

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE

Francesca Viscido

Any port in a storm:  
A systemic functional analysis of linguistic choices of representation in news  
texts.

Master's Thesis  
School of Communication, Media and Theatre  
European and Russian Studies Master's Programme  
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December 2014

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This Master's Thesis aims to gain insight into how linguistic choices shape the representation of information in news stories. Because they involve decision by definition, choices have an effect on the news angles and consequentially on the content and the message conveyed in an article. Specific structures, such as passive sentences, are not only determined by simple stylistic preference, but are also the fruit of linguistic choices. The choice of such constructions in place of factually equivalent or similar ones, gives a sentence a particular direction and indicates a linguistic strategy in the (re)presentation of the facts and the speaker's attitude.

A study on an integral aspect of language use such as linguistic choices applied to news stories is of particular interest because of the essential role language plays in media and communication in general. More specifically, the present thesis is situated in the particular context of foreign news reporting, which involves also editorial choices.

The main theoretical framework of this study lies on systemic functional linguistics, from which the concept of linguistic choices originates, and discourse analysis, in its particular application to news texts. This study investigates linguistic choices through the systemic functional linguistic analysis of 8 articles, from 4 daily newspapers, that cover the adoption ban signed by President Putin in 2012. The selected newspapers consist in a set of American dailies and a set of British dailies. Each set contains a tabloid and a broadsheet. In addition to the examination of the focus of information that the linguistic choices reveal in the articles, this study also seeks to observe the differences and similarities between the dailies based on their nationality and on the type of newspaper.

While the main focus of information is on political figures, the articles concentrate the attention on the thoughts and the feelings of other individuals involved in the adoption ban issue as well. Moreover, the study suggests that the use of the same language, or two varieties of a same language, results in similarities between the newspapers, despite of their nationality. It is the type of newspaper that marks a divergence in the corpora and points to different linguistic choices.

*“Language, as every language user knows,  
involves a kind of doubling of our perceptual universe”*  
John C. L. Ingram

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## 1. Introduction

Every utterance we produce is charged with meaning and purpose. Countless verbal responses to other people's utterances and to the numerous phenomena of reality are at our disposal. They are dictated by our individual experiences, our perception of the world, or the circumstances, and are based on linguistic choices. These choices are often unconscious, but regardless of their nature, they are revealing of the message or information that we are trying to convey.

The purpose of this study is to observe these linguistic choices in the context of news media. Linguistic choices are intrinsic to communication and "whenever we speak, we make a choice among different ways of expressing ourselves, of putting things" (Loebner, 2002, p. 79). What we want to communicate is not simply a straight line of encoded information, but "[T]here is usually more than one way to depict certain facts" (ibid., p. 79).

Linguistic choice is an underlying theme in M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, the linguistic approach on which the present investigation is based. In fact, choice is one of the principal tenets of the Hallidayan approach, which states that every linguistic production is the result of a conscious or unconscious decision and has a precise function.

Through the examination of a selected number of news stories on the Russian adoption ban of 2012, I aim to uncover the effect produced by the influence that linguistic choices have in the representation of a news event.

On December 27, 2012, the Russian Federal Council passed a bill that would ban the adoption of Russian children by American citizens. The events that led to the President signing the bill into law revolve around the figure of Sergey L. Magnitsky. Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer representing a London investment firm, Hermitage Capital, was arrested in November 2008, after he tried to expose a huge Russian government tax fraud. He died in prison of a heart attack as a result of being denied medical assistance, despite suffering from acute pancreatitis and gallstones in the days before his death. Following the death of the Russian lawyer, the Magnitsky Act was drafted, which would deny travel and investment access (such as owning property and so forth) in

the U.S. to Russian citizens accused of human rights violations. The Act was signed into a law by President Obama in November 2012.

In response to this law, in November 2012, Russian officials advanced a bill banning adoptions of Russian orphans by American citizens. The bill was signed by President Putin in late December 2012 and came into force as a law on 1 January 2013. The law was named after Dima Yakovlev, a toddler who died of heatstroke in Virginia in July 2008, after his father left him in a sweltering car for nine hours. The adoptive father, Miles Harrison, was acquitted of charges of involuntary manslaughter by judge Nye. The ban was also accompanied by sanctions for American judges who fail to punish those responsible for abuses on Russian orphans. In addition, the Russian law also bars adoption agencies that work with Americans from operating in Russia.

The Russian adoption ban was met with sharp criticism both in Russia and the United States, especially due to a very recent ratification of an adoption agreement between the two countries earlier in November 2012.

Russian officials close to Putin, such as the minister of foreign affairs, Sergei Lavrov, and the minister of education and science, expressed their views against it, but the bill was passed and came into effect in 2013, de facto nullifying the previous agreement within a year.

While at first banning all adoptions by American citizens, Russian officials allowed pending adoptions (around 46) that had already received a court order to go through.

On April 2013, Russia released a list of American officials banned from entering the Russian Federation for allegedly violating human rights.

This event, like all news events, can be presented in a number of perspectives, called angles, that clarify the purpose of a story and place focus on a particular aspect.

The following paragraph briefly explains how the research project developed.

### **1.1 Evolution of the research idea**

The process that took to the development of this thesis was a quite long and at times misleading journey.



The starting point was the idea to analyse a corpus of news texts under a linguistic light and contextualise it within the realm of Russian studies. At first I planned to perform a linguistic analysis of a year's worth of news articles related to Russia from the *New York Times*, with the general purpose to observe how Russia was portrayed in the American newspaper. I gathered all articles and tagged and colour-coded them according to the topic and news type (economics, politics, sports...). However, it soon turned out to be a project of colossal proportions, especially for a Master's Thesis.

One option was focusing on the headlines, but it seemed too broad and vague as the analysis would have focused only on one newspaper and a more thorough investigation on other corpora would not have been feasible due to limits of time and space. The next step was therefore to look at the various topics and news types into which I had classified the headlines and find a suitable group of articles for a more thorough investigation. The adoption ban issue was a perfect match because it involved the newspaper I had chosen as well, and because the main events could be easily concentrated in a limited timeframe, which made the analysis more chronologically clear. Moreover, the fact that the issue combined a political nature and human interest was an incentive for the choice of this topic, because it would allow a broader view of the reaction and the focus of its coverage.

Furthermore, because the topic could be delimited neatly, it was possible to examine more than one corpus. The choice of a second American newspaper fell on the *New York Post*, a tabloid and therefore a publication with a visibly different style than the *New York Times*. The second set of newspapers analysed is from the UK, a country that was not directly involved in the controversy and in a geographically interesting position as it is located between the two countries involved. The type of newspaper in the British set mirrors the American set, as *The Guardian* is a broadsheet, and the *Daily Mail* is a tabloid. The selection of the articles and its criteria are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

## 1.2 RQs

Focusing the study to a specific topic allowed me to better define my research questions.

The research questions on which the present investigation is based derive from the view of a connection between news and linguistics and how a linguistic analysis can help explain and clarify the contents of a news text. Of the numerous linguistic devices used in news texts, the linguistic choices made to create a text appeared to be a significant angle. Because verbal (written and spoken) communication requires the use of language and therefore involves choices, there is an even more evident link with linguistics that inspired me to look at how journalists choose to create meanings. Thus, linguistic choices are the backbone and thread of the present study and the first and main research question addresses them.

The first research question, therefore, seeks to look at the effects that linguistic choices have on the contents and what central message emerges.

**RQ1: What focus of information do the linguistic choices in the articles reveal?**

This question includes the prediction that the main focus of reference in the articles falls on the Participants. While the laws, and the adoption ban in particular, are the central topic in the event at hand, they are rather means of interaction between the people involved. These people, called Participants in this study, are the real focus of attention in the articles.

The subsequent questions address two aspects from the analysis process and address the linguistic choices made in the articles based on two variables. The first variable relates to the country of origin of the newspapers. The second looks at how the linguistic choices that determine the delivery of an article may be influenced by whether the newspaper is a tabloid or a broadsheet.

**RQ2: Are there any significant differences in the linguistic choices depending on the nationality of the newspapers?**

**RQ3: Are there any significant differences in the linguistic choices depending on the type of newspaper?**

### **1.3 Structure of the study**

In order to answer the research questions, this study was organised in sequences of sections showing the development of the investigation from a theoretical to a practical presentation. This is achieved in 5 chapters, including the present introductory section and a conclusive chapter.

The Introduction presents the main goals and the questions addressed in the study, and provides background information on the topic analysed. Basic concepts are presented throughout the chapter, such as what is intended by 'linguistic choice' and what factors are determinant in news selection.

In Chapter 2, I situate the present study within its theoretical framework, by presenting the major theories that support it, which are drawn from linguistics and media studies. The chapter begins with an introduction of systemic functional grammar and the aspect of this theory that is employed in the examination of the news texts. It then presents discourse analysis and explains what features of this approach were adopted and how they were applied to the interpretation of the data. Finally, the chapter concludes with agenda-setting and framing theory, two approaches from media studies that focus on the organisation, the selection, and the effect of news on the audience.

Chapter 3 discusses the methods employed in the selection of the final material and in the analysis. In this part, I also describe the structure of the analysis in some detail to demonstrate the practical application of the theory and methodology to the examination of the articles.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the results from the analysis and draw preliminary conclusive observations. These are elaborated in Chapter 5, which closes the study with a discussion of its limits and a few recommendations for further study.

Finally, a timeline is added as an Appendix to give a more schematic view of the events.

The next paragraph introduces the factors and constraints that act in the choices that the coverage and distribution of foreign news entails.

## **1.4 Factors and constraints in the choice of foreign news**

Numerous events take place everywhere in the world on a daily basis that it would be impossible to report on every single one of them. Media outlets, therefore, select those incidents or situations that are deemed relevant to their target audience based on a set of criteria.

### **1.4.1 Factors**

Different factors determine foreign news coverage, such as a nation's image and the public perception of a foreign country (Salwen, 1987). Scholars have noticed the existence of a correlation between the exposure of specific types of news and the audience's knowledge of and attitude towards a foreign nation (Perry, 1980; Wanta, Lee & Golan, 2004). Coverage of international affairs contributes to the creation of a country's or a culture's image with considerable effect on the formation of public opinion (Flournoy & Steward, 1997), greatly influencing the public perception of a foreign country. This is an important factor in the present study, in particular in the case of the British newspapers, where the news involves two foreign countries and therefore it is possible to observe the presentation of their image. On the other hand, the news covered in the American newspapers is both foreign and domestic, as it directly involves the United States. In this case, the choice of coverage is influenced first and foremost by the relevance the issue has for the country itself. Therefore, the representation of the foreign country could be potentially 'tainted' by a more national perspective.

