

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating Ideas News in Focus*

Azizollah Dabaghi

Assistant Prof of Applied Linguistics, The University of Isfahan

Ehsan Panahbar

PhD Candidate in Translation Studies

Abstract

The present study aims at investigating the underlying ideo-political underpinnings of the news stories in three selected newspaper coverage of Syrian conflicts. In this regard, Washington Post, AFP and KayhanInternational were selected as the representatives of three ideo-political voices. From within the voluminous news stories in these papers, a sample of six news items was selected. Hodge-Kress model of CDA was drawn upon to account for the micro and macro structure of the select news stories. The data was analyzed within an essentially linguistically oriented framework of CDA. Accordingly, five influential discursive structures, i.e., naming, nominalization, causality and agency were selected to be analyzed through Hodge and Kress Model. The reliability of the analysis was ascertained using inter-rater reliability method. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The results of Chi-Square test showed that there are significant differences in the type and tenor of ideological representations among the select news stories. Accordingly, there was a significant difference between the selected media in using two discursive structures of nominalization and agency while the difference was not significant in naming and causality. The results also revealed that the press representation of Syrian conflicts are ideo-politically biased, which may account for the multi-directional power relations in media discourse.

Keywords: CDA, ideo-political underpinning, discursive structures, Hodge and Kress Model.

* Date of submission: July 2014
Email: Dabaghi@fgn.ui.ac.ir

Date of acceptance: Feb. 2015

Introduction

The structure of the news tends to follow a specific framework, which has attracted the interests of critical media analysts who seek to discover the latent discourse-bound ideologies. The news discourse can be analyzed at different levels such as thematic, schematic, and structural or macro and micro levels of structure. It is also possible for media analysts to analyze media discourse in terms of graphical organization such as lay-out, and non-verbal properties of the news such as photographs.

Most of the previous studies in this area focus on the 'context' and 'content' of the news discourse such as ideological, socio-cultural or practical aspects. However, little attention has been paid to the structure and details of the news text themselves such as local syntax and the style of news language.

The present study would restrict its focus to news structures within the sentence level and seek to discover the discursive use of linguistic structures such as syntactic, semantic, stylistic or rhetorical features of sentences. It is common to most critical studies to investigate the social function of language in a specific discourse in order to reveal the discursive sources of power, inequality and bias. In this regard, the present study put the structures of three selected printed media under the critical lenses in order to evaluate the representation of Syrian unrest in media using Hodge and Kress model (1996).

In this model, language is considered as an entity containing certain categories and processes. This model constitutes certain categories which are used to manifest the relationship between texts and events. According to this model, a text is critically analyzed with respect to three aspects: grammar, vocabulary and modality.

With respect to grammar, a text can be analyzed in terms of two properties: syntagmatic models and transformations. In syntagmatic models, categories and processes that describe the interrelation of objects and events are of two kinds: actional and relational. The

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

former describes the occasions when one or two objects are related to verbal processes. The latter refers to a simple relation not showing any process or action.

With respect to vocabulary, by scrutinizing the words the writer chooses, it may be possible to reveal the underlying ideologies. In this model, texts are also to be analyzed in terms of modality, adverbs and time.

The greatest part of our knowledge in the current world is transferred to us through media. But, media are almost always subject to the considerations of power and ideological biases of their stakeholders. Thus, the representation of events in the world of media entails ideological tendencies and systematic choices of language to serve these benefits.

What is known as 'Arab spring' is an outstanding uprising cause which has seriously affected the Middle East in general and Arab countries in particular, which may open up a new window to the future of many nations in the Middle East. Media across the world have extensively been covering the latest events since the uprisings began. But, for sure, reactions have been different on the part of third party countries. Commonly, the uprising is favored by countries once it could be thought of as a devastating cause to eradicate enemy powers but lamented once it could force an ally out of rule. One may reasonably think that these reactions are most vividly represented in the media sponsored by these powers. Therefore, it may not be surprising to find the same event represented differently in different media.

As expected, the events in Syria had different reflections in the Media throughout the world and many politicians and journalists described it as unprecedented. This study is not going to blame the selected media for any kind of conspiracy to deceive the public. Rather, the purpose is to show that how different ideologies of the news practitioners affect their linguistic choices to describe and report on the same event.

Review of the literature

In the late 1970s, drawing upon Halliday's systemic functional linguistics, a group of linguists and literary theorists developed the notion of 'Critical Linguistics' (CL) at the University of East Anglia in order to 'isolate ideology in discourse' (Fowler et al., 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979). Nowadays, CL, recently referred to as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is a fashionable term, which has been further developed and broadened.

CDA has been defined by many scholars and theorists within different disciplinary contexts. None of the definitions provide a simple and clear meaning of the term mostly due to the fluidity of its meaning which cannot be pinned down to just one area so that it is currently used within a wide range of disciplines. But, in many cases, the discourse implies the idea that language is structured according to different patterns that people's utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life, familiar examples being medical discourse and political discourse. Discourse analysis is the analysis of these patterns (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

Among theorists who have paid considerable attention to discourse and defined it in many ways, are linguists. For many theorists within linguistics, the discourse goes far beyond the level of sentences. Accordingly, they consider the language as a system that must be concerned in use (Brown and Yule, 1983). Some other linguists also consider the length of the text or the utterance. Thus, to them, discourse is an extended piece of text (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Carter and Simpson, 1989).

Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 271-80) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory

8. Discourse is a form of social action.

The struggle over representation of ambiguous events, issues, people and objects are the characteristic of all political discourses that have been called "politics of representation" (Holoquist, 1983; Mehan and Willis, 1988; Shapiro, 1987). Fowler (1991) contends that "news is not just a value-free reflection of facts. Anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position" (p. 101). In this regard, the study of the news from a critical point of view has been favored by many CDA practitioners who have developed different analytical frameworks for news analysis. Van Dijk was one of the pioneers that applied his theories of discourse to the analysis of the news in the press (Van Dijk, 1988).

Van Dijk introduces a socio-cognitive framework that involves a thorough analysis of news in terms of both microstructure and macrostructure. Microstructure analysis includes the semantic relations between elements such as syntactic, lexical and propositional as well as quotations and direct or indirect reporting, that gives factuality to the news reports and creates coherence in the text.

On the other hand, many CDA practitioners are convinced that a context-free approach to and pure structural analysis of language, is at best one-sided and cannot suffice empirically. Rather, it should be related to cognitive and socio-cultural context of news production and reception. In order to satisfy this criterion, Van Dijk believes that news analysis should also occur at macro structural level that involves the analysis of schematic structure of the news stories and their overall schemata. Why do news items bear the kind of thematic or schematic structures we want to study? Why would news have headlines and why would these be big, bold, and on top of the news article? These are the questions that the news analysts have to pay attention to in order to account for socio-cognitive and contextual factors.

Discourse sociolinguistic is another framework proposed by Wodak (1995). According to Wodak:

Review of Applied Linguistics Research

Discourse Sociolinguistics...is a sociolinguistics which not only is explicitly dedicated to the study of the text in context, but also accords both factors equal importance. It is an approach capable of identifying and describing the underlying mechanisms that contribute to those disorders in discourse which are embedded in a particular context-whether they be in the structure and function of the media, or in institutions such as a hospital or school-and inevitably affect communication.

Wodak(1995) contends that context of the discourse has an important effect on the function, structure, and context of the texts. She developed the term of *discourse historical method* through which an attempt is made "to the interpretation of the many layers of a written or spoken text"(p.209). In this method, language is believed to manifest social processes and interactions and also shape these processes in turn (Wodak& Ludwig, 1999, p. 12). The most important feature of Wodak's approach is *interpretation*. That is, the readers and listeners' background knowledge and information or their position shapes their interpretation of communicative events so that they may have different interpretations of the same event. Therefore, she does not believe in the existence of the "The Right" interpretation and emphasize the necessity of a hermeneutic approach.

One of the most comprehensive approaches in CDA is that of Fairclough, that has been the dominant approach for the several past years. Fairclough(1989)believes that the main objective of critical discourse analysis should be "a contribution to the general raising of consciousness of exploitative social relations, through focusing upon language".

Trying to provide a framework for media analysis, Fairclough (1995b) introduces some considerations. He states that "an account of communication in the mass media must consider the economics and politics of the mass media: the nature of the market within which the

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

mass media are operating and their relationship to the state and so forth".

He believes that there may be many individuals and groups in the society that do not have equal *access* to the media. This may be because of the fact that "media output is very much under professional and institutional control, and in general it is those who already have other forms of economic, political or cultural power that have the best access to the media"(p.40).

The other important factor is the *economics* of the media. Fairclough argues that the commercial pressures are an influential factor in determining the selection of news and their publication.

Politics of the media is the other consideration that is of upmost importance in analyzing media texts. This factor denotes the fact that, basically, the media are ideologically oriented and work for the benefits of the more powerful social groups (Chomsky, 1989; Fairclough, 1995b; Fishman, 1980; Fowler, 1991; van Dijk, 1991, 1993).

Drawing upon the proposed models of CDA, many critical studies have been done recently within the suggested frameworks, that have addressed the representation of political issues in journals and newspapers. Among them is the work of Adam Hodges (2008) who conducted a critical study of the discursive competition over claims of Iranian interference in Iraq. His study focused on the recontextualization of General Peter Pace by White House officials on Iranian involvement in Iraq. He argues that "the effective study of political discourse, especially as it relates to larger forms of socio-cultural knowledge, requires an analytic emphasis on *intertextuality*." From the study of politics of recontextualization, he concludes that since meaning making is an ongoing process that occurs across multiple contexts, the study of political discourse requires an analytic emphasis on intertextuality. In another study conducted by Yaghoobi (2009), representation of Hezbollah-Israel war in Iranian and American printed media went under critical study. The results of the

studysuggested that the linguistic choices such as passivization and nominalization by the writers enable them to present the same issue in a way that will influence the reader's view of the same event.

