

**Ideological Framing in British Newspaper Headlines: A Critical Discourse Analysis of
The Times, The Sun, and the Daily Mail**

التأطير الأيديولوجي في عناوين الصحف البريطانية: تحليل نقدي للخطاب في صحف التايمز، ذا صن،
وديلي ميل

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ABSTRACT

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This research focuses on the critical discourse analysis of 30 matched headlines from The Times, The Sun and the Daily Mail newspapers, covering 10 similar news events that have been published between 2022 and 2024. It explores the linguistic means through which framing is constructed, including the aspects of lexical choice, labeling, grammatical agency, foregrounding and backgrounding, metaphor, pronouns, rhetorical questions, direct address, wordplay, and intertextuality. The analysis is based on Critical Discourse Analysis and framing theory particularly those of Fairclough, van Dijk and Entman, and is qualitative with matched-event design in order to compare the representation of the same or similar event within the three newspapers. The study reveals that there are persistent differences in register and framing preferences. The Times is more likely to use relatively institutional and propositional formulations, The Sun more interpersonal, allusive and popular-cultural, and the Daily Mail more evaluative, as well as emotive. The study also finds significant overlap between newspapers and reminds readers to read every stylist contrast with care, asking themselves if it is a sign of ideological positioning. Ideological framing is best demonstrated when similar events are distributed in similar ways with regard to responsibility, evaluation, causality, or salience using

language. The conclusion of the study is that headlines not only summarise news, they also shape the attention, position the social actors and influence the relationship between event, newspaper and reader.

الملخص .

يركز هذا البحث على التحليل النقدي للخطاب في ثلاثين عنوانًا صحفيًا متطابقًا من صحف ذا تايمز، وذا صن، وديلي ميل، تغطي عشرة أحداث إخبارية متشابهة نُشرت بين عامي 2022 و2024. وتستكشف الدراسة الوسائل اللغوية التي يُبنى من خلالها التأطير، بما في ذلك الاختيار المعجمي، والتسمية، والفاعلية النحوية، والتقديم والتأخير، والاستعارة، والضمائر، والأسئلة البلاغية، والخطاب المباشر، والتلاعب بالألفاظ، والتناسل. ويستند التحليل إلى منهج التحليل النقدي للخطاب ونظرية التأطير، ولا سيما مقاربات فيركلاف، وفان دايك، وإنتمان، كما تعتمد الدراسة تصميمًا نوعيًا قائمًا على مطابقة الأحداث بهدف مقارنة تمثيل الحدث نفسه أو الأحداث المتشابهة عبر الصحف الثلاث.

وتكشف الدراسة عن وجود اختلافات مستمرة في السجل اللغوي وتفضيلات التأطير. إذ تميل صحيفة ذا تايمز إلى استخدام صيغ مؤسسية وتقديرية نسبيًا، بينما تميل صحيفة ذا صن إلى استخدام صيغ أكثر تفاعلية وإيحائية وارتباطًا بالثقافة الشعبية، في حين تميل صحيفة ديلي ميل إلى استخدام صيغ أكثر تقييماً وانفعالية. كما تكشف الدراسة عن وجود قدر ملحوظ من التداخل بين الصحف، وتحذر من تفسير كل اختلاف أسلوبٍ باعتباره دليلاً على تموضع أيديولوجي. ويتجلى التأطير الأيديولوجي بصورة أوضح عندما تُعرض الأحداث المتشابهة بطرق مختلفة من حيث المسؤولية، والتقييم، والسببية، أو البروز، من خلال الاختيارات اللغوية. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن العناوين الصحفية لا تقتصر وظيفتها على تلخيص الأخبار فحسب، بل تسهم أيضاً في توجيه الانتباه، وتحديد مواقع الفاعلين الاجتماعيين، والتأثير في العلاقة بين الحدث والصحيفة والقارئ.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language conveys more than information. It also sorts experience into categories, provides some actors more visibility than others and sorts the version of reality that reaches the reader in news discourse. These decisions are made by editors with limited space particularly in headlines. A headline can be very short, but it tells the reader who the event is about, what the action is, and what the reader is first confronted with when reading the story.

Small language decisions can have large impact in the headlines since they are compressed. The salient is determined by the evaluative vocabulary, labels, metaphors, active and passive structures, and by omissions. In a particular instance, protesters, activists, demonstrators, rioters and mob may be similar groups but they approach and assess each group differently. The same goes with grammar: If the police are the agent, then the protesters are the object; if the protesters are the agent, then police is the object. In both instances, sentence structure helps to spread the attention and responsibility.