Editorial choices in news selection are another factor. While some scholars (Kunczik, 2002) hold that there is virtually no difference in the selective criteria used by editors between international and national or local news, others have found that certain elements were given more importance than others and had a stronger impact in setting the news agenda. For instance, Chang and Lee (1992) observed that editors put emphasis to a series of factors, such as news about threats to world peace, involvement of the U.S., anticipated reader interest, and timeliness, while topics such as trade relations or the economic development of a country were left out. Hicks and Gordon (1974) also supported the influence of U.S. involvement in an event as a decisive factor in the process of news selection.

Geographical, political, economical, or cultural proximity is also a very relevant factor in the choice of international news events to be covered. Kuczink (2002) clarifies that “the higher ranking of geographical or cultural proximity and more economic or ideological relations of a foreign country led to more intensive coverage of the country” (ibid., p.52). The concepts of geographical and cultural proximity especially apply to the Russian case, because of the predominant role that Russia has in the international picture (Cohen, 1995; Kucznik, 2002; Wu, 2003; Moscovici, 2008).

In addition to general news characteristics, foreign news has specific features relative to its production that concern international news agencies, correspondents, and stringers, and the distribution of news itself between nations and through various types of means of communication.

#### **1.4.2 Constraints**

Van Dijk (1988) identified three main sources of production for foreign news: “national and especially transnational news agencies, foreign correspondents of special envoys, and self-produced background articles by editors or staff writers” (ibid., p.37). Depending on the type of newspaper and the geographical area, foreign news may get to occupy up to 40-50% of all news.

Different constraints may shape and influence the editorial decisions on what news will be published.

The format and content of news, especially for small and regional newspapers, is heavily influenced and potentially constrained by their dependence on news agencies, whose stories are themselves limited by location and the point of view of their correspondents. In addition, the outcome must be relatively standardised and tailored for their best clients, i.e. Western media, and because such agencies have virtually no competition, the product will be conventional.

Other constraints concern the secondary roles of writers and correspondents, whose main function is linked mainly to commentary on news reports, selection of news based on factors such as urgency and frequency of coverage, and editorial sets of values.

Finally, news values and foreign news schemata and journalistic world models are also constraints. Journalistic world models, in particular, explain the criteria for prominence and the selection of news, as familiar situations that are different from everyday events tend to be favoured in foreign news reporting. Coverage of political, military, and/or economic events rather than social and cultural events, is almost exclusively the focus of foreign news. In this sense, the articles analysed in the present study make a significant case as they include coverage of the social aspect of the political controversy at the root of the adoption ban issue.

### **1.4.3 Distribution**

The sources and distribution of foreign news present a rather unbalanced relationship between North and South. The whole production of news, and the technological and financial infrastructures implied, is chiefly controlled by a few north-western organisations and is catered to Western countries, predominantly with Western topics and interests. News about non-Western countries, especially developing countries, tends to be biased, ethnocentric, and incomplete when compared to news about developed countries. Final selection and distribution are likely to happen in developed countries, even when the reports have been written by local non-Western journalists.

Empirical quantitative research has thus shown a certain “dependence of foreign news as supplied by the agencies and as preferred by the North-western press” (van Dijk, 1988, p.44). However, it is difficult to detect how events are covered and actions described through exclusively quantitative analysis.

Regardless of the immense differences on many levels between non-Western countries, they are often perceived and depicted as a single block, seen as politically different than, or at times opposite to, the Western models. On the other hand, while economic problems, such as international debts, are described as problems for Western countries. Furthermore, a lot of events taking place in developing countries are considered newsworthy only when there is a Western country involved, in particular the United States, while no interest in the local cultural aspects is shown.

The concepts presented above, in particular the influence editorial choices have on audiences and how the selection of news stories set a certain agenda, are two of the basic components of a media theory called Agenda-Setting. This, together with Systemic Functional Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, and Framing theory, constitute the theoretical framework of this study, which is presented in the following chapter.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

The chapter presents the main academic theories on which this study is based. Furthermore, it provides a theoretical background for the method of analysis performed in the present study.

### **2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics**

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth SFL) is a linguistic theory based on the central principle that language is a (social) semiotic system and its users have unlimited choice in the creation of meanings.

When asking for directions, giving an answer, making a statement, etc., speakers (and writers) can choose one of the different variations available for virtually any utterance to communicate a message. Most linguistic choices are often unconscious, but even when speech is produced without reflection, using the right forms in the proper context leads to the use of the 'meaning potential' of language (Bloor & Bloor, 1995).

Systemic linguists share a common interest in language as a social semiotic. They claim that the function of language use is to create meanings that are influenced by the cultural and social context of their exchange, therefore language use is a semiotic process. Accordingly, language is characterised as functional, semantic, contextual, and semiotic.

The functional questions of the systemic approach are concerned with how people use language and how language is structured for use, whereas the semantic questions are focused on how many types of meanings are made with the use of language and how language is used to make such meanings. Halliday (1985/1989, 1994) argues that three main kinds of meanings are used simultaneously in the structure of language: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. These three elements are also known as metafunctions<sup>1</sup>, the categories that constitute one of the tenets of systemic functional theory. The functions of a clause are integrated in three systems of choices that correspond to these categories: Transitivity, Mood, and Theme.

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<sup>1</sup> (Halliday used the term 'functions' in his earlier work, but it was changed to 'metafunctions' to avoid confusion with Searle's 'communicative functions' (1965))



The table below summarises the three systems and their respective metafunctions:

clause	ideational TRANSITIVITY	interpersonal MOOD	textual THEME
verbal group	TENSE	MODALITY	VOICE
nominal group	MODIFICATION	PERSON	DETERMINATION

**Table 1.** Main systems of the metafunctions (Wilcock, 1993, p.19).

### 2.1.1 The Ideational metafunction

The **ideational** metafunction refers to the use of language to construe and organise one's experience of the world. It is further divided into the **experiential** and the **logical** subfunction. The former describes clauses as representation and focuses on content and ideas, and how people actively construe and make sense of reality, classifying the objects and events within their awareness (Halliday, 1999). Halliday's claim that grammar has an active role in helping construing reality in the experiential subfunction also shows a Whorfian influence.

On the other hand, the logical subfunction focuses on the relationship between ideas, or in Halliday's words, systems "which set up logical–semantic relationships between one clausal unit and another" (Halliday, 2003), and the emphasis is put on the symbolic representation of reality and experience through language.

The ideational metafunction deals with how reality is represented in language, and asks questions such as "who, (does) what, whom, how, why, where, and when". Halliday devised a system to analyse texts in the spectrum of this category: *transitivity*, which includes processes, participants, and circumstances.

#### Processes

*Process* is a technical term used in systemic functional grammar (SFG henceforth) expressing two purposes: "(i) to refer to what is going on in the whole clause, and (ii) to refer to that part of the proposition encoded in the verbal group" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p.109). Verbs typically realise processes.

SFG distinguishes between six different types of processes and, accordingly, different types of participant are involved for each.

**Material processes** are perhaps the most common type. Clauses that contain verbs expressing action, the so-called “doing-words”, fall into this category. The following examples all contain material process clauses:

- (1) John drove the car.
- (2) Anne opened the window.
- (3) JC stole the big book from the library.

In the first example, “drove” represents the material process, while “John” and “the car” are the two participants. Being the performer of the action, the first is labelled **Actor**, which is quite self-explanatory, whereas “the car” is the **Goal** in this clause. This second type of participant is widely described as ‘the point of impact’ (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004; Bloor & Bloor, 2004) and is present in the other two examples as well: “the window”, “the big book”. “From the library” is not a participant, but a **Circumstance**.

While elsewhere a significant change marks the choice between active and passive voice, where the Subject in the passive form corresponds to the Complement in the active, participants retain the same functions of **Actor** and **Goal** regardless of voice. Fig. 2.1 exemplifies this:

**Active**

John	drove	the car.
Anne	opened	the window.
JC	stole	the big book.
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite/Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Process: Material</b>	<b>Goal</b>

**Passive**

The car	was	driven	by John.
The window	was	opened	by Anne.
The big book	was	stolen	by JC.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
<b>Actor</b>	<b>Process: Material</b>		<b>Goal</b>

Fig. 2.1 Participants in active and passive sentences.

**Material process** clauses can also contain four other participants: **Beneficiary** or **Recipient**, **Scope**, **Client**, and **Attribute**. The **Beneficiary** or **Recipient**, is a participant in a material process clause with a benefactive role, corresponding to the item that answers to the question, “to whom?” (what for example inflectional languages realise with Dative). It usually involves verbs such as ‘give’, ‘send’, ‘offer’, etc.:

Example 4: Anne gave you the keys.

In the material process clause in the example above, ‘you’ is the **Beneficiary** or **Recipient**. In particular, the label **Beneficiary** can be misleading at times, because it may seem to imply that the receiver would only benefit from the action, when in reality it also refers to receiving something detrimental and even harmful, as in “I’ll give you something to cry about” (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p.113). To avoid semantic confusion, this study refers to this participant as **Recipient**.

**Scope** is very similar to **Goal**. The main difference between the two participants is that **Scope** remains basically unaffected by the action, while an action is usually directed to the participant labelled as **Goal**. Furthermore, **Scope** is usually ‘restricted to intransitive clauses’ (Halliday, 2004, p.192). The participants in the following examples are all **Scope** (in italics):

Example 5: Armen and his friends play *ping-pong* every weekend.

(6) The band played *‘Waltzing Matilda’*.

**Client** is similar to **Recipient** as it shares its benefactive role, and Halliday helps clarify the difference between the two: ‘The **Recipient** is one that goods are given to; the **Client** is one that services are done for’ (ibid., p.191).

Example 7: They built a house *for me*.

Finally, the **Attribute** ‘may be used to construe the resultant qualitative state of the **Actor** or **Goal** after the process has been completed’ (ibid., p.195).

