

## A Transitivity Analysis of English Newspapers Headlines on the Ukraine-Russia War: A Study with Critical Discourse Analysis and Systematic Functional Linguistics' Perspective

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### Abstract

Newspaper is the representative of what happens in society. It uses different writing strategies. The language of the newspaper emerged from beliefs, speech and writing practices (Joseph, 2006). There are different lexical, grammatical, and discursive strategies that the author uses in his article or headline. This study aims to explore the lexical and discursive choices that are used in newspaper headlines depicting the Ukraine-Russia war. It uses a descriptive research method and Halliday's transitivity system as a research instrument. The researcher investigated how language features are used to create an emotional impact and influence the common public. The study highlights the hidden ideologies that are the basis of the lexical choices or different representations of the same event. The results show that *Stars and Strips*, a German newspaper, shows Vladimir Putin as a leader of Russia who has authority and a great impact on the people of Russia, but "The New York Post" and "The Guardian" depict him as a murderer who is responsible for this war and attacks Ukraine and kill people violently because of his desire.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is seen as normal human behaviour. Language is very important for a human being to fulfil their needs since it is a communication system (Ningsih & Megah, 2021). Only through using language components correctly people make themselves understood by others. Language is 'meaning potential' (Osisanwo, 2011, pp. 23–24). Jackson (2014) claims that "language is always unbiased and binary structure exists in all languages because the direct opposite of noun, verb and adjective is there". Language is not considered merely a tool to interpret reality. Rather it is also a means to construct reality (Taiwoo, 2007). Habermas (1979) has said, "Language is also a medium of domination and social power. It serves to legitimate relations of organized force" (p. 130). The purpose that legitimates the use of some kinds of specific linguistic structures is more important than the structure. Each language prefers some specific devices but not others, and this preference can be related to cultural and personal differences

(Khodabandeh, 2007). Reah (2002) states that “if a particular culture has little respect for certain groups, concepts, or beliefs, then the language for expressing ideas about those groups, concepts, or beliefs will reflect that attitude”. This kind of use can be explored by use of critical discourse analysis theories; as Van Dijk (1996, p. 86) points out, “one of the central tasks of CDA is to account for the relationships between discourse and social power.”

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a qualitative analytical approach for critically describing, interpreting and explaining how discourses construct, maintain, and legitimize social inequalities (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA rests on the notion that we use language is purposeful, regardless of whether discursive choices are conscious or unconscious (Dianna R. Mullet, 2018). According to Fiske (1994), our words have the power to reflect the interests of their speakers, and they are never neutral. Moreover, CDA is also utilized to survey the relations between language, ideology, and power (Wang, 2010).

Media, for example, newspapers, can represent people’s vision and guide or change the way that they think or react to something. As indicated by Van Dijk (1993a, p. 243; 2000, p. 38; 2002, p. 151-152), individuals tend to believe everything the media says regarding different incidents and events as they see the media as a sound and reliable source, giving the primary facts and actual meanings of a happening. In the 21st century, media, being the fourth pillar of a state, possesses potential power in any society (Thomas & Wareing, 1999; Nani, 2003). It is said that the media may control and sell the information (Richardson, 2007). Mass media shapes public opinion as it is the most powerful force in society (Islam et al., 2015, Carvehlo, 2008, & Van Dijk, 1999). A striking fact is the difference in the overall styles of journalists in dealing with the same issue (Crystal & Davy, 1969). As a result, the same event could be represented differently by various newspapers to propagate the desired ideology (Wang, 1993; Fang, 2001).

Thus, the current study is going to analyze how linguistic choices can create subtle differences in a story. The other purpose is to see the picture that newspapers represent of the Ukraine-Russia war. It aims to investigate the way international newspapers depict this war in their headlines. Hodge, Kress, and Jones (1979) state that the systems of ideas that constitute ideologies are expressed through language. Language supplies the models and categories of thought, and in part, people's experience of the world is through language (p. 81). The reason behind this study is to raise the readers’ awareness and give them a critical-thinking view. They can acknowledge the way that language can be used to give them a distorted and one-sided version of reality for reaching the specified purposes.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis**

Many researchers define CDA. According to Van Dijk (1999), critical discourse analysis (CDA) is the study of social practices through which social power, dominance, and inequality are being practised or sometimes resisted through written or spoken text. Wodak (2011) states, “Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is particularly concerned with the relationship between language and power”. Fairclough (2001) determines that CDA is a paradigm that reveals both veiled and unequivocal social as well as political principles and beliefs. CDA is an approach that is keen on breaking down “social phenomena” which are essentially intricate and subsequently require a multi-methodical approach (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Van Dijk (1995)

states that “CDA pays special attention to power relation, domination and discrimination; and how these are recreated and opposed in the conversation by the members of different social groups”. Critical discourse analysis is a great tool for determining relationships and social attitudes. It can give us knowledge of how things happened and shown in written and spoken discourse.