Framing and ideology provide a useful way of understanding these differences. Framing deals with what is chosen and what is salient about an event, ideology is much more general and involves a system of values and social representations. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) enables both levels to be analysed simultaneously, without making any pre-assumptions regarding the nature of the differences in style as being ideological in nature. In this context, CDA is used to analyse the headlines of The Times, The Sun and Daily Mail newspapers, focusing on lexical choice, labelling and grammatical agency.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The front pages of the major British newspapers can be almost identical concerning the same event, but the descriptions on the page can be rather different. Even if the event in question is common, a change in vocabulary, naming, agency, evaluation, or emphasis will suffice to change the representation. These effects are easy to overlook in that readers tend to notice the event itself and be distracted by it. The focus of this study is therefore not that the three newspapers do not report the same or similar events, but that different linguistic frames are built around the same or similar events in the different headlines of The Times, The Sun and the Daily Mail.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What linguistic strategies are used to construct ideological framing in selected headlines from The Times, The Sun, and the Daily Mail?
2. How do lexical choice, labeling, and grammatical agency contribute to the representation of social actors and events in the selected headlines?
3. What similarities and differences can be identified in the ideological framing of the same or similar news events across The Times, The Sun, and the Daily Mail?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The three aims of the study are closely linked with each other: to determine the primary linguistic strategies employed in the chosen headlines, to analyse the effect of lexical choice, labelling and agency on the representation of actors and events, and to compare the framing patterns that are repeated across the three newspapers.

1.5 Significance of the Study

It's the careful consideration of the smaller textual decisions that make the study valuable. A label, verb, pronoun or grammatical structure can be routine, but can shift the focus of emphasis, responsibility, and evaluation. The use of matched-event comparison in conjunction with CDA helps to maintain relatively stable background while investigating the differences between the frames created by alternative headlines. The same could be used for educational purposes, especially in terms of critical media literacy: asking not just what a headline is reporting, but how it is linguistically structured.

1.6 Scope and Delimitations

Thirty English-language headlines from The Times, The Sun and the Daily Mail are included in the corpus (10 for each paper). They are organized by ten comparable news events that have been posted from February 2022 to November 2024. Main article is the primary unit of analysis, however, full articles are consulted for context. Lexical choice, labeling, grammatical agency, foregrounding, evaluation, pronouns, metaphor and related features are given attention when they are directly involved in the framing. Images, typography, audience effects, and journalists' private purposes are beyond the scope. The conclusions, therefore, only apply to this set of articles and not to all of the articles published by the three newspapers.

LITERATURE REVIEW**2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis, Ideology, and Framing**

Unlike other approaches to discourse as a separate from the context of its use, CDA sees discourse as a social practice. In the analysis of textual choices, Fairclough (1989, 1995a, 1995b) suggests that the context of the product of the discourse is the context of the processes through which it has been created, along with the social context. In headline analysis, this means a noun, a verb, a passive construction, or the absence of a verb is important in the sense that it conveys something or it takes away from or it makes something seem normal.

Van Dijk (1993) takes a related social and cognitive angle, by demonstrating that the processes of reproduction of dominance and ideology can take place through recurring discourse patterns. Moreover, his research on news discourse also makes headlines very significant as they indicate the most salient interpretation of a news story (van Dijk, 1988). In this way, ideology doesn't have to be a naked political proclamation. It can be indirect, for instance, by name-calling, pointing out who is responsible, by presupposing, by specifying particular details, or by using patterns of positive or negative representation (van Dijk, 2006).

These three levels are particularly helpful when analysing media, as they describe the media text, interpret the discourse practice, and explain the media in relation to the wider social practice. This analysis in the present focus primarily on the text itself: vocabulary, grammar, agency, naming, and rhetorical form. Only once those features have been identified, does the interpretation take into account how they are used to structure the event for readers. When the linguistic evidence leads to a wider political position of a newspaper, then it is brought into the discussion. It is a crucial protection against the tendency to use CDA for the purpose of just confirming a bias that was taken for granted in advance.

A second safeguard is given by Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach. The ideological significance doesn't exist in a single word or in a single structure – it is more persuasive when the same representation(s) are repeated. A label can be correct in one situation but not another. Many times, the passive construction can be used for brevity but repeated omission of the same actor can still impact responsibility. For this reason, the analysis is more of a recurrent pattern and matched comparison than an isolated example.

Framing theory is complementary to CDA; it is based on selection and salience. Entman (1993) suggests that communication highlights some aspects of perceived reality over others, which in turn will lead to the

encouragement of certain problem definitions, causal interpretations, evaluations, or responses. Thus two headlines can be factually compatible with each other but attract different attention, one can highlight the actor, another the consequence, and a third the emotional response. This is helpful here because normal stylistic variation is not automatically considered ideological bias.

Newsworthiness is part and parcel of discourse. Bednarek and Caple (2017) demonstrate the possibilities of highlighting of the negative, impact, proximity, personalisation, unexpectedness and superlativeness features by using language. This is especially true for headline words, as compressing to make an event immediately legible and salient is rewarded.