Example 8: They stripped them *clean* of every bit of jewellery.

**Mental process** clauses entail the description of states of mind and cognitive and psychological events. Verbs such as *think, feel, hate, like, know, fear, want, see, hear, enjoy*, etc., realise these processes. The sentences below are an example of such clauses, where it is clear that the reader cannot construe the process as an action, therefore material processes can be ruled out.

Example 9: I know what shrimp soup is.

Example 10: I see the sunrise.

**Mental process** clauses contain only two participants: **Senser** and **Phenomenon**. **Senser** is usually the Subject of the sentence and the “experiencer” of the **Phenomenon**.

The passive voice is rare in mental processes, but not impossible. When the passive is used or it is possible to use the passive form, the order of the participants is reversed:

**Active**

I	see	the sunrise.
<b>Senser</b>	<b>Process: Mental</b>	<b>Phenomenon</b>

**Passive**

The sunrise	is seen	by me.
<b>Phenomenon</b>	<b>Process: Mental</b>	<b>Senser</b>

**Fig. 2.2** Active and passive voice in mental process clauses.

Albeit grammatically possible, this type of passive structure seems quite heavy, but it is possible to find mental process clauses where the **Senser** is omitted (“The shots were heard”), because “one common motivation for using the passive voice is that it permits us to omit certain participants (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, pp. 117-118).

Finally, there are cases, usually involving the verb *know*, where the **Phenomenon** can be realised as a clause, as is the case in Example 8, where *I* is the **Senser**, *know* is the **Process**, and *what shrimp soup is* is the **Phenomenon**.

Copular verbs, such as *be*, *become*, *seem*, *appear*, and verbs of possession realise **Relational processes**. Such processes are further divided in two subclassifications: **Attributive** and **Identifying** processes. The first kind of process assigns an attribute to an item:

Example 11: He is sad all the time.

In the example above, *sad* is the attribute and *He* is the **Carrier** of the attribution. The process is realised by *is*, the present tense of the most typical copular verb *be*. Other examples of attributive relational processes are the following (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p. 121):

She	was	in a ward on the third floor.
The other four beds	were	empty.
She	could have been	a girl of twenty-five or a woman of fifty-five.
Her face	was	a bloated spotty mask.
<b>Carrier</b>	<b>Process: relational</b>	<b>Attribute</b>

Fig. 2.3 Relational processes

Furthermore, sentences containing these other copular verbs can also be classed as attributive relational processes: *feel* (as in *I feel pretty*), *look* (as

*in She looked pale*), *remain* (as in *Café Neko remained the best sushi bar in town*), *smell*, *sound*, and *taste*.

Finally, some possessive structures can be labelled as attributive relational process, as exemplified below:

Example 12: Ivan Yakovlevich has an extra nose.

**Identifying** processes are relational processes such as the sentence in the example below (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p. 121):

Example 13: Quint is his name.

*Quint* and *his name* are the **Identifier** and the **Identified** participants, respectively. Their functions within the sentence would not change if the speaker/writer reversed their order, which would then be more usual (or 'unmarked').

**Verbal processes** are realised through verbs introducing or describing speech. To a certain extent, these verbs present characteristics of material processes, since speaking is a form of action, and of mental processes, as verbalised thoughts can be considered inner speech. The example below contains a verbal process and its elements:

Example 14: Tomas said: 'Let's go to the amusement park this evening!'

In this example, Tomas is the **Sayer**, the past tense form of the verb *say*, *said* is the verbal process itself, and 'Let's go to the amusement park this evening!' is the actual verbalisation, in direct speech classed as **Quoted**. When the verbalisation is reproduced in reported speech, it bears the self-explanatory title of **Reported**. There are different possibilities of ordering the elements within a verbal process clause, especially in the direct speech form. Moreover, when analysing this type of process, the direct and/or reported speech can be also analysed as a separate clause (which it is, technically).

A third participant in **Verbal process** clauses is the **Receiver**, which could be described as the verbal process equivalent of **Beneficiary** in material clauses. In the example below, *me* is the receiver:

Example 14: Salim told *me* that they are closing down the dolphinarium.

The most common verb in this process is *say*, but other verbs such as *ask*, *tell*, *mumble*, *repeat* or verbs conveying an illocutionary force, as speech act theorists call them, such as *beg*, *challenge*, *promise*, *grumble*, *agree*, *report*, also realise verbal processes.

Finally, two other potential participants are **Verbiage** and **Target**. The first is used to label items in a sentence that do not correspond to a quotation or a report of somebody's words, but rather refer "to what is said by classifying it in terms of its character as an expression" or "a clause that is not a projection of speech or thought" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, 125):

Example 15: I told her *the truth*.

Example 16: He told me *what I wanted to know*.

In the examples above, the parts in italics express the **Verbiage**. **Target** is a rather secondary participant and refers to the person or thing "targeted by the process" (Halliday, 2004). Lexical verbs such as *describe*, *explain*, *praise*, *criticise*, *flatter*, *blame*, *condemn*, *castigate*, can be followed by a Target:

Example 17: Former party officials criticised *party leadership*.

### **Existential and behavioural processes**

Two minor processes are **Existential process** and **Behavioural process**. The first has only one participant, the **Existent**, and is realised in two possible ways: with *there* followed by a copular verb as in the example below:

Example 18: There is still some tea in the pot.

The second form of grammatical realisation for **Existential processes** is quite similar to relational processes, but the wording is realised in a different context (Bloor and Bloor, 2004, pp.125-126). Finally, the function of participants within the process is not affected when the clause is negative.

**Behavioural processes** are a type of process containing elements of **Material** and **Mental processes**. This process comprises of two participants, **Behaver**, the most common, and **Behaviour**:

Example 19: The milk was spilled and we cried a river of tears.

In the example above, the first sentence presents a **Material process**, while the second is a **Behavioural process** clause where *we* is the **Behaver** and *a river of tears* is the **Behaviour**. Similar examples include *breathe a sigh*, *sweat blood*, *sing a song*, *have a swim*, *take a rest*, etc. (ibid., p.126).

The table below summarises the processes and their respective participants.

<b>Process</b>	<b>Participant</b>
Material	Actor Goal Beneficiary/Recipient Scope Client Attribute
Mental	Senser Phenomenon
Relational <i>Attributive</i>  <i>Identifying</i>	Carrier Attribute Identifier Identified
Verbal	Sayer Quoted Reported



	Receiver Verbiage Target
Existential	Existent
Behavioural	Behaver Behaviour

**Fig. 2.4** Summary of processes and participants

### 2.1.2 The interpersonal metafunction

The **interpersonal** metafunction is concerned with language as a form of interaction between people, in order to “show how defensible or binding we find our proposition or proposal” (Butt et al., 1995). Analysis at the interpersonal metafunctional level focuses on clauses as exchange and on their function in social interaction.

The main element of the interpersonal metafunction is the division of the clause into Mood and Residue. Mood consists of the *Subject*, i.e. a nominal group, and *Finite*, i.e. the first element of the verbal group. The Residue is made up of the *Predicator*, i.e. the rest of the verbal group, *Complements*, and *Adjuncts*.

Example 20:

Margaret	can	play	the violin
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Finite</i>	<i>Predicator</i>	<i>Complement</i>
<u>Mood</u>		<u>Residue</u>	

One method to identify the part of the clause corresponding to the Mood is by using Mood tags, also commonly known as ‘question tags’:

Example 21:

Margaret	can	play	the violin,	can't she?
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Finite</i>	<i>Predicator</i>	<i>Complement</i>	<i>Finite Subject</i>
<u>Mood</u>		<u>Residue</u>		<u>Mood tag</u>

### 2.1.3 The textual metafunction

The **textual** metafunction refers to “the use of language to organise the text itself” (Bloor & Bloor, 1995) and deals with clauses as messages (Wilcock, 1993). Two important elements of the textual metafunction are Theme and Rheme. Theme is “the point of departure of the message” carried by one clause (Halliday/Bloor& Bloor 1995, p.71), it tells what the clause is about and is placed at the beginning of the clause. Theme is followed by the Rheme, which comprises the rest of the message.

The table below summarises the practical application of the metafunctions and their systems:

In this job	Anne	we	're	working	with silver	
Theme		Rheme				textual
	Vocative	Mood				interpersonal
		Subject	Finite			
Locative		Actor	Process		Manner	ideational

**Table 2.4.** Layers of the metafunctions (Wilcock, 1993, p.19)

Halliday’s (1978) claim that “[...] the demands posed by the service of these functions [...] have moulded the shape of language and fixed the course of its evolution” is the foundation of functional grammar theory (Bloor & Bloor 2004).

The Hallidayan approach rests on previous linguistic theories, which were the foundation of the antipode of systemic functional theory. The following paragraph briefly situates SFL within the field of linguistics.

### 2. 1. 2 Historical overview

The purpose of linguistic theory lies first and foremost in the investigation of the nature of language. The roots of SFL are visible in the history of some linguistic theories that have influenced Halliday’s theory. This section briefly looks at the main theories that have contributed to SFL and those that have developed from it.

Linguistic study before the twentieth century was heavily based on the ancient Greek model of grammar. It focused primarily on research in regional

dialects and followed a tradition of study on historical connections between languages, especially in the Indo-European family.

The beginning of modern linguistics conventionally coincides with the work of Swiss scholar Ferdinand de Saussure, who moved the focus of linguistic research from an historical orientation to a more 'synchronic' analysis of contemporary language (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). De Saussure argued that language can be understood as *langue*, the set of given signs that are inherited by every individual which corresponds to the real object of linguistic examination, and *parole*, the actual utterances and speech acts that make up a language and are subject to individual changes.<sup>2</sup>

The distinction between the *syntagmatic* and *paradigmatic* dimensions is another crucial Saussurian concept with significant importance for systemic functional grammar. According to De Saussure, language is organised on two axes. The horizontal axis corresponds to the syntagmatic dimension and represents the sequence of words following each other in utterances. At the same time, these items are also in relation to other items on the paradigmatic (vertical) axis. These two axes have equivalents in systemic functional grammar in *chain* and *choice*: "a *system* is a set of paradigmatic choices; a *structure* is a syntagmatic phenomenon, a *chain* of elements, in which each element is the result of some paradigmatic *choice*" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, 238). De Saussure laid the foundations for future study, and considered linguistics a mere part of a larger discipline, which he called semiology and was developed in the field of semiotics, more noticeably, and by philosophers and scholars such as Barthes and Eco.