In the present study, the use of four discursive features is investigated in the news stories in three selected media, Washington Post, Agence France Presse (AFP) and Kayhan International, over Syrian unrest. The reason for the selection of these media was that they represent different ideological tendencies in the contemporary world. Accordingly, Washington Post favors the conservative ruling party in the U.S and Kayhan International is the voice of the conservative ruling party in Iran. In between comes AFP which is the oldest news agency in the world and which may represent the continental ideological tendencies though they claim to be independent. Indeed, despite claims of independency, considerations of power and ideology are common to the media in the contemporary world. However, the present study is not to presuppose and attribute any conspiracy to none of these media, rather it will delve into the select sample of news stories in order to discover how considerations of power and ideology might have affected linguistic choice in these media. Embedded in the Iranian context and favored by the current administration, Kayhan International is necessarily pro-Islamic while Washington Post, on the opposite side of the world, may not support rival Islamic movements.

The four discursive structures used to analyze the texts in this study include naming, nominalization, causality and agency. These structures are systematically related and serve to either mystify or demystify a specific event (see Yarmohammadi, 2006). Assigning names to objects, events and people may reflect a certain tendency in referring to the world, hence the discursive importance of naming that can be either direct or indirect. Nominalization is the process whereby the emphasis is shifted from the actor to the action itself or the recipient of the action, hence the mystification of the doer and time of the deed. Causality plays a crucial role in the perception and identification of events, which may be realized with actional sentences. Broadly speaking, the sentences may be divided into actional and relational. Actionals clearly demonstrate the agent of an action whereas relationals tend to relate an already-established state to an

individual or event. Thus, these two modes of representation may be systematically used to either mystify or demystify an event. Similarly, the demonstration of agency can be realized by actional and active sentences. Agency and causality are closely related though not identical.

Methodology

Data collection

Conflicts in Syria began on January 26, 2011 and have been since the topic of continuous analyses and reports in the international media including the three selected newspapers in this study. In order to select the news texts, a two-month time interval from September 1, 2011 to October 1, 2011 was selected first. Subsequently, a corpus of all news stories on Syrian conflicts appearing on the official websites of these newspapers during this period was collected. From among the news stories in the corpus, a sample of 6 texts (2 texts from each newspaper), which reported similar events and bore identical themes, was randomly chosen. All the texts were posted online by the respective media on the spot of the reported events. Some of the stories entailed graphical representations such as photographs, which were deliberately overlooked as the present study limits the analysis to the linguistic aspects of the texts. The sample news stories in the selected media are as follows:

1. Kayhan International

- People's Vigilance Foils West's Plot in Syria (September 3, 2011)
- Iran Blasts U.S. Plots Against Syria (September 13, 2011)

2. AFP

- Dissidents in Syria reject foreign intervention: Kilo (September 29, 2011)
- Syria hails 'historic' Russia, China vetoes (October 5, 2011)

3. Washington Post

- Syria troops fire on protesters, killing 8 (October 8, 2011)
- Unrest in Syria has an upside next door (October 10, 2011)

Data analysis and discussion

Not all sentences of a news story are discursive; thus, in analyzing the texts, discursive structures were identified first. Then they underwent close scrutiny for the respective discursive features to be identified. Since two news stories were selected from each newspaper culminating in a sample of six texts to be analyzed, the mention of all discursive relations may be bulky. Therefore, samples of each feature in the texts were chosen to be elaborated on in this section. Besides, organization of news stories takes the form of a so-called inverted pyramid so that key points come first in the headline and at the beginning of news. Therefore, we shall restrict ourselves to a discussion of major themes and process as occurring early in the text. For every newspaper, the two chosen stories will be discussed in terms of the type and frequency of the respective discursive structures. For convenience, news stories and their associated paragraphs are coded numbered in every newspaper.

Kayhan International

1. People's Vigilance Foils West's Plot in Syria (September 3, 2011)
2. Iran Blasts U.S. Plots Against Syria (September 13, 2011)

Naming

Naming is a process whereby names are assigned to actions, people, objects and events, which represents one's ideology in encapsulating a certain fact into a term. The headlines of both the story 1 and story 2 involve examples of naming. The so-called "people's vigilance" and alleged "west's plots" in the story 1 and "U.S plots" in the storey 2 are instances of naming. Accordingly, people's backing of current political system in Syria is referred to as "people's vigilance" and the interception of western countries in Syrian conflicts is considered as "west's plots". These two are examples of indirect naming. However,

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

in the headline of the story 2, the writer most markedly charges the U.S with the plots, hence an instance of direct naming. The most noticeable is a scene of conflict between two chronic enemies, namely Iran and U.S and it is Iran that is represented as taking the upper hand in foiling these plots.

1.1 A senior Iranian foreign ministry official lauded Syrian people's resistance against plots hatched by the West to sow discord among Shiite and Sunni Muslims in Syria. Vigilance observed by the Syrian people had foiled the Western ploy to split Shiites and Sunnis, Director-General of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Persian Gulf and Middle-East Department Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Thursday.