2.2 Newspaper Headlines as Discourse

Headlines are a unique space in news discourse. At once they summarise, draw attention, and create a first frame: They stand out, are highly compressed, and semantically dense. In terms of newspaper language, Reah (2002) focuses on the issues of omission, word order and lexical selection; Dor (2003) regards headlines as not being a mere summary, but instead as relevance optimizers. They are short, tend to be elliptical, are allusive, metaphorical, are witty, and make use of conventional references to shared culture.

When compression changes agencies it is particularly important. A passive or nominal construction can tell what happened without specifying the responsible person. Lewin-Jones and Webb (2013), in their study of *The Sun* and *The Guardian*, demonstrate that even place-name metonyms can imply agency and make it seem as if it is one organisation. In other words, brevity does not subtract representation, it accentuates it.

Also, the headline discourse is pragmatic. The headline is generally the first thing readers will see before reading the article, and in many instances, they may not read past the headline. The headline should therefore, generate enough relevance to get people's eye and leave the details for later. In such instances, ellipsis, presupposition, direct quotation, allusion to something which is familiar to the culture, and culturally familiar references are extremely helpful. They are important from a CDA point of view because they can seem natural when making assumptions. Is that it? provides virtually no factual information, for instance, and welcomes a skeptical response. The strategy of 'you're rehired' is followed in a similar manner in 'You're rehired', which uses Donald Trump's television persona and the re-enacts an election result using a familiar cultural script.

This is very evident in the newspapers that came out after the EU referendum on the 24th of June 2016. The Daily Mail's 'WE'RE OUT!', The Sun's later edition 'SEE EU LATER!', and The Times' 'Britain's Brexit revolt' were among the headlines. The Daily Mail's inclusive we turns the collective national action. The Sun uses celebratory wordplay, the Times takes resort to the noun revolt, which carries connotations of resistance to authority. All three are in reference to the same electoral result but each has a linguistic form. That's why matched comparison is helpful – though the event doesn't change much, there are lexical and rhetorical differences.

2.3 Lexical Choice, Labeling, and Grammatical Agency

The selection of words is one of the most obvious ways of framing, as different words can classify the same actor/actor or the same event. Lexical and labelling strategies can be used to represent different positions in news reports as illustrated in Seo (2008). Using 130 headlines, Tabe and Fieze (2018) reached similar conclusions that lexical patterning played a role in the various representations of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon.

The issue of narrowness can be traced back to the naming of social actors in the context of labelling. Jucker (1996) lists the various labels such as names, titles, occupational roles, descriptions and pronouns that are used in British news discourse. Moreover, Chilwa (2011) demonstrates that repeated labels are able to recognize a group and also assess it simultaneously. The King/Charles distinction and the Princess/Kate distinction, for instance, are therefore considered significant choices in this corpus, which have an impact on institutional distance and personalization.

The grammatical agency is a process in which the persons who are viewed as acting are represented as doing so, and the persons who are viewed as being affected are represented as being effected. Systemic-functional treatments of transitivity are useful here since they relate the participants and the processes to representations of experience. Seo (2013) illustrates such contrasting actor-process patterns with her analysis of the headlines of the Battle for Tripoli, which reflect different political representations. The key questions are then simply: Who is subject? What process is given to that actor? Is there an explicit, vague or missing agency?

2.4 Previous Empirical Studies

This study is preceded by prior headline research which serves as a methodological precedent and starting point. Taiwo (2007) explored 300 newspaper headlines from Nigeria and demonstrated how headlines, rhetorical strategies and vocabulary can reflect opinions. Lewin-Jones and Webb (2013) were able to show the ideology

potential of metonymy in British headlines. Branum and Charteris-Black (2015) identified significant differences in the reporting of Edward Snowden in both The Times and The Daily Mail, with the latter being more personalised and the former more us-versus-them. Kharbach (2020) demonstrated how an ideological construction could be examined systematically at the headline level using 515 headlines from Al Arabiya English and Al Jazeera English. These studies collectively make some points relevant to this analysis. Language can be a clue to ideological patterning rather than simply assumed from ownership or political standing. Naming and lexical choice continually appear as key resources for positive and negative representation. The grammatical organization may foreground or background agents to distribute responsibility. Last but not least, comparison is most convincing when the outlets cover similar or related events. In this context Seo (2013) study on the Battle for Tripoli and Tabe and Fieze (2018) work on lexical patterning are relevant.

British press research is particularly valuable because the newspapers examined in this study are set in the same country environment. Even newspapers using the same language, legal framework, and national political climate can differ significantly as seen in the work of Branum and Charteris-Black on Snowden. By keeping this context relatively constant, one source of variation is diminished that can make cross-national comparisons difficult. The current study is similar but limits the analysis to matching the headlines, so as to keep the focus on words.

The Brexit coverage is another helpful example. The Daily Mail's headline was WE'RE OUT! on 24 June 2016, The Sun's later edition was SEE EU LATER! and The Times's was Britain's Brexit revolt. All three papers were reacting to the same referendum outcome: one emphasized a sense of community, one a joyous wordplay, and one a revolt frame. Matched event examples help to support the matched event design as it minimizes the likelihood that wording variations are merely the result of different content areas.