Franz Boas and Edward Sapir laid the foundations of American linguistics. The latter scholar, in particular, is part of the empiricist tradition which sees language as an arbitrary system of communication, with a social nature, in contrast to inherently biological functions, such as the ability to walk (Sapir, 1921, 4): "Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of

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<sup>2</sup> A similar argument would be advanced by Chomsky about 50 years later, with the concepts of 'competence' and 'performance' (or 'I-language' and 'E-language', as they came to be known later).

communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols.”

Leonard Bloomfield was another significant figure in the development of modern American linguistics who made linguistics an independent and scientific subject and developed a type of analysis called American Structuralism, which became a dominant approach in the 1950s-60s and is still in use today. Bloomfield’s work emphasised certain areas such as phonology (pronunciation) and morphology (word formation) and moved a little into syntax (structure of sentences), but did not venture into semantics (meaning).

However, already in the late ‘50s, Noam Chomsky cast a shadow on Bloomfieldian linguistics. Influenced by his training in the American Structuralist tradition, the first two decades of Chomsky’s work were focused on syntax. Further research led the scholar to the development of what is perhaps his most famous theory, Universal Grammar (UG), based on the idea that language is a natural and innate element in all people, “hardwired” in the human brain.

Chomsky’s UG is somehow the antipode of SFL, since the latter gives more importance to the social aspect of language while UG is concerned with the biological determination of language. Chomsky’s view of language is somehow similar to the Saussurian distinction between *langue* and *parole* in his division between I-language (internal language) and E-language (external language) (Chomsky, 1993; Baker, 2001). It follows that Chomsky “is interested in models of mental grammars; Halliday is interested in languages and communication” (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, 240). Chomsky falls into the formalist tradition, claiming a stronger importance of syntax, the structure of a sentence, over meaning. “For Chomsky semantics merely interprets the syntactic structures. For Halliday, meaning is at the heart of everything in language.” (ibid.)

A scholar that influenced Halliday and SFL was Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941). Renowned for the Whorfian Hypothesis (also known by the alternative name Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis), Whorf recognised the importance of the role language plays in a culture and argued that the language of a society determines its perception of reality. This argument is at the base of the

principle of linguistic relativity, which maintains that a speaker of a certain language will experience the world differently than a speaker of a fundamentally different language. Whorf's most prominent example presents the perception of time of speakers of Hopi, a Native American language, and speakers of English, or any 'Standard Average European' (SAE) language. In particular, Whorf observed the inherent meaning of the word for *mountain* in Hopi and English. In the former, the word *mountain* describes the process that led to the formation of the tall mass of land thus expressing an event, while in the latter a mountain is perceived as a thing (Whorf, 1956, p.57-64):

The Linguistic Circle of Prague also bears some resemblance to Halliday, in particular in the interest its linguists showed in finding functional explanations for grammatical structures and the development of a Functional Grammar. These scholars also stressed the importance of thematic organisation, what is known as the Hallidayan Theme and Rheme.

Two names inevitably spring to mind when discussing influences on Halliday: Firth and Malinowski. Bronislaw Malinowski was a Polish anthropologist who argued that, to understand an utterance, we need to know not only the literal meaning of words, but also the elaborate social context in which they occur and the same holds true for any cultural artefact. Firth's work was mostly important in the fields of phonetics and phonology, but a very important concept that has played a significant role in Halliday's work is Firth's argument that language is *polysystemic*, a system of systems. Both Malinowski and Firth affirmed the role of the individual as a member of society.

The advancement of computer technology has benefited linguistic study with the development of computational analysis techniques of large collections of texts. In the field of corpus linguistics in particular, systemic functionalists have employed such methods from important projects, and Halliday himself used the Cobuild project in his own research (Halliday and James, 1993; Halliday, 2004). The Cobuild corpus was established at Birmingham University by John Sinclair, a former colleague of Halliday's. Sinclair developed a discourse analysis model on Hallidayan principles with Malcolm Coulthard. The relevance of corpus linguistics in the context of the present study lies in the fact that this discipline has a more practical output

and results tell something interesting about the language itself, rather than bringing forth major theoretical suggestions. However, one theoretical claim comes from Sinclair's statement that "linguistic choices are much more tightly constrained (by lexical considerations) than had previously been suggested" (ibid., p.248).

Halliday's Systemic Functional theory has itself influenced the work of other scholars who have in turn shaped the theory's development since its emergence in the 1970s. Talmy Givón is the most prominent member of a group called West Coast Functionalists (which also includes scholars such as Sandra A. Thompson and P.J. Hopper). His work is mainly concerned about language as a means of communication and focuses on discourse and pragmatics. West Coast Functionalists as a whole are quite close to Halliday in their rejection to grammatical categorisation and their preference for the idea of items as prototypes of a category.

Similar work in Belgium and the Netherlands has led to Functional Grammar (FG), created by Simon Dik in 1978. FG shares theoretical assumptions with other functionalist models, especially "the priority of the communicative over the cognitive function of language, with the accompanying socio-cultural as opposed to psychological bias" (Siewierska, 1991, p.3). The main difference between most functionalist approaches and Dik's is that his "grammar restricts itself to the sentence and tends to work with idealized data rather than authentic text. It is also heavily influenced by predicate logic, which plays no part in SFL" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p.249).

In recent years R. Fawcett, G. Tucker, P. Tench, G. Huang, and their colleagues have developed the Cardiff Grammar, a remarkably rigorous variant of SFL, which also referred to as 'dialect' of SFL. Furthermore, scholars and linguistics have composed several grammars and expository books of Hallidayan grammar and its application to English over the years.

The systemic functional linguistic analysis of the news texts was the basis of the analytical methodology applied to the texts. This approach was accompanied by the discourse analysis of news, which focuses on journalistic production and media discourse and whose main promoter was Teun A. van Dijk. The following section presents the main tenets and characteristics of this approach.

## 2.2 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a multidisciplinary approach with roots in numerous fields, including linguistics. Several scholars have attempted to theorise discourse analytical features present in texts and, more specifically, in news media discourse, and the impact they have on society. One of the most prominent scholars in the discourse analysis of news is Teun A. van Dijk, a professor of discourse studies in the Netherlands and Spain<sup>3</sup>. This section discusses the theoretical description of linguistic discourse analysis in news discourse as outlined by van Dijk in some of his works.

In News Analysis (1988, p.2), van Dijk describes news reports, and media discourse in general, as “particular types of language use or text and as specific kinds of sociocultural practice”. The analysis of such discourses involves an integrated examination not only at the grammatical level, but also on the level of coherence, topics, schemata, and stylistic and rhetorical dimensions. However, the analysis of discourse is an even more complex endeavour encompassing the social context, and it is this contextual aspect that makes it pertinent to the study of media discourse.

Even though the discourse analytical approach has only been applied to media research more recently, it has its roots in many fields of study, which have merged into discourse analysis and influenced the different scopes within the discipline.

The revitalisation of semiotics in the 1960s led to a rise of interest in the analysis of cultural objects and practices and was particularly important for later work on news and media messages (Barthes, 1966; Greimas, 1966; Todorov, 1966; Eco, 1976; van Dijk, 1985). Moreover, while the work of Dundes (1965) and other scholars in structural anthropology resulted in more systematic analysis of folklore and myths, linguistic anthropology was a main contributor to the birth of discourse analysis, and laid out the ground for the study of discourse and communicative events (Lévi-Strauss, 1958; Hymes, 1964; Bauman & Scherzer, 1974). Finally, the study of performances and of the social and cultural conditions of performances in the ethnography of

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.discourses.org/teaching/>

communication provided a broader context of examination (Gumperz & Hymes, 1972).

In sociology, the study of underlying meanings and interpretations of everyday interactions, an aspect of microsociology, led to work on conversation analysis and provided another source for modern discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1988; Wodak & Busch, 2004).

A third influence came from pragmatics, which looks at verbal expressions and linguistic objects and a realisation of social action, and sociolinguistics, which focused on the impact of social factors on language use (Labov, 1972a, 1972b).

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the rise of studies on artificial intelligence and psycholinguistics, characterised respectively by a focus on computer simulation and text processing and in particular stories. Naturally, linguistics also started spreading and, especially in the United Kingdom, Halliday's (1966, 1969, 1977) systemic grammar shifted the focus on discourse structures.

These different fields crossed and integrated to form a new discipline called discourse analysis, discourse studies or text linguistics, at the end of the 1970s. In time, different styles of research have developed, with scholars focusing more on either conversation analysis or discourse analysis, as is the case within the Anglo-Saxon tradition, for instance.

### **2.2.1 Discourse Analysis of news.**

Van Dijk (1988) describes discourse as a communicative event or act and that is not limited to a verbal utterance but involves interaction between the speaker and the hearer on personal and social levels. While the interactional nature is more obvious in spoken discourses, it is less so in written communication. Messages conveyed by writers are assumed to be understandable for readers, and this holds true for news discourse as well.

The goal of discourse analysis of news centres on "the preferred or the typical grammatical structures that characterise language use in such a form of discourse" (1988, p.10), including personal and social contexts that influence the use of language. For example, the quality press, even in news reports, tends to use long and complex sentences, nominalisations, and



formal political jargon. Some syntactic structures, such as for example inverted declarative sentences, that are less frequent in other types of texts may be often present in news reports<sup>4</sup>.

The analysis of specific word order, or the use of the active or passive voice might be revealing as it could expose a journalist's perspective. Van Dijk (ibid., p.xx) provides the example of the headline "Police kills demonstrator", which puts the police in a subject position and gives it an agent role, whereas in the passive phrase "Demonstrator killed by police", the police still has an agent role but it is less prominent as the demonstrator is in a subject position. On the other hand, the headline "Demonstrator killed" may implicitly suggest the role of the police, but is syntactically ambiguous, as it could imply an association of demonstrators with killing. Grammatical research has shown that syntactic implicitness helps concealing negative roles of the elite (Fowler, et al., 1979; van Dijk, 1988).