### **2.2. Discourse Of Media**

Media can be considered one of the most important phenomena in human life. The discourse that the media uses is purposeful. A statement without any purpose cannot be called discourse (Gee, 2010). Fairclough (2003) and Johnstone (2018) define discourse (written or spoken) as a way to highlight different relations of the people to the external world may it be political, economic, social, or religious. Using different discourses, media, and people using it can affect the way people think and act. Public opinions and beliefs are always moulded by media institutions (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). We can find daily newspapers, channels, or websites that report the same incident differently. As Fairclough (2003, p. 53) explains further, “When the voice of another is incorporated into a text, there are always choices about how to ‘frame’ it, how to contextualize it in terms of other parts of the text”. Discursive techniques are used as persuasive tools to disseminate a particular ideology to the target readership (Phillips et al., 2004). Therefore, there is a strong relationship between media and discourse.

### **2.3. Newspapers headlines**

Headlines are the most important part of a newspaper. A headline is one of the most distinctive features of a newspaper as it highlights the creativity of the journalists (Crystal, 1993). A newspaper performs its communicative act through headlines (Tiawo, 2007). The communicative function of the headline is to build relevance between the news story and the reader (Dor, 2003; p. 696). It can show us the newspaper’s attitude toward an event. According to Develotte and Rechniewski (2001), newspaper headlines are more likely to have a greater influence on readers because of certain linguistic features. The success and failure of a newspaper can be directly related to this part. Every headline should influence the pedestrians who see it. We can say that the author and the reader interact and communicate with each other through the medium of headlines of the newspaper (Bitiniene, 2007, p. 62). It can be a hard job. Therefore, headline writers must be experts in their skills (Don and Simpson, 2002). Headlines are the first part of a newspaper that we can see and read, so they should be engaging, eye-catching, and interesting to readers. However, it is the last item to be written (Bell, 1991). Morrish (2003) explains that headlines are the final gist of news articles. As stated by Reath (1998, p. 50), media “are not simply vehicles for delivering information. They guide the ideological stance of the reader.” The language that newspapers used can be considered a device for the wide spreading of political and ideological values and ideas.

### **2.4. Ideology**

According to Johnstone (2018), ideology is a system of beliefs. Hatim and Mason (1997, p. 218) describe ideology as “a body of assumption which reflects the beliefs and interests of an individual, a group of individuals and societal institutions which ultimately finds expression in language”. Van Dijk (1988b, p.7) explains, “Ideologies are the fundamental beliefs of a group and its members”. Through language, we can relate ideology to political ideas, power relations, political parties, and organizations. Fowler and Kress (1979) stressed that “Ideology can be studied through linguistic analysis and is known as a source of power and strength in the text.”

The writers can show their political attitudes and their political parties. Fowler (1991) explains that news is a product formed due to political, economic, or cultural factors. Generally, the use of linguistic factors is a common way to interpret or write about similar events. As a result, the way that we use language can be important and show something more than just a series of words or sentences. As Wodak and Fairclough (1997) have said, "Language is a social activity, so it is an approach towards the presentation of things and position of the people, and in this sense, social life is organized in it."

### **2.5.Previous studies**

Some related research shows the importance of this issue. Several studies have been undertaken on news analysis. The most famous ones are Van Dijk (1985), Fairclough (1995a), Paniagua et al. (2007), Fowler (1991), Bell (1991), Richardson (2007), Bell & Peter (1998), Matheson (2005), Lukin (2013) and Boyd-Barrett (2009). They investigate this issue from different perspectives. Conboy (2010) and Reah (2002) looked at newspaper headlines from stylistic and syntactical perspectives. Fairclough (1995a) built a model that integrates discourse analysis based on linguistics, social thought, and politics and is generally integrated into social change. Abdel-Hafez (2006) studied front-page headlines of Egyptian newspapers, which have different ideological affiliations, using the methodological framework of Develotte and Richniewski (2001) for the discourse analysis of newspaper headlines. Taiwo (2007) presents a Critical Discourse Analysis of Nigerian newspaper headlines. (Abdel Kawy, 2015). Bonyadi and Samuel (2013), in their analysis of headlines in newspaper editorials, reveal that the editors had a very subjective attitude toward the topic. (Muhammad Akbar Sajid, Behzad Anwar & Muhammad Ashraf, 2019).

