. This may be in line with cultural norms and expectations, where open criticism or dissenting views may be less common in the media. On the other hand, the American media landscape is characterised by a stronger emphasis on freedom of speech and press freedom. As underlined by Zheng (2017), emotive language is used to portray abstract ideas in a bold manner. American journalism often values the role of the media as a watchdog and believes in the importance of holding those in power accountable. As a result, American journalists may be more inclined to express negativity when required, especially in their coverage of government actions or policies. This approach aligns with the American value of freedom of expression and the media's role as a check on power.

Based on the research findings, several recommendations for future research can be made to further explore emotive language in journalism and its impact on public opinion. This study only had a look into the emotive language used in political news articles from news platforms of two different cultures, only Malaysia and The United States. Firstly, future researchers could conduct comparative studies on emotive language usage across different news platforms from various countries, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural factors influence journalistic practices and language choices. Such cross-cultural analyses could offer valuable insights into the varying degrees of emotive language usage and its effects on audience perception in diverse societal contexts. Another area of interest for future researchers is the examination of emotive language use in other forms of media, beyond traditional journalism. Exploring how emotive language is employed in social media, advertising, and political communication could reveal its role in shaping public discourse and mobilizing public opinion in different contexts. To improve the present study, future researchers could consider expanding the sample size and including a more diverse range of news articles from various topics and periods. This could enhance the generalisability of the findings and allow for a more nuanced analysis of emotive language usage across different journalistic genres and timeframes.

The implications of this study are far-reaching, encompassing tangible improvements for individuals, communities, organisations, institutions, cultures, and societies as a whole. By shedding light on the use of emotive language in online news and its impact on shaping public opinion, the research equips individuals, especially language students and academics, with a deeper understanding of how emotions are conveyed in language and how they can influence perspectives and opinions. This knowledge can empower individuals to critically analyse news content and make more informed decisions, leading to a more discerning and media-literate citizenry. Furthermore, the study holds significant value for political activists, enabling them to recognise biased journalism and manipulative language techniques employed to sway public sentiment. Armed with this awareness, activists can engage in more effective advocacy and foster a more transparent and accountable democratic society.

Ultimately, the research findings contribute to the improvement of journalistic practices, fostering ethical and balanced reporting that enhances the public's trust in the media as there are reports on the decline in newspaper reporting trustworthiness.

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