News production is a means to manage discourse rather than "a direct representation of events" (van Dijk, 1983, p.28), and linguistic choices are implicated in a discourse. Some of these choices are grammatical, but what is more interesting is the use of a specific register, because stylistic variation can be seen as hinting at social implications and revealing certain beliefs and opinions. This is the case of lexical choices, in particular. In a study on the coverage of demonstrations against intervention in Vietnam, for example, Halloran et al. (1970) noticed that participants were often described with negative connotations, using such words as "hooligans", "thugs", "mob", and "horde". Other examples are the lexical choices made by the press to describe workers and their actions when covering industrial affairs (Glasgow University Media Group, 1980).

Lexical choices are not only important at the local level of a sentence, but will highlight stylistic coherence in a discourse. Van Dijk notes that "even 'neutral' words, such as 'sympathizer', can receive a negative connotation in certain contexts" (1983, p.31). This means that a negative denomination contains certain evaluative implications that may influence the perception of a topic or theme to the point of forming a general negative conception of a

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<sup>4</sup> An example of an inverted declarative sentence in a news report would be: "More army forces will be deployed, president announced".

subject. The analysis of a discourse at a semantic level gives rise to relative interpretations, described by van Dijk as “local or sequential coherence” (1988, p.12; 1977, 2014). Because the coherence of a text is determined by whether or not there is a description of sequence of acts or situations, “coherence depends on our knowledge and beliefs about what is possible in the world” (1988, p.12). To complete the coherence rule, linguistic knowledge is integrated with the knowledge people have in a given culture and how they use it, which is then analysed on a cognitive and social basis.

Another level of focus for the analysis of discourse are semantic *macrostructures*, the general themes or topics that clarify a text and define its overall coherence. Macrostructures are expressed in the general organisation of news discourse by headlines, summaries, or leads. Van Dijk identifies three ways that signal macrostructures: “a) a prominent position in layout, b) a change in typeface, and/or c) bold or capital letters” (1983, p.34). The first elements of a news piece are crucial for the processing of news discourse. They attract attention to the article and help the reader decide on whether or not to read the rest. They also provide the main information and theme, and form a “macrostructure” that helps the reader control their understanding of the subsequent text. Another important first element are the first sentences of a story, which van Dijk calls “the setting of a story” (ibid., p.35).

On the third level, *schematic superstructures* are used to express and organise the general meanings of a whole text. Narrative schemas are categories shared in a culture and also used for daily storytelling. They are important because if one obligatory category is missing, it can be assumed that the story is unfinished or has no point. In short, superstructures rely on conventional knowledge and functions to facilitate comprehension. These conventional functions are the news schemata and they contribute to the formal organisation of a news text.

Gathering background information of events, journalists usually look for facts that would fit into the categories that make up their schemata. Van Dijk described the macrostructure of a news report as a top-down construction where the highest “macroproposition” is put at the top and is followed by the lead, which is “the top of the macrostructure” (1988, p.16). This type of structure creates a link between news text construction and strategies of news

production and makes it possible for the reader to know that the most important information is provided at the beginning of an article. Structuring a news report by relevance so that the most important information appears first affects not only the general organisation of the article but also the distribution of sentences in the text.

On the other hand, some rhetorical structures that rely on phonological or syntactic operations and rhetorical features, such as hyperboles or climax, may frame news reports in a way that improves the memorability and persuasiveness of the texts. The use of numbers in a news report, for example, is a rhetorical indication of enhancement and therefore objectivity.

Van Dijk calls these structures “textual” elements and explains that discourses are “integral parts of communicative acts in some sociocultural situation” or “context” (1983, p.24). A combination of textual and contextual properties characterises each discourse type. As regards news discourse, its analysis can focus on typical structural aspects and differences. Moreover, some general characteristics of discourse can be specified. Discourse types follow the principles of functionality, which refers to the role of discourse in a social context, meaningfulness, connected to coherence, and goal-directedness, which refers to the realisation of a goal speakers have in mind (see van Dijk, 1988, for a more detailed discussion). Each discourse type has its own different meanings, speech acts, and social functions, and thus exhibits the three principles differently:

### **2.2.2 Discourse Analysis of news participants.**

Different theoretical levels of discourse help news texts with the macrostructures of society and mass media. The first theoretical assumption is the view of news participants as social actors, as the representatives of society closest to news reports, and

“[...] it is through their actions, sociocultural practices, organisation, and shared beliefs or ideologies that we may link the news text to its institutional and societal production or consumption processes, its economic conditions, its historical role, its function in the reproduction of ideologies [...]” (Van Dijk, 1988, p.19).

The main focus in the analysis of news participants in their social dimension is on cognitive processing. However, since journalists and media users can be seen more as social actors and members of a group, the approach concentrates on social cognition. The basis for this lies in the interaction between representations and operations in memory.

In order to build understanding, the audience need not only to understand the grammatical structures of a text and its representation, but also the model on which the text is built, i.e. the events or situation it talks about. People use sets of models to make generalisations and abstractions and build those frames or scripts that make up one's general knowledge and beliefs. The textual representation of an event is an essential of the model that makes it possible to remember the macrostructures of a news report. Being at the top of the mental models of actions or discourse, macrostructures are retrieved and recalled best. It is usually easier to recall the overall gist of a text, rather than details or aspects of the language used. Naturally, cognitive processing has important social aspects as well, since the acquisition, use, and modification of all shared information occur in social contexts (Van Dijk, 1988, p.25). Shared social and cultural representations are usually presupposed in the news, and reports become understandable in reference to this shared knowledge. However, journalists also tend to belong to a certain part of society, therefore they may construct models based on their social schemata. However, the same holds true for readers and their comprehension of news. While readers know less about journalistic ideologies and values in practical terms, they absorb and process them in part by reading and interpreting the news.

While discourse analysis looks at the language in action in media products, theories in media studies elaborate on the processes that lead to the selection of certain news items and the effects this has on the description of events and the reader's perception of the world represented. The next and final section of the chapter introduces two such theories.

## 2.3 Framing and Agenda-setting

*“Most of our world is a second-hand reality created by the news organizations. There is no guarantee, however, that this reality accurately depicts our world.”*

(M. McCombs, T. Bell, 1996, p.93)

### 2.3.1 Framing

The perspectives on issues used by journalists and, consequently, the public, are also an important aspect of the news agenda. Aside from the transmission of the salience of an issue from the media agenda to the public agenda, another dimension considered by research is how media *frame* the news.

One of the first scholars to introduce the concept of framing was Erving Goffman in his book Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience in 1974. To mass communication studies, framing analysis was introduced as a new method of scientific investigation by Todd Gitlin in 1980. It was further expanded as a concept involving both salience and selection by Robert Entman (1993) who notes, “Frames call attention to some aspect of reality while obscuring other elements, which might lead audiences to have different reactions” (ibid., p.394).

Framing theory belongs mainly to the fields of sociology and communication studies, and depending on the area of research, scholars have attempted to give pertinent and more complete definitions. In the sociological definition more emphasis is assigned to the social interpretation of framing and its interaction with the public discourse message and the personal perception and understanding. As Klandermans (1997) notes:

“social construction of collective action frames, involves public discourse, which is, the interface of media discourse and interpersonal interaction; persuasive communication during mobilisation campaigns by movement organisations, their opponents and countermovement organisations; and consciousness rising during episodes of collective action” (ibid., p.45).

In communication studies, framing is defined as “the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy” (Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997,

p.221). In this sense, framing has a connection to linguistic choice for its function in constructing the presentation of an occurrence.

Scholars use different approaches to framing, for example by looking at it as the public's understanding and interpretation of information or the basis of construction of communicative texts.

According to Entman (1993) and Bichard (2006), information is packaged and organised for people to understand an issue according to the way information is framed. The resulting interpretation gives rise to an alternative perception of the reality in an individual's mind. In this sense, framing is understood as the study of information-processing in society to generate meanings.

However, Donati (1992) observed that people do not frame an issue itself, but rather the object it evolves from. Framing does not show the public's favour on a certain proposition, but shows how people understand an issue. Therefore, framing analysis a helpful method for studying people's perception and understanding of an issue, rather than a way to collect data and predict how public policy is influenced by mass media and other influential groups (Fisher, 1997).

Key-words, metaphors, symbols and visual graphics help identifying frames, which conceptualise and incorporate key ideas and the narrative techniques that support them (Hallahan, 1999).

### **2.3.2 Agenda-setting**

The roots of agenda-setting theory lie in Walter Lippmann's classic Public Opinion (1922). In this seminal work, the scholar stated that mass media create a link between the outside reality and the reality within one's mind and equated the reality reflected and presented by news media to the pictures and ideas represented by the shadows in Plato's allegory of the cave<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> In this allegory, some people have lived all their lives chained to a wall in a cave and all they could see from the outside world were the shadows projected when people and animals were passing by the entrance of the cave. One of these people, who represents the philosopher, manages to get out of the cave and see that true reality is not mere shadows on the walls, and thus is able to acquire true knowledge. However, the philosopher's duty is to come back to the cave and inform the others about this discovery. From this derives Plato's 'Theory of Forms', whereby Forms, or Ideas, are entities that exist individually, independently of anyone.

Bernard Cohen (1963) first elaborated on Lippmann's concept writing that "the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (ibid., p.13). But it was only in 1972, 50 years after Public Opinion was published, with the work of McCombs and Shaw, that agenda-setting found its theoretical foundation as an empirical instrument of news analysis. McCombs and Shaw carried out a test of Lippmann's thesis that media create the pictures of the world for the audience/readership and influence their perception of the important issues of the day. The two researchers used *salience* as an independent variable. In this study, salience indicated whether or not an issue is perceived as important and prominent. The main finding was that salience had a strong relationship in its transfer from media to the public.

The theory can be divided in two dimensions. The first was used in the 1972 study and refers to the transmission of salience from the media agenda to the public agenda, while the second dimension concerns the role of media in framing the issues transferred, and emerged in subsequent studies. This role is more relevant to the present research and will be described further in the next paragraph on framing.

Agenda-setting started off as a methodological approach and developed into a fully-fledged theory in the next decades after McCombs and Shaw's 1972 study. Successive studies have replicated and expanded the primary examination of an agenda of issues or have focused on a specific issue throughout a long time-span.