The size of previous datasets also helps to define the project's intent. The 300 headlines of Taiwo and the 515-headline corpus of Kharbach are a testament to the breadth of information they offer and the usefulness of large-scale systematic comparison. This study takes a more targeted approach with a smaller corpus due to the type of questions it asks. Each headline is accompanied by two other headlines reporting the same event, and is analysed at the lexical and grammatical level. The design is therefore geared more to the question of what happens with salience rather than how many occur: it is designed to let people know how different formulations get salience in a controlled set of events.

There are other studies in Britain that support this placing: In the same media system, newspapers could create significantly different accounts of the Snowden affair, as found by Branum and Charteris-Black (2015). As Lewin-Jones and Webb (2013) demonstrated, even a small tool like metonymy can make agency hard to see in British headlines. These results indicate that differences at the level of the newspaper are discernible in the linguistic form of the text and that they can be analyzed without making assumptions about the private intentions of the journalist.

2.5 Research Gap

Most of the research that is available so far compares newspapers from different national contexts, focuses on one linguistic aspect, or uses a different set of stories that are not matched. A few times less focus has been paid to The Times, The Sun and the Daily Mail in the same matched event CDA based on the same lexical choice, labelling and grammatical agency categories. The present corpus taps into that hole with thirty headlines from the same set of ten common events, in the same British media arena. It is not intended to compare the newspapers with regard to the term 'bias' rather, it is designed to uncover the common patterns in which similar events are highlighted through different linguistic means.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The design used is qualitative, descriptive and comparative CDA. The methodological characteristic is the event matching - one headline from The Times, one from The Sun and one from the Daily Mail for each major event. The closer the wording is matched to the topic, the easier it is to understand the differences as words can be interpreted more easily since the event is generally controlled. The analysis starts not with a preconceived notion of neutrality or bias of any newspaper, but with observable linguistic features.

3.2 Data and Sampling

Ten major events were chosen from the newspapers using purposeful sampling, at a similar point in the news cycle. The resulting corpus consists of 30 real news headlines of which 10 are taken from each newspaper and are published from 25 February 2022 until 7 November 2024. Only if it could be confirmed in the front page, by newspaper archives or reliable press records, did an item's wording and date appear on the same period was it

included. Publication dates are given for all headlines, issue numbers are provided only when these can be independently verified. The Times for 9th September 2022 (No. 73884) is an example of such a edition.

The chosen events are political, international, constitutional and public-interest events as they are easily identifiable with actors, actions and evaluative choices appropriate for discourse analysis. Headlines were not included when the three papers were obviously reporting on different parts of a continuing story, when there was no way to verify the words in the headline, or when the story was an opinion column, not a news headline. If there were multiple editions, the closest matching edition was selected. The purpose was to make the data comparable, rather than statistically representative.

The choice of headlines from the newspapers and of the ten events is balanced on purpose; ten headlines are written from each newspaper, and three headlines are written from each event. A single outlet or topic can thus not be the only focus of the qualitative comparison. The selection of 30 headlines is sufficiently small to preserve context, while also enabling recurrent patterns to be observed across events. The study is therefore analytical in depth and comparison is transparent, not for generalisation at the population level.

3.3 Corpus of Authentic Headlines

Code	Date	Event	The Times	The Sun	Daily Mail
E1	25 Feb 2022	Russia invades Ukraine	A dark day for Europe	Her blood on his hands	Putin to seize capital in days
E2	26 May 2022	Sue Gray Partygate report	Gray report vindicates me over No 10 parties, claims Johnson	The Party(gate) is over	Is that it?
E3	8 Jul 2022	Johnson resignation	Johnson throws in towel	Kiss goodbye ... and thanks for Brexit	What the hell have they done?
E4	9 Sep 2022	Death of Queen Elizabeth II	Death of the Queen	We loved you, Ma'am	Our hearts are broken
E5	25 Oct 2022	Rishi Sunak becomes PM	Sunak tells Tories: Unite or die	The force is with you, Rishi	A new dawn for Britain
E6	6 May 2023	Coronation of Charles III	King's day of destiny	His & Hers	His day of destiny
E7	6 Feb 2024	King Charles cancer diagnosis	The King has cancer	King: I have cancer	Charles is so grateful they caught it early

Code	Date	Event	The Times	The Sun	Daily Mail
E8	23 Mar 2024	Princess of Wales diagnosis	Princess reveals her cancer and says: I'm going to be OK	Kate, you are not alone	I am well and getting stronger every day ... I am going to be OK
E9	5 Jul 2024	Labour election victory	Labour surges towards landslide election win	Winner by smiles	Labour set for historic landslide
E10	7 Nov 2024	Trump election victory	Trump promises golden age after sweeping Harris aside	You're rehired	A comeback to Trump all comebacks!