Above all, the present study aims to investigate and help our understanding of the way that the most important event in 2022, the Ukraine-Russia war, has been shown in some newspapers around the world. Every newspaper in the world publishes many articles or reports about it. They have their point of view. Choices are made as to which voices are foregrounded and which are not: the way that language is used reveals norms and value judgments. (Richardson, 2007: 48). This paper seeks to analyze the linguistic and discursive strategies used to report the Ukraine-Russia war.

### **2.6.Research question**

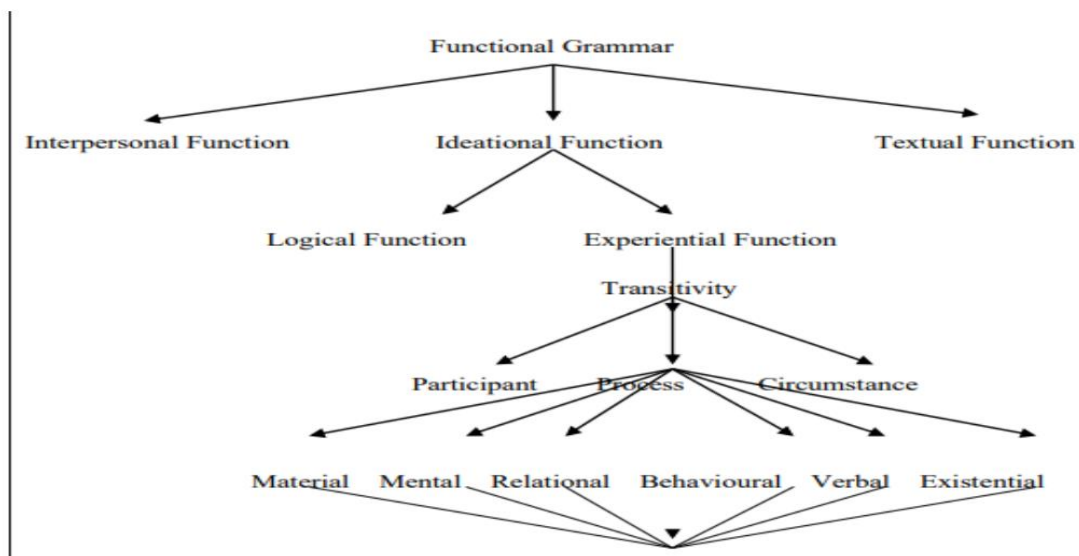
In the light of the above discussion, our work aims to contribute to the process of a more accurate investigation of this question:

1. What transitivity choices have been employed in these newspapers to show this war?
2. What are the differences and similarities of these newspapers' headlines by use of transitivity analysis?
3. How do they represent the same event by different linguistic features?

### **2.7.Theoretical framework**

Transitivity Analysis: Halliday SFL Tenets

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is the theory of language that focuses on the functions of language. The presentation of systemic functional categories opts in the analysis of CDA in its early



**Table 1. The conceptual framework of functional grammar**

stages in the work of Wodak (1989), Fairclough (1989), and Fowler (1996). According to Halliday and Matthiesen (2014), SFL germinates from the foundation that language is an instrument of social interaction, which has evolved to meet our communicative needs in society. He conceptualized Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) as an approach (Harman, 2008). It studies the relationships between language and social context. In SFL, the purpose is to combine form and meaning. It investigates how human linguistic knowledge can deliver different meanings according to different social situations or participants.