The theory was further expanded and divided in four different typologies, which were first introduced during the International Communication Association convention in Acapulco, Mexico, in 1980. The first two types focus on a series of issues. Type one examines the public agenda for the aggregate population, while type two shifts the unit of analysis to the individual. The other two types investigate a single issue, with type three comparing media coverage of an individual issue and "its trend in public opinion over a period of time" (McCombs and Bell, 1996). Finally, type four

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The Forms or Ideas are the blueprint of reality and through them one can achieve knowledge (which is represented by leaving the cave).

complements field research of media coverage and the salience of one issue with laboratory experiments. These types are associated with a type of analysis focused on audience called 'reception studies'. While this aspect is very important and closely linked to agenda-setting, it is more specifically the framing dimension that informs the present investigation.

Furthermore, Shaw and McCombs (1977) noticed the existence of some *contingent conditions* that might modify the influence of the news media's agenda-setting. A need for orientation, the comparative roles of media, and the correlation between interpersonal communication in the mass communication process might be such conditions. The researchers identified four phases of agenda setting, the first being that patterns of news coverage influence the public's perception of important issues, which was a conclusion from their first hypothesis.

The second phase is an exploration of the contingent conditions and thus involves psychological explanations for agenda-setting, such as the concept of need for orientation, people's need to understand their environment, the physical and the cognitive world in which they live.

The third phase attempts to explain different kinds of agendas, which were identified by McLeod et al. (1974) as the individual public agenda, the interpersonal, or community public agenda, and the perceived community public agenda.

Finally, in the fourth phase the news agenda becomes a dependent variable and journalists and editors are seen as the decision makers, or "gatekeepers", shifting the focus of the analysis on determining who are the agents responsible for setting the agenda. A phenomenon that was observed in this phase is the so-called "pack journalism", or the inter-media agenda-setting effect, where there is a mutual influence between news organisations and individual news workers. McCombs (1992) used a very effective metaphor to list the various elements in this phase, comparing them to the layers of an onion. The outermost corresponds to the sources used by journalists to acquire news, while the next layer includes angles and topics and corresponds to the diffusion of news stories among media. The innermost layer comprises of the set of core values, practices and traditions that make a news story the unique product of one journalist.



However, years before McCombs's metaphor, Breed (1955) observed the similarity in content and style in American newspapers and developed the principle of standardization. Factors such as the news agenda set by wire agencies and the low interest of local editors in changing the wire content considerably, contribute to the process of standardisation. Breed's observations are still relevant in more recent times to researchers such as Wanta (1993) who argues that the importance of certain issues may change depending on media coverage and that "the way in which international news is framed in news reports may determine the magnitude of salience cues" (Wanta, 1993, p.250).

Werder (2002) noticed that different worldviews and identity concepts also influence the agenda-setting effect as the result in distinguishable differences between national news outlets, and in particular the print press. This observation is particularly relevant in the investigation of cultural differences between the West and Russia.

## **Chapter 3. Material and Methods**

The material analysed in this study includes 8 articles from 4 newspapers, 2 British and 2 American dailies: The Guardian, the Daily Mail, the New York Times, and the New York Post. The articles cover several events: when Putin signed the adoption ban bill on December 27, 2012, and the subsequent outcomes and public reactions in January 2013.

This chapter is divided in three parts. The first part describes the chosen newspapers (section 3.1), the second part explains the selection criteria of the articles (section 3.2), and the third part presents the methods used in the analysis.

### **3.1. Two sets of newspapers**

#### *3.1.1 American dailies*

*The New York Times* (henceforth *NYT*) is an American daily newspaper founded on September 18, 1851 in New York City. During its existence, it was awarded 112 Pulitzer Prizes, more than any other newspaper. Its international edition, the *International Herald Tribune*, was recently renamed the *International New York Times*. The paper is divided in three sections, News, Opinion, and Features, and includes Sunday supplements such as “The Week in Review”, “*The New York Times Magazine*”, and “*The New York Times Book Review*”.

The *NYT* has been present on the web since the mid-90’s and in March 2009 nytimes.com was one of the most visited newspaper website, with over 20 million unique visitors in the US (Saba, 2009).

Sales have gone down considerably in recent years, falling by around 7.3% in 2009 (Perez-Pena, 2009). However, the paper increased circulation in the second quarter of 2013, especially thanks to a growth in the number of digital subscribers, with an increase in circulation revenue by 1.4%, but a significant decline in advertising revenue (Somaiya, 2014).

The ‘Gray Lady’, as the *NYT* is affectionately nicknamed, is the largest local metropolitan newspaper in the U.S. and the third largest newspaper after the Wall Street Journal and USA Today. It has 16 bureaus in the New York region, 11 national bureaus, and 26 abroad. In February 2008, the *NYT* started a special project to connect with its Russian audience. Under

the guidance of Clifford J. Levy, the project covers political and social topics in Russia and is translated in Russian. Furthermore, it invites Russian readers and bloggers to “Tell Americans and the whole world about Russia”. Some responses are then translated into English and published on the *NYT* website. A quick visit to the site, however, shows that it is not updated regularly.<sup>6</sup>

A survey by Rasmussen Reports (2007) on perceived media bias in American newspapers showed that American readers believe the *NYT* to have liberal bias. In particular, 40% of respondents perceived the paper as more favourable towards liberals, while 11% saw the *NYT* as having a bias in favour of conservatives and 20% believed it had no bias. Overall, among the newspapers observed in the survey, the *NYT* is considered one of the most liberal. Moreover, most liberal participants in the survey believed the *NYT* has a liberal bias.

The second American newspaper analysed is the *New York Post* (henceforth *NYP*), founded by Alexander Hamilton in 1801 and mainly distributed in New York City and the NYC metropolitan area. Currently owned by Murdoch’s News Corp since 2013, this daily was owned by the company’s predecessor, News Corporation from 1976 to 1988 and again from 1993.

Since Murdoch’s ownership, during which the *NYP* increased its circulation by 29%, the newspaper adopted a more sensationalist style, similar to Murdoch’s other British and Australian publications, to which it has added a tabloid format. The newspaper has been criticised for sensationalism, conservative bias, and blatant advocacy, and has been called “a force for evil” (*Columbia Journalism Review*, 1980). A characteristic feature of the *New York Post* are its famous headlines, six of which appear in *New York Magazine*’s list of “Greatest Tabloid Headlines”, including the notorious “Headless Body in Topless Bar”.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://nytimesinmoscow.livejournal.com/>

### 3.1.2 British dailies

The *Daily Mail* was founded by Alfred and Harold Harmsworth in 1896, and was the first British newspaper aimed at the “lower-middle class” (Manning, 2001, 83). Until 1971, the newspaper followed its original broadsheet format. From the outset, it has been strongly conservative, and started out as a daily with feature stories especially for women. As of 2013, the *Daily Mail* is the only British newspaper whose female readership outnumbers the male readership with 54.77%. Circulation has always been high for this daily since its first publication, with a daily average of 1,708,006 copies as of March 2014<sup>7</sup> and a total weekly readership of 4,074,000 adults<sup>8</sup>.

The paper tends to keep a conservative line, as is evident from its open support of the Conservative Party in recent general elections<sup>9</sup>, or its criticism towards other media that are perceived as having “a left-wing bias”<sup>10</sup>.

In 1904 and 1905, the *Daily Mail* began the publication of two foreign editions, the *Overseas* and the *Continental Daily Mail*, which cover Europe and North Africa. The *Daily Mail* launched a sister publication, *The Mail on Sunday* in 1982 and a Scottish edition in 1947. More recently, in 2006, an Irish edition also appeared. Finally, the daily paper was introduced in India in 2007 with *Mail Today*.

Today the tabloid is published by DMG Media. Paul Dacre has been editor-in-chief of DMG Media since 1998 and of the *Daily Mail* since 1992.

The first British national daily to adopt a *Berliner* format, *The Guardian* was founded in 1821 as *The Manchester Guardian*, a local newspaper, by John Edward Taylor. It became a daily newspaper in 1855 and grew slowly into a national paper until it changed its name to the current one in 1959. *The Observer*, a Sunday paper, and *The Guardian Weekly* are two sister publications, and *The Guardian* also includes two foreign online outlets in Australia and in the US.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.newsworks.org.uk/Daily-Mail>

<sup>8</sup> <http://media.info/newspapers/titles/daily-mail/readership-figures> (Anyone above the age of 15 was considered “adult” in the survey).

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1272501/GENERAL-ELECTION-2010-Vote-DECISIVELY-stop-Britain-walking-disaster.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/6764779.stm>

The paper is currently edited by Alan Rusbridger who was appointed in 1995 by The Scott Trust, a charitable foundation which has owned *The Guardian* and other media in the GMG Guardian Media Group<sup>11</sup> from 1936 until 2008, when its assets were transferred to a new company called The Scott Trust Limited. The Trust was founded by John Scott, owner of then *The Manchester Guardian* and has been responsible for preserving the paper's editorial independence and providing the necessary financial support.<sup>12</sup>

Although *The Guardian* has been losing money since the mid-2000s, its readership figures are more optimistic. In fact, as of March 2014, its weekly readership amounts to 793,000 readers<sup>13</sup>, and the online edition has been one of the most visited since 2012.

Ideologically, the paper currently identifies with social liberalism and attracts readers from certain social strata and specific political orientations. According to a MORI report (2004), 44% of readers of *The Guardian* were Labour voters and 37% liberal democrats. This reputation has earned readers of the newspaper, mostly from the middle class, the label "*Guardian* reader", used with both positive and more negative connotations. As *Guardian* features editor, Ian Katz, stated in 2004, "[...] it is no secret we are a centre-left newspaper [...]".

### 3.2 Selection of Material

The selection of the material followed a set of criteria that were first of all chronological. The adoption issue between Russia and the United States is not completely new and the discussion has been escalating in the last few years with the Magnitsky Act and the recent cases of mistreatment of Russian adopted children in the US and their mishandling by courts as *casus belli*. Therefore, delineating a specific moment for the analysis was of great importance. On the one hand, one course of action would have been to observe how coverage of the issue has evolved over the years from its inception up to the point of its explosion and its aftermath. However, due to

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<sup>11</sup> The GMG Guardian Media Group includes other media and newspapers such as *The Observer*, *The Guardian Weekly*, the *Guardian Abroad* website, and *guardian.co.uk*.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/values/socialaudit>

<sup>13</sup> <http://media.info/newspapers/titles/the-guardian>

time and space constraints, this type of investigation was not feasible. As a result, the most likely option was to focus the analysis on the most central circumstances of the matter and consequently the most eventful period.