3.4 Data Collection and Coding

Headlines were transcribed exactly as they appeared, even wordplay, pronounceable and non-pronounceable ellipsis, and the use of pronouns were included if they were analytically relevant. There are 10 matched events, each numbered with a T, S and M code, e.g. T1 is the first matched event in The Times, S1 is the first matched event in The Sun and M1 is the first matched event in Daily Mail. The coding was done in two phases. First, each headline was explored individually and then the three headlines within each event were compared to look for patterns within an event, before patterns across events were identified.

All items were documented with a full record of the newspaper name, exact headline(s), date of publication, event, edition details as appropriate and used sources for verification. Headlines that were available online but could be found in the archive of a print publication were preferred as these may be revised after publication. This record gives an audit trail for later review, and prevents details of issues and editions that aren't actually in the source being reported.

3.5 Analytical Framework

The analytical framework is divided into three categories which are directly related to the research questions, namely, lexical choice, labelling, and grammatical agency. In lexical analysis, you will include evaluative words, verbs, adjectives, intensification, idioms, metaphor. Record the actors and their formal titles or surname, first name, institutional identity, collective noun or pronoun. Agency analysis documents the grammatical subject, main process, affected participant, active/passive construction, and cases in which the responsibility is unclear or missing. Elements added in the foregrounding, direct address, rhetorical questions, intertextuality and collective pronouns when they add meaningfully to the frame.

Category	Operational question
Lexical choice	Which words evaluate or conceptualize the event?
Labeling	How are people, groups, and institutions named?
Agency	Who is represented as doing what to whom?
Evaluation	What positive or negative stance is encoded?
Foregrounding	Which actor, consequence, or emotion receives prominence?
Framing	What interpretation is made most salient in the matched set?

3.6 Trustworthiness and Ethics

Several steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the procedure: source verification, balanced corpus, matched event comparison, explicit coding categories and separation of the linguistic observation and interpretation. Statements about newspaper tendencies are made on the basis of the pattern of several headlines and not on a particular striking headline. The study does not involve human participants as the material is made up of only fragments of publicly available newspaper text. Also it does not make any statement about what journalists mean in their private intentions; only statements about discourse patterns that can be seen in the selected corpus. Also, the sequence of coding was intentional. Descriptive observations were made prior to any interpretive claims. The use of the pronoun *our* in a headline is not the same as the pronoun building an inclusive community. Similarly, determining who the omitted agent is precedes assigning the backgrounding responsibility. Separate stages allow for easier understanding of the reasoning and minimizes the likelihood of presenting interpretation as a textual truth. Trends at the level of newspapers were only described after checking the same trends in events.

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Analytical Overview

The same event is made salient in each of the thirty headlines through various lexical, grammatical, interpersonal, and rhetorical means. Event by event discussion, followed by cross newspaper synthesis. This type of layout allows one to distinguish a real framing difference from a more typical variation in style and to observe the patterns that appear more than once.

4.2.1 Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

The first headline, T1, 'A dark day for Europe', becomes an evaluative metaphor of tragedy, danger and historical rupture. The term for Europe broadens the scope from Ukraine and introduces this invasion as a European crisis. A

more personal and accusatory title, S1, 'Her blood on his hands', activates a familiar metaphor of responsibility by means of blood and hands, and the gendered pronouns tie a victim with an implied male perpetrator. M1's more direct approach is to name Putin, give him direct agency, and replace seize with forceful military acquisition. Use the word days to make urgency more pressing. The three headlines are not necessarily in opposition, but each highlights a different facet of the invasion: historical consequence, personal responsibility, and imminent conquest.

4.2.2 The Sue Gray Partygate Report

In T2 the voice of vindication is Johnson's: 'Gray report vindicates me... claims Johnson'. The reporting verb takes away from the newspaper's involvement in the claim, which is why it is so important. S2, 'The Party(gate) is over', is based on parenthetical word play, while is over is a stronger framing move (the latter asserts that the controversy has come to a close). M2: Is that it? provides virtually no descriptive information. It has a force of its own: a rhetorical question makes the reader think the report is underwhelming, because it assumes very high expectations. Attribution, closure and minimization are thus three different ways of dealing with the same publication.

4.2.3 Boris Johnson's Resignation

T3, 'Johnson throws in towel,' expresses resignation in a boxing idiom in which the figure of Johnson is the one who is defeated. In 'Kiss goodbye ... and thanks for Brexit', S3 moves the focus from the shortly before-and-after-effects of resignation towards the legacies of Brexit, making the event a success in its own right. What the hell have they done? ('What' is a more open evaluative), is M3. Rhetorical question assumes damage, hell makes indignation worse, vague is the way he shifts responsibility from Johnson to an unnamed group that he imagines is connected to his ouster. In this case, the contrast isn't just stylistic, but is also a rearrangement of causal responsibility and moral judgment.