The first paragraph of the story 1 contains instances of both direct and indirect naming. Accordingly, "Syrian people's resistance" and "western ploy" are examples of indirect naming but "Shiites and Sunnis" is an instance of direct naming of two Islamic sects. The charges have been put on the West as weaving plots to cause enmity between the two cults irrespective of the ingrained religious discords among them. Besides, the first sentence begins with "A senior Iranian foreign ministry official" as an official affiliation, which is an example of indirect naming and may be used to apply authoritative rigor to the asserted claim. Still, the paragraph ends with reference to the same authority through direct naming "Director-General of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Persian Gulf and Middle-East Department Hossein Amir Abdollahian " which makes the official rigor of the statement even stronger.

2.1 Iran has lashed out at the United States for hatching plots to ignite insecurity in Syria, saying U.S. pressure on Damascus aims to save the occupying regime of Israel.

Instances of both direct naming in the first paragraph of the story 2 include the direct mention of major actors in the scene of Syrian conflicts including Iran, U.S and Israel. Here Syrian conflict is represented as a stage where the old enemies come to the fore. The scene is decorated as though Iran is being taking the upper hand in

identifying the U.S and Israeli plots and helping the Syrian people in exercising the type of vigilance required to foil the American mischief.

Nominalization

Nominalization is a process whereby sentence patterns are reduced to noun phrases in which the time and doer of the action can be removed and the emphasis be put on the action itself.

1.5 He highlighted the lifting of the emergency law in Syria, the introduction of changes in the country's electoral process, and media laws, as well as other instances of political reformation as examples of 'true reforms' implemented by the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, Press TV reported.

"The lifting of the emergency law", "the introduction of changes" and "political reformation" in the above paragraph are obvious examples of nominalization which emphasize the significance of the actions done followed by the direct naming of the actor who has initiated the actions.

2. 3. Following the collapse of dictatorial regimes in Egypt and Tunisia, the U.S and its allies were concerned that the popular uprisings would threaten their interests, Mehr news agency quoted the Iranian official as saying.

"The collapse of the dictatorial regimes" is an instance of nominalization, which makes no reference to those who might have initiated the action. Therefore, the time of the action and the agents are mystified.

Causality

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

1.4 He also downplayed the Western efforts to push Syria out of the forefront of the 'axis of resistance' against Israel, and stated, "The US and Israel want to...detach Syria from the axis of resistance; if not they want to change the regime in Damascus."

The above paragraph contains examples of actional sentences, which are used to address causality in the texts. Accordingly, "Western efforts to push Syria out of the forefront...", "The US and Israel want to...detach Syria..." and "they want to change the regime" are instances of the actionals where the actors are outspokenly identified and held responsible for the actions. In this regard, moves, forces and intention of the U.S and Israel to actively interfere in Syrian affairs are highlighted.

2.4 The Iranian spokesperson noted that the U.S. and its allies decided to cause instability in certain important regional countries which had set up an Islamic resistance front to fight against the occupying regime of Israel.

The above excerpt also highlights "the U.S and its allies" as the agents of mischief and "instability in certain important regional countries" to foil the "Islamic resistance...against the occupying regime of Israel". The ideological war is being manifested markedly in the sentences that are clearly devised to represent the good versus evil.

Agency

Agency is a process closely associated with causality. In this study, the agency of processes was divided into two general themes: the agency of western powers in Syrian conflicts and the agency of Syrian regime in dealing with the conflicts.

1.10 The European Union was to formally adopt an embargo on Syrian oil, but the sanctions would not take effect until November 15 for existing contracts after Italy insisted on a delay, according to diplomats in Brussels.

1.13 In Paris, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the world community should escalate pressure on by targeting Syria's oil and gas exports to force him from office.

2.5 He stated that the U.S. and Western powers sought to pretend that instability in regional countries is the outcome of the Islamic awakening, stressing they are still making utmost efforts to cause instability in Syria.

In the above paragraphs, the agency of western powers in "escalating pressure" on Syria through oil and gas export sanctions are highlighted so as to emphasize a call by western powers for global hegemony against the Syrian regime.

1.6 Syria has been experiencing unrest since mid-March with organized attacks by well-armed gangs against Syrian police forces and border guards being reported across the country.

1.8 The government blames outlaws, saboteurs, and armed terrorist groups for the deaths, stressing that the unrest is being orchestrated from abroad.

The above paragraphs put Syrian regime and its forces into a defensive position as experiencing assaults by "well-armed gangs", "outlaws, saboteurs, and armed terrorist groups". Thus, the emphasis has been put to highlight the role of the victim (Syrian forces) and victimizers (outlaws), calling for empathy with the victim.

Agence France Press (AFP)

1. Dissidents in Syria reject foreign intervention: Kilo (September 29, 2011)

2. Syria hails 'historic' Russia, China vetoes (October 5, 2011)

Naming

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

The headline of the story 1 contains two instances of indirect naming so that the people protesting against the current Syrian regime are referred to as "dissidents" and efforts by the third party countries to make a potential military intervention in Syria are referred to as "foreign intervention".