The articles were thus selected from the online platforms of each newspaper in consideration of their significance in the timeframe of the events<sup>14</sup>, and covered the events that occurred within the month immediately after President Putin signed the adoption ban bill into law in late December 2012. Table 3.1 below shows a chronological list of the articles analysed. As is evident, the newspapers alternate, with one American daily followed by a British daily. This choice was partly coincidental. The table also shows the months when the events covered occurred, namely December and January, the dates when the articles were published, and the corresponding newspaper.

A quick mention about the selection of the *Daily Mail* article seems in order here: the tabloid covered the issue quite regularly during December 2012, resulting in a decent amount of articles on the adoption ban (see Table 3.3). Initially, one story from December 27 and one from December 28 seemed to be both a reasonable choice for the analysis. However, the choice fell on the story from December 30 for two reasons: the first of those two articles covered President Putin’s announcement that he would sign the bill, therefore falling right out of the chosen timeframe that would give priority to stories reporting the signing of the bill or events immediately after the bill was signed into law. On the other hand, the second story was written after Putin signed the bill, therefore was an optimal candidate. Furthermore, given the very similar nature of the contents of this article and the one that was eventually selected, it seemed more logical to adhere to the pattern that had formed with alternating types of newspapers (i.e., broadsheet-tabloid-broadsheet-tabloid).

<b>Month</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Newspaper</b>
December	27	<i>The New York Times</i>
	28	<i>The Guardian</i>

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<sup>14</sup> For a better chronological orientation with the events, see Appendix 1.

	29	<i>The New York Post</i>
	30	<i>Daily Mail</i>
January	2	<i>The New York Post</i>
	10	<i>The Guardian</i>
	14	<i>The New York Times</i>
	15	<i>Daily Mail</i>

**Table 3.1. Articles analysed; December-January 2012.**

Search criteria included the use of specific keywords or phrases, such as “Russian adoption ban”, “Dima Yakovlev law”, and “Magnitsky law”. It follows that content was another influential factor for the selection. The selection in these circumstances was kept as “neutral” as possible, in order to avoid giving a too arbitrary direction to the analysis. This means that while the selection demanded a certain degree of control based on the topic covered in a story, articles were chosen based on the relevance of the event they covered rather than for a more personal preference.

Although not strictly a criterion, quantity also played a secondary role in the selection. Not all newspapers presented the same number of articles on the issue and in some cases the differences were quite clear and rather interesting as well. Between 2012 and 2013, *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* had a total of 49 and 15 articles respectively, while the tabloids presented 27 stories in total, 19 of which were from the *Daily Mail* alone.

Moreover, the search yielded a smaller amount of articles for the designated timeframe. The table below shows the total number of articles per newspaper and the total number of articles covering the issue that were written within the timeframe selected for the present investigation.

Newspapers	Total number of articles on the subject	Total number of articles within timeframe
<i>The New York Times</i>	49	12
<i>The New York Post</i>	8	6
<i>The Guardian</i>	15	6
<i>Daily Mail</i>	19	7

**Table 3.2 Articles published 2012-2013 and articles published between 27 December 2012 and 30 January 2013.**

As is evident in the table above, *The New York Times* presented the highest number of articles on the topic for those two years, while *The New York Post* dedicated a very limited amount of stories to the adoption ban issue.

Moving from this, the next step was to select the most relevant articles, a difficult task especially in some cases as *The New York Times*, which had quite a few pieces dedicated to the developments of the question. The choice here was determined by how close the dates of the publication of the articles were and by the relevance and similarity of the aspect of the issue covered. For example, in the case of the January articles, the stories from both *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* are not only very close in terms of date of publication as they are one day apart, but they also cover the same event, i.e. the protest march in Moscow that week. However, as is noted in the analysis in the next chapter, the two newspapers report on the demonstrations quite differently, with the article from *The Guardian* presenting a more “personal” and feature-like angle.

In other instances it was more difficult to apply these criteria, due to a lower number of articles available within that timeframe. This is especially the case with the tabloids, and *The New York Post* in particular. One might speculate that the reason for this could be the general style of tabloids and the editorial decisions in the coverage of an issue. However, it would be unfair to say that the newspaper ignored it altogether or barely mentioned it, as the *Daily Mail* published quite a few stories in early 2012 covering the incident where a Tennessee woman sent her adopted 7-year-old son back to Russia.



On the other hand, the word count of the articles analysed is more consistent and balanced. As shown in the table below, the difference between the total number of words for each pair of newspaper is not very large, and overall the American newspapers contain only 229 words more than the British ones.

	<b>Broadsheet</b>	<b>Tabloid</b>	<b>Tot.</b>
<b>USA</b>	2,635	855	<b>3,490</b>
<b>UK</b>	1,217	2,044	<b>3,261</b>
<b>Tot.</b>	<b>3,852</b>	<b>2,899</b>	

**Table 3.3 Word count by nationality and by type of newspaper.**

An interesting difference already noticeable in the above table is between newspaper types. While in the American pair the broadsheet presents a higher number of total words than the tabloid, the situation is remarkably reversed in the case of the British dailies.

Moreover, there is a difference of about 1,000 words between the two types of newspapers. The most evident results are from *The New York Post*, the only paper that does not reach a total of 1,000 words.

### **3.3 Methodology**

The methods employed in the analysis to look at the representational choices made in the articles draw mostly from Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and are devised on its application in the discourse analysis of text by Fairclough. Customising and tailoring the method for the specific purposes of this investigation is based on Gjesdahl (2008), whose work provides a useful framework for the structure of the analysis.

#### **3.3.1 Structure of the analysis**

I divided the analysis into three parts: a word level, a grammatical level, and the interpersonal dimension in the texts, i.e. the use of "pronouns such as we" and "they" as the third level.

In the analysis based on the word level, I adopted the way Fairclough (2003) outlined the concept of choice as representation of social actors according to a set of variables. Fairclough uses terms taken directly from systemic functional grammar to describe social actors as “Participants in clauses, [...] and not all participants are social actors –they may be physical objects for instance (compare ‘the car hit Mary’, ‘the car hit a rock’ –both ‘Mary’ and ‘a rock’ are objects of the verb, i.e. Participants, but only ‘Mary’ is a social actor)” (ibid., p.145). Therefore, I first looked for the referent chains to see how frequently different elements were referenced, then focused on the choice of representation of social actors<sup>15</sup> in the stories.

The core of the analysis on a grammatical level is the study of the Processes and Actors present in clauses, according to the Transitivity structure (see Chapter 2). This also includes the analysis of nominalisations and passive sentences in the articles.

Finally, the third part of my analysis explores the interpersonal metafunction in the use of pronouns identifying in- and out-groups, such as “us” and “them”. Fairclough (2003) the importance of the choice of pronouns “in terms of Identificational meanings [...], how texts represent and construct groups and communities” (ibid., p.149). Such pronouns also contribute to a more comprehensive picture of what is analysed in the referent chains for social participants, which is more numerical, as they indicate the “socially significant choices in the representation of social actors” (ibid.).

Table 3.6 below shows the structural division of the analysis as elaborated in this chapter.

<b>WORD LEVEL</b>	<i>Reference</i> ❖ Central referent chains ❖ Social Participants 1. <i>Pronoun/Noun</i> 2. <i>Named/Classified</i>
<b>GRAMMATICAL LEVEL</b>	❖ Transitivity 1. Processes

<sup>15</sup>Social actors were called Social Participants in the analysis to distinguish them from the Actors in the Processes in the Transitivity analysis, which is one type of Participant in Material Processes.

	2. Participants ❖ Nominalisations ❖ Passive Sentences
<b>IN-GROUP AND OUT-GROUP</b>	❖ Interpersonal function

**Table 3.4 The three sections of the analysis.**

## Word Level

### Referent chains

#### *What is the text about?*

In order to investigate the linguistic choices made in the texts selected, the analysis started with their content.

Each article was analysed to find the *central referent chains* according to 3 categories: **Participants**, **Ban/Adoption**, **Agreements**. *Central referent chains* were used to find out what the text is about and how often certain words referring to people, events, or themes would be mentioned in the stories. In this sense, the categories answer the questions ‘who’ and ‘what’.

The first category, **Participants**, was further divided into four sub-categories representing the different groups of people referenced in the stories. These sub-categories are classified with quite self-explanatory names and include: *Officials* corresponds to all official figures; *Children*, refers to the adopted children or the orphans; *Adopters*, refers specifically to adopting parents, including both those who successfully adopted a Russian orphan and those caught in the middle of the controversy and struggling to get their adoption process through; and *Other* includes all other people who do not fall within any of the above categories, such as expert sources and civilians quoted in the stories.

Of the other two categories of reference, **Ban/Adoption** includes all the terms referring to the ban and adoption, including the words ‘ban’ and ‘adoption’, of course, and **Agreements** refers to the various legislations, arrangements, and settlements made by the parties.

Next, the attention was focused on **Social Participants**. This step of the analysis was split into two pairs variables referring to each element of reference examined adapted from Fairclough (2003), who originally proposed seven couples of variables. Two were chosen for the present study. These are *Pronouns/nouns*, which examine whether the Participant is realised as a

pronoun or a noun, and *Named/classified*, which indicate whether a Participant is represented by name or as a class or category. The latter type of representation can be done individually, ('the official') or as a group, ('the officials'). Sometimes the variables may overlap with each other, especially in the case of *Nouns* and *Classified*. An example of a word that would be classified as both *Noun* and *Classified* is 'executive director of the New York-based Donaldson Adoption Institute'. This is because classifications tend to be most often nouns as well, while the opposite does not necessarily happen. Words like 'orphan' and 'generations of kids' are clearly *Nouns*. However, 'executive director' fits under the variable *Classified* because the social actor is referred to in terms of category or class, the position held by this person.