4.2.4 Queen Elizabeth II's death

T4, 'Death of the Queen' is an syntactically nominal construction around the event and around the constitutional title of the monarch. It has no inherent emotion and is a distance from institutions. In S4, 'We loved you, Ma'am', we forms a collective speaker, you speaks to the Queen straight, Ma'am is a blend of respect and familiarity. Heartbreak' (M4) also registers its emotions from a collective perspective: our aligns the newspaper with its readers, and hearts are broken metaphorically. The interpersonal difference between the two sets is the key difference. The Times

reports on the institutional event, while The Sun and the Daily Mail mourn and invite readers to be part of a collective emotional community.

4.2.5 Rishi Sunak Becomes Prime Minister

T5, 'Sunak tells Tories: Unite or die', negotiates Sunak's grammatical self-sovereignty and puts the Conservative Party in an existential crisis frame. The call to unity or die makes party discipline sound like a matter of life or death. Social distance is being lowered, and even heroic, associations are being placed on the new prime minister, as S5, 'The force is with you, Rishi', gives up on institutional language in favor of a reference to Star Wars. M5's 'A new dawn for Britain' takes Sunak completely out of the sentence and transforms the political change into a 'change for the nation'. This is the same ascendancy of power that is structured by party survival, personalized optimism and a metaphor of regeneration.

4.2.6 Coronation of King Charles III

The evaluative noun destiny, which is important in both phrases, T6: King's day of destiny and M6: His day of destiny, is associated with strongly evaluative nouns, which indicate historical fulfillment and completion of a path that is long established. The difference is in the labeling, King's is constitutional office, while his makes it more personal. The phrase of a familiar commercial is taken to the roof of Charles and Camilla in S6 'His & Hers'. It's worth discussing this case because the newspapers aren't writing contrasting interpretations of the coronation. Most of the differences have nothing to do with ideology, but with register and audience.

4.2.7 King Charles III's Cancer Diagnosis

The King has cancer' is a direct declarative sentence with the formal label The King in the predicate. It places more emphasis on the medical fact, and provides little explicit judgement. In S7, 'King: I have cancer', the first-person voice is used and the colon represents the voice of the king, making the distance between the monarch and reader smaller. M7, 'Charles is so grateful they caught it early', put the diagnosis in the background. The first name Charles makes the monarch, grateful centers emotion and caught it early brings reassurance. Thus, the three headlines make different aspects salient – diagnosis, personal disclosure and optimistic prognosis.

4.2.8 Princess of Wales's Cancer Diagnosis

T8 is about disclosure and reassurance: 'Princess shows her cancer, and tells me, "I'm going to be OK". The institutional formality of princess is offset by the marks of the information that Princess reveals as being newly

disclosed, and the quotation provides a positive future orientation. Kate, you are not alone' is another S8 altogether. The first name and direct second-person address elevates the headline from a diagnosis to a statement of solidarity. At the forefront of this M8 is the comforting voice of the Princess, 'I am well and getting stronger every day ... I am going to be OK'. The repeated use of the first person clauses highlights resilience and recovery. The inter-personal and emotional distance is the smallest in The Times across the set, and the highest in The Sun and the Daily Mail.

4.2.9 Labour's 2024 General-Election Victory

Political momentum is communicated via 'surges' in T9, 'Labour surges towards landslide election win'. Landslide, as a self-evidently traditional election term, highlights scale. The same basic frame is used in M9, 'Labour set for historic landslide', and is amplified by the word historic, creating a result that is presented as being nationally exceptional. S9 'Winner by smiles' uses a play on words for Winner by miles and personalizes the description of the institution through the use of plays. The three papers do not differ greatly in terms of whether Labour's victory was decisive, but they do disagree slightly in terms of their register and emphasis in making their evaluation. That convergence is analytically useful, however, in that it helps to ward off the tendency to mistake each stylistic opposition as an ideological opposition.

4.2.10 Donald Trump's 2024 Election Victory

According to T10, 'Trump promises golden age after sweeping Harris aside', Trump has two processes in play: promising and metaphorically sweeping aside Harris. Harris is the person who is being forced to victory, the latter is the winner. More importantly, the newspaper gives credit to Trump's promise, not as an endorsement of his own. S10: 'You're rehired' is a spin on the catchphrase used on The Apprentice when they fired someone, but uses celebrity culture and work to mean 'Glory to you, you are being rehired'. In M10 'A comeback to Trump all comebacks!', word play, structure exaggerated with the use of a superlative, and the exclamation mark greatly enhance the magnitude of the return. The common outcome is then expressed as a winning agency, a celebrity comeback and a miraculous return.

4.3 Cross-Newspaper Patterns

The feature most commonly expressed across the corpus is lexical choice. Words like the dark day, blood on his hands, throws in towel, new dawn, historic landslide, and golden age are more than just words. They imagine them

as crisis, guilt, loss, rebirth, transformation or future riches. Evaluation is then frequently conveyed through the ordinary vocabulary of the headlines, rather than through an explicit editorial argument.