According to Halliday (1985), language has three main meta functions: the textual, the interpersonal, and the ideational. The first function deals with grammatical structures that build a message. It focuses on the interpretation of language and the way the text is organized and structured. Halliday (1994) mentions that textual meaning is an interpretation of the clause in its function as a message. The second meta-function focuses on the use of language as a bridge and a way of conducting social relations. Halliday (1994: 21) states that “interpersonal meaning is an interpretation of the clause in its function as an exchange”. The interpersonal metafunction explains the relationship between interaction and semantic organization (Eggs, 2004). Language is used for interaction and social relationships. The third one, the focus of this article, is ideational meta function or Transitivity. Halliday (1981), clarifies Transitivity as the clause analysis expressing ideational meanings. The ideational function is concerned with the use of language to communicate information and content. It is related to our world experience. It is a real-world function. According to Thompson (1996), “ideational meaning is the using of language to talk about the experience in the world, including the worlds in the minds, to describe events and states and entities involved in them”. Ideational meta function comprises two elements. the experiential function 2. and the logical function. The first one can help the author make meaning about the world by the use of specific structures. It is concerned with the way that the speaker or author wants to show the world in a conversation.

Transitivity or Ideational meta function is about what is happening, what will happen, and what has happened (Halliday, 1978). Transitivity was first introduced by Halliday in his conceptualization of functional grammar. According to Halliday (1994: 18), “Functional



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Grammar is a study of wordings, but one that interprets the wording by reference to what it means, and the meaning is encoded in the wording as an integrated whole". Transitivity is one of the three components of SFL tenets. It discussed the role of grammatical components in the word processes and social functions of a sentence. Simpson (1993), defines "Transitivity refers to how meaning is expressed in the clause". He added, "Transitivity demonstrates how speakers encode their mental image of truth in language and account for their experience of the world around them since it concerns the transmission of ideas; it is a part of language's ideational function" (p. 88). When you encounter a sentence, you should ask some questions like "where, what, and why" to comprehend and extract the exact meaning and the situation that happened in this sentence. Burton (1982), puts this process of transitivity analysis as "to explain the scenario of "who does what to whom" (p.200). It analyzes the language of clauses to find out the happenings, participants, and circumstances regarding a certain event (Abbas & Talaat, 2019).

According to Halliday, there are three basic elements to the structure of Transitivity: the process itself, the participants, and the circumstances underlying the process. The process refers to the events that happened in the clause. The process(verbs) can be an active or a passive category. The category of process type also plays a role in implying meaning to the text about hegemony. Journalists in news discourse do more than just cover the news; they can also communicate their tacit meaning by using various terms and processes (Liu & Jia, 2020). The participants (nouns) determine the elements and entities that are in the process of the clause, e.g., actor, goal, speaker, receiver, sensor, etc.

<b>Process Type</b>	<b>What they construe?</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Material (Happening of an event & Doing of an action)	drive, push, melt, cook, kick, play, jump, etc.	Actor, Goal, Range, Beneficiary
Behavioural (Physiological & Psychological)	Behaving—like breathing, dreaming, snoring, smiling, hiccupping, looking, listening, watching and pondering	Behaver & the Behaviour
Mental (Perception, Affection & Cognition)	Feeling—like feel, see, etc. Thinking—like know, hear, see, etc.	Sensor, Phenomenon
Verbal (Saying or Signaling)	Saying—like asking, commanding, offering, stating, showing, indicating, etc.	Sayer, Receiver, Verbiage
Being - Relational (Attributive & Ideational)	Construing attribute Construing identity	Carrier, Attribute, Token, Value
Being - Existential	Existing	Existence

**Table 2. Processes, what they include, and the participants (Abbas & Talaat, 2019: 402)**

The circumstances (prepositional phrases) are identified with questions such as when, where, how much, and what or location, manner, etc.

Type	Category	Examples
<b>Extent</b>	a) Distance	a) He walks <u>for seven miles</u> .
	b) Duration	b) She stayed <u>for two hours</u> .
<b>Location</b>	a) Place	a) we work <u>in the kitchen</u>
	b) time	b) I get up <u>at six o'clock</u> .
<b>Manner</b>	a) Means	a) My mother went <u>by bus</u> .
	b) Quality	b) It was snowing <u>heavily</u> .
	c) Comparison	c) It went through my head <u>like an earthquake</u> .
<b>Cause</b>	a) Reason	a) <u>For want of</u> a nail the shoe was lost
	b) Purpose	b) <u>For the sake of</u> peace.
	c) Behalf	c) I'm writing <u>on behalf of</u> Aunt Jane.
<b>Accompaniment</b>	a) Comitative	a) Fred came <u>with Tom</u> .
	b) Additive	b) Fred came <u>instead of Tom</u> .
<b>Matter</b>		I worry <u>about her health</u>
<b>Role</b>		I am speaking <u>as your employer</u>