1.1 Anti-regime activists inside Syria oppose the Syrian National Council, an opposition body formed in Turkey last month, because it favors foreign intervention, prominent activist Michel Kilo said on Thursday.

Instances of indirect naming include "anti-regime activists", "opposition body" and "foreign intervention", which are chosen to refer to people, groups and actions with no direct appeal to a proper name. However, "prominent activist Michel Kilo" is an instance of direct naming whereby the name of a certain individual along with his affiliation is addressed. The noun phrase "prominent activist" is to emphasize the political orientation of the speaker.

2.1 - A senior aide to Syria's embattled President Bashar al-Assad on Wednesday hailed as "historic" Russian and Chinese vetoes of a UN resolution against his regime's deadly crackdown on protests.

"A senior Aide", "Syria's embattled president", "UN resolution" and "regime's deadly crackdown" are instances of indirect naming of the processes, people and events in this socio-political situation. However, direct reference to "Bashar al-Assad" as the "embattled president" is an example of direct naming which emphasizes the unfortunate situation the Syrian president is experiencing.

Nominalization

1. 11 Paris and Washington have welcomed the formation of the SNC, which is backed by the Local Coordination Committees, an anti-regime network inside Syria.

1.12 The group is to meet this weekend in Istanbul in a bid to unify the fragmented opposition movement, a spokeswoman said on Tuesday.

"The formation of SNC" and "fragmented opposition movement" signify processes which could have been represented via sentence patterns with thematic relations including agent, patient and source. However, they are reduced to noun phrases so that those who have formed the Syrian national council (SNC), those who have initiated the opposition movement and causes that has led to the fragmentation of the movement remain unknown.

2.1 But Syria's newly united opposition said that by voting against the European-proposed resolution at the UN Security Council, Russia and China risked provoking opponents of Assad's regime to resort to violence

2.6 "I think that all the Syrians are happy that now there are other powers in the world to stand against hegemony, against military interference in the affairs of countries and people.

Again, "Syria's newly united opposition" is represented as an animate being which expresses its opinions on the current events with no reference to the actual people who have initiated and currently lead the movement. "Military interference" can also be considered as a sentence with thematic roles reduced to a simple noun phrase to mystify those who may initiate the interference. Thus, the speaker takes quite a cautious stance in expressing his opinions. Besides, the china-Russia veto of military action resolution is appreciated indirectly.

Causality

1.8 ...opposition figures in Turkey have not consulted the NCDC and offered it only three representatives among the 71 of its members coming from inside the country.

1.13 "All our efforts now are not to appear as a movement that wants to eliminate others, we're trying to offer a national framework," BassmaKodmani said.

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

The sentences in the above paragraphs are actionals, which attribute an active role to the opposition as taking charge of current opposition movement. The emphasis is put on the "opposition figures" who are shaping a national framework and developing an organized movement. The speaker tries to give the impression that the opposition movement is so strong and organized that it can initiate a nationwide cause.

2.12 "To avoid the slide towards violence, the international community needs to act differently and realize what are the risks and the dangers of this moment in history," said Ghalioun.

2.13 "I think the international community has not yet lived up to its responsibilities," the Paris-based academic said.

The actional sentences in the above paragraphs emphasize the role of so-called "international community" to take effective measures to stop the violence in Syria. The speaker calls on the international community to assume its true responsibility and do something about the Syrian regime. This comes as an objection to the Russia-China veto of a UN resolution on the violence against protesters.

Agency

1.11 Paris and Washington have welcomed the formation of the SNC, which is backed by the Local Coordination Committees, an anti-regime network inside Syria.

2.3 The double veto was both condemned and lamented in Western capitals, with the United States saying it was "outraged" and France bemoaning it as a "sad day" for Syria's people and the Security Council.

The above excerpts emphasize the agency of western powers including Paris and Washington in exercising their power in Syria through supporting the opposition council as well as attempts to enforce a resolution against Syrian regime. However, they allegedly do so in favor of "Syria's people" so that the double veto by china and Russia would be a "sad day" for Syrians rather than these sympathetic custodians of Syria's people.

2.12 "Supporting Bashar al-Assad in his militarist and fascist project will not encourage the Syrian people to stick to a peaceful revolution," SNC president BurhanGhalioun told AFP.

The speaker condemns Bashar al-Assad most poignantly as conducting a fascist project in Syria and thus provokes the images and horror of fascism though nowhere in the text he refers to the project. Therefore, it seems that the reference to a so-called "fascist project" is just an appeal to the reader to show sympathy with the oppressed people.

Washington Post

1. Syria troops fire on protesters, killing 8 (October 8, 2011)
2. Unrest in Syria has an upside next door (October 10, 2011)

Naming

1.7 Assad granted citizenship in April to stateless Kurds in eastern Syria in an attempt to address some of the protesters' grievances. The two instances of indirect naming including "stateless Kurds" and "protesters' grievances" are discursive whereby the writer deliberately implies that Kurds do not favor Assad's regime since they are referred to as protesters. Besides, the adjective "stateless" indicates one of the most important "grievances" of Kurds who wish to establish an independent state of their own. Thus, the writer implicitly sympathizes with the Kurds who aspire to exercise separatism.