Interpersonal distance is the primary area of impact of labeling. The Times frequently uses institutional names or surnames, like The King, Sunak, Labour, Trump. The Sun rather leans towards first names and towards direct address, as in Rishi and Kate. The Daily Mail also personalises, especially when emotion is at the heart of it – Charles, for example. The pattern continues with the pronouns we and our, which represent a community, you, which represents direct address, and a generic they, which can be used to make a judgement about some group without naming the specific one.

Agency is likewise clearly variable. Headlines like 'Putin to seize capital', 'Sunak tells Tories', 'Labour surges', and 'Trump promises ... sweeping Harris aside' put the political actors in 'head' and make their actions the focus. In contrast, 'A dark day for Europe' and 'Our hearts are broken' emphasize a consequence or emotion, not a cause. In other words, grammatical organization is important for determining the focus on actor, victim, consequence or evaluation.

An alternative contrast can be found in Register. The Times tends to have propositional, actor-event structures in this corpus, but there is no denying that metaphor and evaluation are also in evidence. The Sun is more likely to use puns, allusions to popular culture, direct address and interpersonal language that is compressed. The Daily Mail is more prone to rhetorical questions, national metaphors and emotional intensification as well as to making explicit evaluations. These are characteristics of the sample data, and not of the newspapers themselves.

Besides, the newspapers also vary in the relationship they build with their readers. The Sun can make you seem like a conversational equal, use first names and commonplace cultural references. Collective feeling is more frequently constructed the Daily Mail, through our or through evaluative questions that call for agreement. The Times is not as forthright in its voice, in that it employs institutional designations, traditional declaratives, and attributed speech. Framing, then, is not just about representation of an event, but also the relation that is created between the event, the newspaper, and the audience.

Convergence is also of the essence. The coronation and Labour-election sets demonstrate that the newspapers, which have different editorial identities, can be both very broad and very different when they are using a similar interpretation of the material but different registers. The clearest evidence of ideological disconnect is in a change

in the terms used to refer to responsibility, evaluation, or a shift in the causal emphasis of the claim, like in the case of Johnson resigning or Partygate sets, rather than their differing in the humour or stylistic accessibility.

Metaphor and intertextuality are found throughout the dataset. A darkness metaphor 'A dark day for Europe', boxing 'throws in towel' and renewal 'new dawn' plus The Apprentice 'You're rehired' and Star Wars 'The force is with you Rishi'. These widely used frames are easily understood scripts for complex political developments. All three papers have a consistent use of the resource of the Sun, but this is used most consistently in the Sun. Being analyzed is the content that each metaphor offers: resignation is defeat, accession is renewal, and electoral return is rehiring.

Some of the most distinct contrasts are from foregrounding and backgrounding. The Ukraine set features a headline that foregrounds Europe, a second that foregrounds personal bloodshed and a third that foregrounds military capture. Defeat, Brexit legacy and the role of a "they" are key components in the Johnson-resignation set. The media buzzes with royal-cancer headlines of diagnosis, disclosure or reassurance. These contrasts very aptly show Entman's idea of salience: facts do not have to be challenged to shift in an attention-grabbing way.

Another distinction appears between a "broader" institutional and "interpersonal" framing. Formal structures are used often in The Times, which names office-holders or institutions formally. The sun constantly diminishes social distance by using first person, second person and sharing popular culture. Collective emotion or evaluative stance are often used to achieve the affective alignment in the Daily Mail. These decisions are not just in terms of style, but also about the possible relationship between the newspaper and the reader, which is part of the framing process.

Feature	The Times	The Sun	Daily Mail
Propositional/actor-event structure	Frequent	Moderate	Moderate
Direct address/personalization	Limited-moderate	Strong	Moderate-strong
Wordplay/intertextuality	Moderate	Very strong	Moderate
Overt emotional evaluation	Moderate	Strong	Very strong
Institutional labeling	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
National/collective framing	Moderate	Strong	Strong

4.4 Discussion in Relation to the Research Questions

The first research question is what are the linguistic means used to create framing. The resources that occur repeatedly across the corpus are evaluative lexical choice, labelling, the grammatical agency, foregrounding/bg

which include the foregrounding of background, metaphor, pronouns, rhetorical questions, direct address, wordplay, and intertextuality. They frequently act in conjunction with each other. For instance, 'Our hearts are broken' pairs a collective pronoun with an emotional assessment and metaphor, while 'What the hell have they done?' pairs a rhetorical question, intensification, and vague agency with a presupposition of the damage done.

The second research question is more specific, regarding lexical choice, labelling and agency. A lexical item can evoke an event as a crisis, as a defeat, as a renewal, or as a historic change. The institutional distance can be accentuated or diminished by the use of labels, and the grammatical agency can heighten or create the impression of responsibility. The patterns are similar to van Dijk's account of the representation of ideology and Seo's (2013) illustration of different perspectives in participant-process relations in headlines.