Table 3. Circumstances and their categories (Bustam, 2011: 30)

Ideology can be found through the process and participants of the Transitivity since circumstances consist only of adverbs (Noor, 2015 Musthtag et al., 2020). In Table 4, we bring some examples from a short story called “Heroic Mother”. We can see the combination of these three elements in some sentences. Halliday and Matthiessen portray the interrelationship between transitivity processes as a sphere that enables us to construe and portray our

<i>Process Type</i>	<i>Examples</i>
	(Participants <u>underlined</u> ; Process in <b>bold</b> ; Circumstances in <i>Italics</i> )
Material	<b>I do</b> <u>my exercise</u> <i>near Hoan Kiem lake</i>
Behavioural	<b>I smile</b> <u>at them</u>
Mental	<b>I do not understand</b>
Verbal	<u>They say</u> ->I have acted crazy all my life
Relational	<b>I am</b> <u>a kindly grandmother</u>
Existential	<i>today there's</i> <u>Christianity</u> <i>in the south</i> (Note 1)

experiential meanings of the world, and how we perceive what is going on. (1976, p. 172)

Table 4. Examples of different process types from “Heroic Mother” (Thu Hanh Nguyen,2012)

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research design

In this study, the researcher employs the qualitative method with a descriptive approach to analyze the discursive features of newspaper headlines. According to Sugiyono (2017), research has natural settings and inductive data analysis, where the result of qualitative methodology only focuses on meaning, because meaning is the only pure data. It is an objective and neutral methodological framework aiming at describing how reality is; it keeps a distance from forming hypotheses or developing theories (Van der Voort, 2002). The goal of this

research is to find the purpose of using the specific structures and determining the roles of the processes, participants, and circumstances underlying the event.

Twenty-three headlines(H) were collected from three different English-written newspapers about the Ukraine-Russia war two weeks after the happening of the event. (24<sup>th</sup> February-6<sup>th</sup> March 2022). The researcher chose the online versions of these newspapers because of their availability and the ease of tracing them. Different headlines were adopted from these newspapers. The criteria for choosing these headlines were not constant. The researcher did not consider the number of headlines that are taken from every newspaper. Each headline will be dealt with separately to identify the process, participant, and circumstance that exists in that clause. The following table shows us the chosen headlines:



<b>The newspaper</b>	<b>Date of publishing</b>	<b>Statements of headlines</b>
<b><i>Stars and Strips</i></b> <b>(Germany)</b>	February 24, 2022	Russia evacuating the embassy in Ukraine. <b><u>Volume 5, Issue 1, 2024</u></b>
	February 25, 2022	War in Ukraine
	February 28, 2022	Russia puts nuclear force on alert.
	March 1, 2022	The invasion not going as Russia planned.
	March 2, 2022	Russia pummels Ukraine no.2 city.
	March 4, 2022	Long anxious trek
	March 7, 2022	Invasion reorders West's calculation.
<b><i>The Guardian</i></b> <b>(United Kingdom)</b>	February 24, 2022	Russia's force launch a 'special military operation' in Ukraine. Putin declares war as Russia invades Ukraine.
	February 25, 2022	Putin invades
	February 28, 2022	Putin puts nuclear force on high alert as backlash grows
	March 1, 2022	Russia deadly raids defy sanctions and peace talks
	March 2, 2022	Desperate rush for the last train from Kyiv
	March 4, 2022	Putin prompts fears that 'the worst is yet to come'.
	March 7, 2022	Macron urges Putin to allow Ukraine's besieged cities to be evacuated.
<b><i>The New York Post</i></b> <b>(United States)</b>	February 24, 2022	Putin declares war on Europe
	February 25, 2022	13 heroes die telling Russians go f... yourself.
	February 28, 2022	code red world outrage as Putin puts nuke on alert
	March 1, 2022	mad Vlad
	March 2, 2022	We are fighting for our freedom.
	March 4, 2022	Inhuman- Putin butchers children and worst is yet to come.
	March 6, 2022	beauties and the beast
	March 7, 2022	murder of innocents

**Table 5: The newspapers and their headlines**

### 3.2.Data analysis

In this section, we investigate our corpus following three elements of transitivity. We use the day that they publish as a criterion for analyzing(A) better.