2.5 One of the significant upsides already from the growing chaos in Syria has been a disruption of the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq to join al-Qaeda's affiliate there, according to a senior U.S. intelligence official.

"Foreign fighters" and "al-Qaeda's affiliate" are examples of indirect naming. The writer implies that Syria has long been the source of fighter supply to al-Qaeda in Iraq but since the beginning of conflicts in Syria, the flow of fighters has stopped. Considering the earlier reference to Damascus as an indirect naming of the Syrian regime in the first and second paragraphs of the same text, the blame for the flow of fighters is directly put on the regime in Syria. The appeal to

the indirect naming "a senior U.S. intelligence official" is an attempt to give authority to the claim.

Nominalization

1.3 The slaying of Mashaal Tammo, a 53-year-old former political prisoner and a spokesman for the Kurdish Future Party, was the latest in a string of targeted killings in Syria seven months into the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad.

"The slaying of Mashaal Tammo" and "targeted killings" are instances of cunning nominalization in the above paragraph. Though the shift from a sentence structure to nominalization has helped mystify the doer and time of the action, further references are made in the following phrases to have the reader make inferences as to the identification of the agent of slaying. Accordingly, the references to Tammo as a "political prisoner", "spokesman" and "Kurdish Future Party" and the final slide into "targeted killings" are directive towards the agent of slaying, "President Bashar al-Assad". The word "slaying" also provokes connotations of brutality and atrocity on the part of the doer of the action.

2.10 It's difficult to know exactly what Assad's fall would mean for the flow of foreign fighters across the border. But the official said, in the view of U.S. intelligence, there's little question that Assad will, indeed, fall.

"The flow of foreign fighters" from Syria into Iraq to join al-Qaida is associated with Syrian regime and most markedly with Assad himself, which is why the U.S intelligence official craves so much for Assad's fall. The reduction of what could be quite a few paragraphs into the noun phrase "the flow of foreign fighters" has made the true agents, time, processes, organization, volume, affiliates and accomplices of the action obscure while it gives a vague impression of what is claimed to have been happening in the past.

Causality

1.1 Syrian security forces opened fire on protesters in several parts of the country Friday, killing at least eight people and wounding scores, and masked gunmen burst into an apartment in the predominantly Kurdish northeast and shot dead one of Syria's most prominent opposition figures.

The first actional sentence clearly highlights the agents of killings while the second coordinated sentence introduces "masked gunmen" as the agents of the second action. However, through associations and references made in the paragraph, the reader is to identify the masked gunmen as the Syrian security forces who kill the protesters indiscriminately and who may readily do so discriminately.

2.6 "The unrest in Syria has hurt AQI," the official said, referring to al-Qaeda in Iraq. Syria has been "their conduit, their historical fighter flow. The unrest has gotten in the way of that."

The first actional sentence puts the patient, "al- Qaeda", in a passive position and implicitly lauds the unrest that has damaged a terrorist group. The following sentences put the blame on Syria and implicitly Syrian regime for providing a safe "conduit" for al- Qaeda fighters into Iraq.

Agency

1. Headline: Syria troops fire on protesters, killing 8

1.6 The killing could spark violent protests in the Kurdish region at a time when Syria's security forces have their hands full trying to stamp out dissent elsewhere. Kurds make up less than 10 percent of the country's 23 million people and have long complained of neglect and discrimination.

The agency of "Syrian troops" and "security forces" in killing protesters and Kurds are highlighted. Besides, a prediction has been made by the writer that "violent protests" will be "sparked" because of killings. The impression is given that earlier protests, in which Syrian forces killed people, were not violent on the part of the protesters, but the killing could spark violent protests in future, and thus offering a justification for violent protests in future.

2.8 But the official said Syria under Assad had "enabled" that flow of fighters into Iraq, allowing his border to serve as a major crossroads as part of a deliberate effort to destabilize Iraq and undermine U.S. efforts there.

The agency of "Syria under Assad" in fighter supply to al-Qaida is outspokenly highlighted. Syrian regime is depicted as conducting mischievous activities to "destabilize Iraq" and thus wage an indirect war with the U.S.

Results

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Following the identification of discursive features, descriptive statistics was first used to describe the measures of frequency and percentage. The reliability of the analysis was calculated to be 0.82 using inter-rater reliability method. Table 1 illustrates the results of descriptive statistics of the use of discursive features in each newspaper.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of discursive features analysis

Discursive features		Kayhan		AFP		Washington Post	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Naming	Direct	30	19.73	38	24.83	18	20
	Indirect	122	80.26	115	75.17	72	80
Nominalization		28	56	13	27.5	16	51.5
Causality	Actional	57	75	41	67.21	44	73.33
	Relational	19	25	20	32.78	16	26.66
Agency	Agency of western powers	19	90.5	11	84.61	2	14.28
	Agency of Syrian regime	2	9.5	2	15.38	12	85.71

As shown in the table, all newspapers have used more indirect than direct naming. As well, all newspapers have used more actional than relational sentences. With regard to nominalization, the percentages do not vary markedly among the newspapers. However, they differ in their reference to the agency of western powers and the agency of Syrian regime.