The third research question compares and contrasts the three newspapers. None simply reproduces an event; all three select, foreground and evaluate. The differences between them are in the way they prefer to frame it. Evaluation is often embedded in the traditional news propositions of the Times, the Daily Mail is more likely to make attitude and emotion explicit and the Sun frequently adopts interpersonal and popular-cultural forms. The pattern is consistent with Entman's (1993) claim that framing involves selection and salience — facts that are compatible can be presented, and different aspects of the facts can be emphasised.

Comparisons are as important as differences. All three newspapers do something similar in compressing complex events into a few salient meanings all the time, and all newspapers in the sample can personalize public figures. It is impossible to avoid framing in that descriptive sense as no headline can include all the elements of an event. A more challenging question is whether there are enough specific choices to give one representation a head start over competitors that are plausible.

The results also emphasize the importance of caution when using CDA. Ideological opposition does not automatically imply a pun, a metaphor, or a "passive". The two sets of events here — the coronation and the Labour-election — demonstrate that newspapers can have very different styles but very similar interpretations. Patterns that repeat across events are needed for stronger ideological claims. Therefore, it is helpful to conceptualize framing as a work of the relationship between linguistic choices rather than to automatically impute meaning to words.

That's the same precaution that works to clarify the concept of bias. There is no opposition between neutral and ideological language, there is only a continuum, as the corpus indicates. Some headlines serve primarily as

informational, but still selective; others provide evaluation; others try to introduce the reader with pronouns, questions, or direct address. A good CDA should state the text-based mechanism(s) for an interpretation and should show the degree of support of the evidence for the interpretation. This degree of transparency is especially vital for headline analysis, as it is so brief that it can be interpreted in many different ways, while simultaneously being stylistically inventive.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In the present study, 30 matched headlines from The Times, The Sun and Daily Mail were analysed to gain insight into the process of ideological framing in the linguistic level. The results revealed that headlines actually more than just summarize the events. These focus attentions on specific actors, consequences and interpretations through lexical selection, labelling, agency, metaphor, pronouns, evaluation, and selective prominence.

The three research questions all fall under one general theme. Evaluative vocabulary, labeling, grammatical agency, foregrounding, metaphor, idiom, direct address, rhetorical questions, wordplay, intertextuality are all strategies that are repeated. Lexicalization categories events; labeling controls institutional distance and personalization; agency creates who is responsible or powerful. The Times is relatively propositional and institutional, the Sun interpersonal and allusive, and the Daily Mail evaluative and emotive in the corpus.

The main argument is not that one newspaper is 'neutral' and the other 'biased'. In headline writing, there is always a selection. A more fruitful and analytical question would be which choices are repeated, which actors do they favor, which consequences do they make more conspicuous, and how do they explain them. The matched corpus helps to highlight the differences between the alternative wordings in the design, as it covers similar events in both.

5.2 Implications

The results support two related concepts: selection and salience as emphasized by framing theory and social consequences as emphasized by CDA. They also have a practical application in terms of media literacy. Readers gain from the questions of "who is named," "who gets grammatical agency," "which evaluative terms are selected," and "what is not placed in the headline prominence. The findings for the researcher help distinguish between matching events in similar languages without assuming that stylistic differences are indicative of ideology.

For the purposes of headlines, then, literacy should not be limited to vocabulary, but should include pragmatic and interpersonal aspects as well. Readers can be placed before any explicit argument if it is addressed, used with pronouns, in the form of a rhetorical question, or in the form of an allusion. These effects can be made visible by comparing multiple headlines for the same event, as there can be multiple different ways of formatting it without losing any factual information, which can help draw attention to them for evaluation.

5.3 Limitations

There are some limitations of the study. The number of 30 headlines for 10 events and 3 newspapers is enough for close qualitative comparison, but not for the generalisation of the results to British journalism at large. The analysis is limited to headline rather than full article data, and is not included for images, typography or audience response. Since it's qualitative in nature, the validity is related to the clarity of its interpretation based on text analysis, not a big number of frequencies. There may also be patterns for this period of time that would not appear in another historical or political context during 2022-2024.

Versioning is another drawback. The wording of the headlines may vary from one print edition to the next, online publication, and subsequent updates. The study mitigates this issue by relying on authoritative contemporaneous records and documenting dates and editions where available, but there is not equal access to the archives for the three newspapers. Systematic, future replications that provide access to full print archives would enable even stricter control over differences in editions.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Research

This study can be expanded in future using bigger corpora and more newspapers from the British newspapers. Close CDA might be complemented by corpus methods, such as keyword analysis, collocation analysis and concordance analysis, or by full-article studies to see whether the frame for the headline is strengthened or changed in the body text. Some of the photographs and layout might be added, and audience testing might be conducted on the impact of changes in the headline formulation on perceived responsibility, sympathy, or political evaluation. If possible, matched event sampling should continue as it provides a good comparison.

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