#### A1. 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022:

##### H1. Russia evacuating embassy in Ukraine.

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Russia	Evacuating	Embassy	In Ukraine
Actor	PR: material	Goal	Cir: location

H1 is taken from *Stars and Stripes*, an English-written newspaper in Germany. Here, we have a country as an actor. It means the Russian government. In this headline, the author used the transitive verb “evacuate”. In Merriam-Webster dictionary, evacuate means “to remove especially from a military zone or dangerous area”. So, there is a war in Ukraine.

**H2. Russia force launch a ‘special military operation’ in Ukraine.**

Russia force	Launch	‘Special military operation’	In Ukraine
Actor	PR: material	Goal	Cir: location

H2 is taken from *The Guardian* newspaper. It is an active voice clause showing the effect of the process on circumstance. The actor is not a person but a military force. The lexeme “launch” shows the desire of the actor to start the action first without any cause.

**H3. Putin declares war as Russia invades Ukraine.**

Putin	Declares	War
Actor	PR: material	Goal

Russia	invades	Ukraine
Actor	PR: material	Goal

H3 is from *The Guardian* newspaper. It consists of two clauses. Both of them are active voices. The first sentence uses an individual as the actor. So, he is responsible for this war, and his country is not with him. Clause 1 helps in showing the effect of the two processes on the goal of clause 2. The latter is affected by the two actions of the actors in clauses 1 and 2. Both processes of declaring war and invasion directly affect the goal in clause 2, which is Ukraine.

**H4. Putin declares war on Europe**

Putin	Declares	War	On Europe
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Actor	PR: material	goal	Cir: location
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H4 is taken from an American newspaper, *The New York Post*. Here, Putin is known as the actor, not his country or people. So, the war is because of him. The clause is active, and the verb is transitive. “declares” refers to the fact that Putin starts this war, and he is responsible. Ukraine is in “Europe”. This word refers to all the countries that are in Europe. This threat and madness can be a warning for all.

**A2. 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022:**

**H5. Putin invades**

Putin	Invades
Actor	PR: material

The clause includes only the actor and the process. The goal is omitted here not only for brevity and to save space (Reah, 2002) but also to direct the readers’ attention toward the actor and the process. The purpose is to claim that the responsibility is on Putin’s shoulders, and the absence of the goal, along with the use of the lexeme ‘invades’ indicates that the doer of the action has power on the one hand and has an intention to take over other countries not only Ukraine on the other hand (El Houssine, 2022). Lexeme “invades” refers to the actor’s power and intention. There are no circumstances here. We can indicate that he has no clear circumstance or purpose for his decision.

**H6. 13 heroes die telling Russians go f... yourself.**

Thirteen heroes	Die
Actor	PR: material

Telling	Russians
Process	Goal

Go f...	Yourself
PR: material	Goal

The first thing that needs mentioning here is the word “heroes”. Hero, in Merriam-Webster dictionary, means “a legendary figure or an object of extreme admiration”. So, the author admires the protestants’ work and gives them the nickname “heroes”. “Russians” means the Russian army. In the end, they die because of their work, but why? They just insult them. This sentence shows the Russian army’s brutality. They kill people easily.

**A3. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**H7. Russia puts nuclear force on alert.**

Russia	Puts	Nuclear force	On alert
Actor	PR: material	Goal	Circumstance

H7 talks about the upcoming disaster. It uses putting something on alert that means the Russian government has a plan and an intention. Force means “a body (as of troops or ships) assigned to a military purpose”. The author uses this word to show the extent of the violation. It is a war and Russia’s nuclear bombs are planned to use for this purpose. This is a disaster.

**H8. Putin puts nuclear force on high alert as backlash grows**

Putin	Puts	Nuclear force	On high alert
Actor	PR: material	Goal	Circumstance

Backlash	Grows
Actor	PR: material

H8 talks about the same event but the author uses different linguistic and discursive features. Backlash means “a strong adverse reaction”. So, Ukraine is considered a strong country that answers Russia’s violations. The author wants to show us that Ukraine is fighting for its rights. This is the reason that Putin, the leader of Russia, wants to use nuclear force.

**H9. world outrage as Putin puts nuke on alert**

World	Outrage
Actor	Process

Putin	Puts	Nuke	On alert
Actor	PR: material	Goal	Circumstance

H9 includes two clauses. The lexeme “world” refers to people all around the world and the next lexeme completes the meaning and the author’s intention. He wants to tell us that everybody is angry and wants Putin, the actor of the next sentence, to finish his violation. The lexeme “outrage” means “an act of violence or brutality”, so we can interpret that everybody is ready to stop Putin.