Chi square test was run to test the research hypotheses and examine the significance of the differences among the newspapers in their use of discursive features. SPSS 18 was used to do the statistical analysis.

Table 2 illustrates the results of Chi square test of the use of naming in the newspapers.

Table 2. Chi square test of naming in the three newspapers

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.379 ^a	2	.502
Likelihood Ratio	1.365	2	.505
Linear-by-Linear Association	.993	1	.319
N of Valid Cases	395		

Since the two-sided sig. equals 0.502 which is bigger than 0.05, there is no significant difference in the use of naming among different newspapers. Besides, there is no significant difference between the subsets of naming, direct and indirect, in each newspaper. Table 3 illustrates the results of Chi square test of the use of nominalization in the newspapers.

Table 3. Chi square test of nominalization in the three newspapers

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.708 ^a	2	.013
Likelihood Ratio	8.943	2	.011

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

Linear-by-Linear Association	5.418	1	.020
N of Valid Cases	128		

Considering the value of two-sided sig(0.013) which is smaller than 0.05, there is 95% certainty that there is a significant difference among newspapers in the use of nominalization. Table 4 illustrates the results of Chi square test of causality in the newspapers.

Table 4. Chi square test of causality in the three newspapers

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.087 ^a	2	.581
Likelihood Ratio	1.072	2	.585
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.566	1	.452
N of Valid Cases	197		

As shown in the table, the two-sided sig (0.581) is bigger than 0.05, which indicates that there is no significant difference in representation of causality among different newspapers. Besides, there was no significant difference between the two subsets of causality, actionals and relationals, in each newspaper. Table 5 illustrates the results of Chi square test of agency in the newspapers

Table 5. Chi square test of agency in the three newspapers

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)

Pearson Chi-Square	24.527 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	25.251	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.261	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	48		

Considering the value of two-sided sig (0.000) which is smaller than 0.05, there is 95% certainty that there is a significant difference in the representation of the agency of processes in different newspapers. Besides, there is significant difference in the representation of the two subsets of agency, agency of western powers and agency of Syrian regime, in each newspaper.

Overall, the results showed no significant difference in the use of the two discursive features of naming and causality and their subsets in and among the newspapers. However, there was a significant difference in the use of nominalization and agency among the newspapers. In this regard, post hoc Tukey's test was run to determine between which newspapers the difference is significant. The results of Tukey's test of nominalization showed that there is a significant difference between Kayhan International and AFP in the use of nominalization. The results of the post hoc test of agency revealed a significant difference between Kayhan International and Washington Post as well as between Washington Post and AFP.

Conclusion and implication

The present study was conducted to investigate the ideo-political processes of the representation of Syrian conflicts in the selected media in different ideo-political contexts. In this regard, Kayhan International, AFP and Washington Post were selected as the media that belonged to not only different geographical areas but also ideological domains. Four discursive features, which systematically work to either mystify or demystify processes and events, were selected to examine how differences in ideology and power relations

may lead to different representation of similar events in different ideological domains in these selected newspapers.

Fairclough (1993) contends that "ideology and ideological processes are manifested as systems of linguistic characteristics and processes." In fact, there is common belief among the analysts that discourse analysis is ideology analysis. According to Thompson (1990), ideology is a type of social process which establishes and regulates symbolic forms in the society. Language is a means of ideological representation so that texts are designed in ways which help establish and institutionalize a dominant ideology in a certain social context. Weiss and Wodak (2003) assert that "one of the aims of CDA is to demystify discourses by deciphering ideologies." (p. 27).

The selected media in the present study were thought to belong to different ideological worlds. Accordingly, supported by the current conservative administration and located in the socio-cultural context of Iran, Kayhan International is evidently pro-Islamic while Washington Post may support the politics of current conservative administration in the U.S in dealing with Middle East conflicts. Still, AFP may show no apparent tendency toward either of these ideological possessions and follow a different line of politics. The ideological conflict between these domains was clearly voiced by Kayhan International that calls Syria the "forefront of the 'axis of resistance' against Israel" (1.4) so that U.S and Israel are deemed to push Syria out of the forefront of Islamic resistance against the west. Quoting one the top officials of Iran's foreign ministry, Kayhan reports that in case the west cannot "detach Syria from the axis of resistance; they want to change the regime in Damascus." On the other hand, Washington Post reports that Syria has long been the route for the flow of Al-Qaeda fighters into Iraq so that "U.S. officials can thank the pro-democracy protesters rising up against President Bashar al-Assad," which has helped block the flow of Al-Qaeda fighters into Iraq (2.4). This is considered to be "one positive development lately in Iraq" providing justification for possible prolongation of U.S troops

staying in Iraq until the everlasting blockage of Al-Qaeda fighters flow route is warranted. This also provides justification for the U.S attempt to remove the Syrian regime.

The results showed no significant difference in using naming and causality among the selected media. However, a significant difference was noticed in using nominalization and agency among the newspapers. The results of statistical analysis showed a significant difference between Kayhan International and AFP in using nominalization. That is, the use of nominalization in selected news stories significantly differs between these two newspapers. In other words, Kayhan International has used significantly more instances of nominalization as a process to shift the emphasis to the events and mystify the agency and time of the deeds.

Overall, the results showed a significant difference in the use of the two discursive features of nominalization and agency and their subsets in and among the newspapers. In this regard, post hoc Tukey's test was run to determine between which newspapers the difference is significant. The results of Tukey's test of nominalization showed that there is a significant difference between Kayhan International and AFP in the use of nominalization. The results of the post hoc test of agency revealed a significant difference between Kayhan International and Washington Post as well as between Washington Post and AFP. A thematic analysis of the texts showed the highlighted agency of two main actors in the texts, i.e., western powers and Syrian regime. While Kayhan International emphasized the role of western powers in putting pressure on Syrian regime to drive it out of rule, Washington Post highlighted the role of Syrian regime in suppressing the pro-democracy protests. However, AFP took a more moderate stance and directly quoted the western officials and Syrian activists. Overall, the selected newspapers were shown to draw upon variable linguistic choices to impart their ideological tendencies to the reader.

In the current world, media have come to be the main source of information and circulation of knowledge. This study could be considered as an attempt in raising the readers' consciousness toward the underlying ideological and political considerations prevalent in the media so that the readers may be able to take a more critical stance toward the flow of news stories flooding the individuals every day. In this regard, it may foster the critical thinking in the reader. It may also prove useful to the students of language and linguistics who need to

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

pay greater heed to the powerful social functions of language in shaping the social world.

References

- Brown, G. & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carter, R. and Simpson, P. (eds.) (1989). *Language, discourse and Literature: An Introductory Reader in Discourse Stylistics*. London: Unwin Hyman.
- Chomsky, N. (1989) *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*. Toronto, Ontario: CBC Enterprises.
- Fowler, R. (1991). *Language in the news: Discourse and ideology in the press*. New York: Routledge.
- Hodge, R. & Kress, G. (1996). *Language as ideology*. London: Routledge.
- Weiss, G. & Wodak, R. (2003). Introduction: theory, interdisciplinarity and critical discourse analysis. In G. Weiss & R. Wodak (Eds.). *Critical discourse analysis: theory and interdisciplinarity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fairclough, N.L. (1989). *Language and power*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (1993). Critical Discourse Analysis and the Marketisation of Public Discourse: The Universities. *Discourse & Society*, 4(2), 133-168.

Review of Applied Linguistics Research

Fairclough, N.L. (1995b). *Media and discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.

Fairclough, N.L. & Wodak, R. (1997). Critical discourse analysis. In T.A. Van Dijk (Ed.). *Discourse studies: A multidisciplinary introduction*. Vol. 2. Discourse as social interaction. (pp. 258-284). London: Sage.

Fishman, P. M. (1980). Conversational insecurity. In H. Giles, W. P. Robinson, & P. M. Smith (Eds), *Language: Social psychological perspectives* (pp. 127-132). Oxford, England: Pergamon Press.

Fowler, R., Hodge, B., Kress, G., & Trew, T. (1979). *Language and control*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hodge, A. (2008). The politics of recontextualization: discursive competitions over claims of Iranian involvement in Iraq. *Discourse & Society*, 19 (4), 483-505.

Holquist, M. (1983). The politics of representation. *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition*, 5(1), 2-9.

Jorgensen, M. & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Kress, G. & Hodge, R. (1979). *Language as ideology*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Mehan, H. & Willis, J. (1988). MEND: A nurturing voice in the nuclear arms debate. *Social Problems*, 35(4), 363-383.

Shapiro, M. (1988). *The politics of representation*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Critical Discourse Analysis: A Study towards Translating...

Sinclair, J. & Coulthard, M. (1975). *Towards an Analysis of Discourse*. London: OUP.

Thompson, J.B. (1990). *Ideology and modern culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Van Dijk, T.A. (1988a). *News as discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Van Dijk, T.A. (1991). *Racism and the press*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Van Dijk, T.A. (1993b). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 4 (2), 249- 283.

Wodak, R. (1995). Critical Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis. In J. Verschuren, J. Ostman, & J. Blommaert (eds.). *Handbook of Pragmatics- Manual*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. Pp.204-210.

Wodak, R. & Ludwig, C. (1999). Introduction. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.). *Challenges in a changing world. Issues in critical discourse analysis*. Vienna: Passagen, pp. 11-20.

Yaghoobi, M. (2009). A critical discourse analysis of the selected Iranian and American printed media on the representations of Hizbullah-Israel war. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 21.

Yarmohammadi, L. (2006). *Communication within critical discourse perspectives*. Tehran: Hermes.