**A4. 1st March 2022:**

**H10. Invasion not going as Russia planned.**

Invasion	Not going
Actor	PR: material

Russia	Planned
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Actor	PR: material
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In Longman's dictionary, The lexeme "invasion" means "When the army of one country enters another country by force, to take control of it". This word can be interpreted as the author's idea and feeling. This word is used to show a bad picture of the Russian government and army.

### H11. Russia deadly raids defy sanctions and peace talks

Russia deadly raids	Defy	Sanctions and peace talks
Actor	PR: material	Goal

We have two opposite words here, peace and raid. The lexeme 'raid' means "a hostile or predatory incursion". So, everybody wants peace and peace talks, but Russia is not willing to do it. "defy" is a transitive verb that has a goal here. We can interpret that Russia only wants to raid, fight, and destroy. Peace is not an option.

### A5. 2<sup>th</sup> March, 2022:

### H12. Russia pummels Ukraine no.2 city.

Russia	Pummels	Ukraine no.2 city
Actor	PR: material	Goal

The clause clearly shows the effect of the material process on the goal. It is an active voice clause in which the actor is foregrounded to reveal his identity and make him more prominent. However, the actor is Russia. The use of the transitive action verb 'pummels' is highlighted here. It also signifies that the goal is helpless since it is a sudden attack for which the goal was not prepared.

### H13. We are fighting for our freedom.

We	Are fighting	For our freedom
Actor	PR: material	Circumstance

The lexeme "freedom" is more important than the rest of the sentence. It shows that there is a war. Enemy attacks this country, and Ukrainians fight for their freedom. "we" can be considered as every man and woman in the world. People should fight for their freedom in every country they live in. This Actor creates a stronger visual and emotional impact. The author wants to deliver an ethical message. We should fight for our rights; we should be with those who fight for their freedom and help them in this unfair fight.

### A6. 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022:

### H14. Putin prompts fears that 'the worst is yet to come'.

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Putin	Prompts	Fears
Actor	PR: material	Goal

The worst	Is to come	Yet
Actor	Process	Circumstance

This clause uses active voice, and it refers to the doer of the action by name to put more emphasis on his identity. Putin is responsible for the war and its consequences. The verb is a transitive one and shows the effect of Putin's decision on the world. He scares them, and his acts make it worse. In the second clause, we have a prediction that this situation will be worse if he continues his wrong decisions.

**H15. Inhuman- Putin butchers children and worst is yet to come.**

Putin	Butchers	Children
Actor	PR: material	Goal

Worst	Is to come	Yet
Actor	Process	Circumstance

Firstly, we have an adjective before the actor, Putin. The adjective "inhuman" refers to Putin and his acts that come later. The first clause is an active clause that shows what happened to the Ukrainian children. The use of "butchers" in this clause shows the degree of brutality that the Russian army and leader had in this war. They don't even forgive children and kill them. That's why Putin's acts are "inhuman". After that, in the second clause, we face more terrible news. This is just the beginning and there are more savagery and fierceness in the future.

**A7. 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022:**

**H16. Invasion reorders West's calculation.**

Invasion	reorders	West's calculation
Actor	PR: material	Goal

Here, the actor is an act, a Russian invasion. This act can affect the goal and change everything. It is an active clause that uses a transitive verb. In this clause, invasion is the cause of reordering. The emphasis is on the actor rather than the process or circumstance.

**H17. Macron urges Putin to allow Ukraine's besieged cities to be evacuated.**

Macron	Urges	Putin	To allow	Ukraine's besieged cities	to be evacuated
Actor	PR: material	Goal	Cir: cause	Cir: location	Cir: cause

In this clause, France's president is the actor. It shows the effect of the material process on the actor. The actor's identity is revealed by the name. In the Longman dictionary, the lexeme



“urge” means “to force somebody”. In this sentence, Macron’s status is considered higher than Putin’s. The goal is an individual. The first circumstance is the cause. It shows the purpose of the process. The lexeme “besieged” is related to the ongoing war. The Russian army can be considered an assaulter. So, the word “besieged” referred to this issue. Also, the lexeme “evacuate” is the situation that happens during the war. Generally, this clause shows the dimensions of war and the importance of the situation.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher adopted transitivity analysis for looking at newspapers’ headlines depicting the war between Russia and Ukraine. The results show that headings include clauses that are in the active voice. The material processes used in these newspapers can be related to the attitude. “*Stars and Strips*” has a neutral attitude toward these events. The headlines that are chosen from this newspaper show this point. As we see, the actor is the Russian government or army. We can’t blame anybody for starting this war. In the second newspaper, *The Guardian*, we see a different attitude. Putin is the actor. We see the effect of the actor’s negative decisions on the goal. The headlines (H3,4,5,8) show this point. In these headlines, we see Putin as an individual who has the desire, intention, and power to assault and violate another country. The lexeme like “invade”, “raid”, or phrases like “special military operation” or “the worst is yet to come” create a visual and brutal picture. They also have an emotional impact on the reader because Putin is seen as a violator and dictator who wants to conquer the world and all should stand against him. The author considers Putin as the reason for this war. People are not with him. This is what we see in these headlines.

*New York Post* uses more radical and harsh words to depict this war. The feature that is used in the headlines is very different. Most of the headlines know Putin as the actor and use his picture on the first page. Different lexemes show Putin’s violence. The lexemes like “inhuman”, “murder”, “mad”, and “beast”. This is the picture that they show Putin. He, as the actor, is considered a madman who kills people in Ukraine violently. As this newspaper shows, he is a murderer. The verbs are also important. The lexeme “butchers” is a harsh one. On the other hand, Ukrainians are called fighters who fight for their freedom. They are heroes and innocent.

H14 and H15 are from two different newspapers that reflect the same event. The use of different linguistic features can be highlighted here. In the first headline, there is a rather neutral attitude toward the event and the headline just mentions that the actor prompts people’s fear and increases his violation in the future. The second headline uses an adjective before the actor, so we can see the effect of this adjective on people’s views. Contrary to the first headline, the second one has a strong negative attitude toward Putin. The results show that the language used in newspapers’ headlines is neither neutral nor innocent. It serves the agenda of the newspaper itself and conveys the meanings and messages meant to shape public opinion. (El Houssine,2022). We can answer the third question with this example.

Generally, Transitivity analysis is an objective data analysis technique that reveals the ideologies conveyed by the newspapers (El Houssine,2022). The German newspaper does not depict Putin as the one who claims responsibility. However, in two other newspapers, Putin is known guilty. The world should isolate him and his country and fight against him. The American newspaper criticizes Putin for this misbehaviour harshly. Putin is a person who

should be blamed. The United States policies and this newspaper's ideas are similar. Russia and America have been enemies for about 50 years. So, in this newspaper, we can see this conflict.

Although the scope of research is limited due to time and lack of available sources, Transitivity analysis investigates the many ways that a world is built by using different linguistic structures and features. Therefore, the findings of the study indicate that the transitivity system can effectively analyze the text and set the social and political parameters that are highlighted in headlines. The purpose and intention have a direct relation with ideology and political policies. Therefore, it is useful for the readers to be aware and critical when reading news media. (Nurjannah,2018)

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Transitivity is a significant semantic concept in the analysis of the depiction of reality. Further, it assists us to unmask the reality hidden in the drapery of language specifically in media (Afsheen Ekhteyar & Tariq Umrani,2021). The current study investigates the way that the English-written newspapers in Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States represent the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

In this study, we adopt Halliday's Transitivity system as the research instrument. According to the findings, there is a difference in using specific linguistic and discursive elements in newspaper headlines. This difference can be related mostly to the nation of belonging and newspapers' agenda. For example, there are similar events that are reported differently in samples because one of the newspapers belongs to a country that supports Russia and the other is against the Russian government (H14 and H15). The German newspaper does not refer to the actor by name. However, the American newspaper uses names and lexemes that create a horrible image in the minds of the readers. According to the American newspaper, this war was a massacre against the Ukrainians (El Houssine,2022).

The study concludes that different ideology causes different language uses and choices. The significance of the findings lies in the argument that the way the popular discourses in newspapers (in print and online) have the power to shape commonly held understandings of social reality and the perceived scope for change (Munro, M,2018). Language can be considered a political device. The differences in the thought related to media freedom indicate that media plays a significant role in constructing an ideology (Afsheen Ekhteyar & Tariq Umrani,2021). Thus, the ideology that has been used in writing these headlines can persuade and change people's ideas.

The importance of this subject can be investigated in other articles and there is a need to analyze it more profoundly in upcoming studies. The research scope and the different attitudes can be two factors that can make a difference and bring something new to this field of research.

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