## **Grammatical Level**

### **Transitivity**

*What are the Processes and Participants involved?*

The second part of the analysis begins with the Transitivity system, which is the examination of the Processes and Participants in the clauses, following Halliday's systemic functional grammar. The most prominent Processes and Participants present tell what is going on in the clauses and, more generally, in the texts. For Processes and Participants are the experiential components of the ideational metafunction, it is through these that experience, intended as "the 'outside' world and [...] the 'inner' world of consciousness" (Francis & Kramer-Dahl, 1991, p.341) is encoded in text.

### **Nominalisations and Passive sentences**

Next, nominalisations are analysed. Grammatically, nominalisations involve turning a verb, adverb, or adjective into the head of a noun phrase. A characteristic of nominalisations is "the 'loss' of certain semantic elements of clauses –both tense [...] and modality [...]. It also may involve the exclusion of Participants in clauses" (Fairclough, 2003, p.143). In systemic functional linguistics, expressions involving nominalisations, such as 'have a look' are also identified as examples of "grammatical metaphor" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004), where looking is perceived as 'doing'. Within systemic functional linguistics, nominalisations are considered metaphorical or *non-congruent*

representations of processes. For example, 'have a look' has an optional version in a Material Process with an Actor: 'We looked'. According to Bloor & Bloor (2004), nominalisation "involves an alternation within the experiential metafunction: instead of being realised by a verb [...], a process is realised as a thing [...]" (ibid., p.128). The optional version in the example above, being the realisation of looking as 'doing', is said to be *congruent*.

Nominalisation has the potential to "erase or even suppress difference" (Fairclough, 2003, p.144) as itself "is a resource for generalising, for abstracting from particular events and series or sets of events. [...]" (ibid., 144). As a way to represent events and processes, nominalisation "entails choice [...] amongst the process types" (ibid., p.144).

The second section of the analysis ends with an examination of passive sentences in the articles. As nominalisations, passive sentences can be used as means to conceal an agent.

### **In-group and out-group**

*Who and what do 'we' and 'they'/'us' and 'them' refer to?*

The third and final section of the analysis looks at the choices of pronouns to include and/or exclude social actors in the identification with a certain group. In systemic functional linguistics, this choice allows the writer to step in the text through "his [*sic*] attitudes, evaluations and judgements; his [*sic*] expectations and demands; and the nature of the exchange as he [*sic*] is setting it up" (Halliday, 1979, pp.59-60).

## **4. Tit for tots –how words set the tone. Analysis results and discussion.**

### **4.1 American Newspapers**

#### **4.1.1 Articles in the *NYT***

The first of the two articles selected from the *NYT*, headlined “Putin Signs Bill That Bars U.S. Adoptions, Upending Families” was written by David M. Herszenhorn, a Moscow-based correspondent, and Erik Eckholm, based in New York, and was published on the newspaper’s website on December 27, 2012. The 1630-word-long article, which was preceded on December 26 by a more informative and detailed account of what the adoption bill entails, announces that President Putin had signed the bill. The second paragraph puts this event into context, starting with the words of Maria Drewinsky, a prospective adoptive mother in the last stages of adoption, and her husband. At the heart of the article are political facts, such as the costs of the law and its consequences, some background information tying the issue to the Magnitsky Act, which President Obama had signed earlier that month, the criticism moved to the measure by American officials in particular, and Putin’s responses. The article then moves to present the more “human” face of the controversy, introducing the Summers, a New Jersey family who had already planned their trip to Russia to pick up their 21-month-old future son, and a mother from North Carolina who had just adopted a son, with a circular ending returning to the Drewinskys.

The article is a balanced combination of facts and indirect commentary, presenting as many aspects of the situation as time and space allow. What was interesting to see at a preliminary reading was the way it started, with the first words being “President Vladimir V. Putin”, followed by the main action, which is directly connected to the very first word in the headline. As Van Dijk (1988) points out, headlines are very important to set the tone, and the first words or couple of paragraphs contain the main information that the reader will retain. Most of the headlines of the articles collected from the *NYT* started with a word referring to the Russian administration. In fact, of the 50 articles collected, 22 begin with the word ‘Russia/Russian’, 3 with ‘Putin’, and one with ‘Russians’. On the other hand, one article begins with ‘Obama’ and 2 with

'American' (3 if we consider 'In Tennessee' broadly as a reference to the U.S. as well).

The article features two small pictures on the side, both of the Summers's family. One, right under the first paragraph with the caption that summarises the event, reading "The Russian bill jeopardizes the already approved adoption of a Russian boy by Robert and Kim Summers of Freehold, N.J.", shows the Summers in a bedroom, with some children's clothes laid out on the bed and more hanging in the walk-in closet behind them. Kim Summers is sitting on the bed, looking at a pair of trousers she is holding, while her husband is standing behind her, one hand visibly holding his wife's arm. Neither of the Summers is looking directly at the camera, nor to the light shining into the room from the right, which from the reader's point of view corresponds to the east, coincidentally also the location of Russia.

The caption in the second picture describes exactly what is portrayed: "Kim Summers with the Russian boy whom she and her husband want to adopt. Their house is already filled with toys and clothes for him". In the picture, Mrs Summers is kissing the boy's cheek, her eyes closed. The boy is smiling and looking straight into the camera. The photo is quite obvious in its visual depiction of motherly love and the bond between Kim Summers and her prospective son.

The second article of the NYT is titled "Russians Rally Against Adoption Ban in a Revival of Anti-Kremlin Protests" and appeared with this headline in print on January 14, 2003. It was written by Ellen Barry, the Moscow bureau chief for the NYT and Andrew Roth, and is 966 words long. The story reports the protest march against the adoption ban in Moscow on Sunday, January 12. Among the information recapitulating the situation and the comments from officials, it includes especially many quotes from marchers, creating a mosaic of the members of Russian society that participated. But the story ends with the bitter remark from one of the protesters that there is a big difference between Moscow and the countryside. The story features only one large picture of the pickets used in the protest, each with a photograph of a different member of the Russian Parliament with their names and the word "Pozor!" ("Shame!") written across them, and the name and date of the march on the bottom right side of the poster.

#### 4.1.2 Articles in the NYP

The first article from the *NYP* is only 140 words in total (including the headline). It was published on December 29 with the title “Putin ban on US adoptions prevents 46 orphans from joining American families”. Written by Andy Soltis, the report provides the most basic information about the adoption ban, saying when it was signed and by whom, its consequences, and the reactions. In particular, the only reactions quoted were from a Russian rights advocate and a Russian writer, both against this political move, and a spokesperson from the US State Department.

The only picture in the article, right under the headline, features Vladimir Putin looking to the right and frowning. Due to the combination of the direction of his gaze and the position of his eyebrows his overall facial expression appears unfriendly, adding a visual aid to the facts provided in the article.

The second article from the *NYP* was published only 4 days after the first one, and written by Naomi Schaefer Riley, a weekly columnist for the *NYP*. The story, with the dramatic headline “And the kids suffer” is considerably longer, counting 709 words. The dramatic tone is strengthened by the first word, “heartbroken”, referring to how Liz Jackson, an adoptive mother reacted to the news of the ban. The article is written like a moving tale, starting from the Jacksons and their son Landon and moving to all the children who will not be adopted by parents like them. The unhappy shades are sided by evaluative comments describing the move as “vicious”, and quotes from different types of experts. A Harvard professor and a dean of a Baptist seminary, who also adopted two boys from Russia in the past, paints a very grim picture of the orphans’ future expectations. Another quote is from a speaker from the Hudson Institute, a US conservative think tank.

The article argues that adoption is so popular in the United States not just because of wealth but because it is a normalised process and quotes Adam Pertman, the executive director of an adoption institute, who calls this process a “culture of adoption”, referring to the fact that the US is a nation of immigrants compared to “other cultures”, thus uniting readers as one group separated from other countries.



The article ends with a circular move that brings back to the first word, extending the heartbreak not just to Liz Jackson but all Americans like her and to her son’s friends and other orphans like them back in Russia.

This article also features only one picture, between the headline and the rest of the story, showing two girls sitting at a table, eating. One is looking quite happy and the other has her back turned to the camera.

### 4.1.3 Word level

The table below shows the results of the analysis on word level for the frequencies of central referent chains in the *NYT* and the *NYP*. As with all other tables, two results are presented: the full number of elements calculated in one category and its percentage. The totals refer to the overall number of elements and the total percentage (which therefore amounts to 100).

**Table 4.1 – Central Referent Chains**

	<b>NYT</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>NYP</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
	<b>Participants</b>			<b>Participants</b>		
	Officials	63	24	Officials	12	11
	Children	52	20	Children	33	31
	Adopters	32	12	Adopters	20	18
	Other	77	30	Other	28	26
	<b>Ban/Adoption</b>	25	10	<b>Ban/Adoption</b>	14	13
	<b>Agreements</b>	11	4	<b>Agreements</b>	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>260</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

It is clear from the table above that the selected stories from the *NYT* use far more official sources than those in the *NYP*. The percentages show what the newspapers focus on and what the angle of their coverage is. The majority of participants present in the *NYT* stories are either Other, i.e. people not directly involved in the issue, at 30%, or Official sources (24%), followed by references to children with a percentage of 20%.

On the other hand, Children are the most represented participants in the stories from the *New York Post* (31%), followed by Other participants and Adopters. Official sources are the least referenced (11%) in the *NYP*. This is further stressed by the frequency of the agreements and legislations (included in the 'agreements' category) in the *NYT* making up 4% of references, whereas it stands at 1% in the *NYP*, i.e. only one term is used as reference. However, references to the ban and adoptions seem to be higher in the *NYP* overall –13% compared to 10% in the *NYT*.

The fact that the *NYT* uses more official and expert sources, from the 'Other' category while the *NYP* emphasises the role of children is not surprising. It reveals a certain "stylistic agenda" and reflects the type of main audience each newspaper targets –one that prefers

It is also relevant to point out that Children and Other are the most referenced participants in the first article from the *NYP*, despite its considerable shortness. Furthermore, since the category has the highest percentage in the *NYT* articles, it is interesting to observe who the Other participants are. This is made clear in the example below, with a list of the references for the Other category.

[Other]: Russian citizens – adoption agency officials – a judge – caregivers – Russians – the protesters – the marchers – a group of activists – Yekaterina Komissarova – Tamara Nikolayeva – friends – Russian society – State-controlled television – Boris Komberg, a physicist – Yelena Rostova – the Public Opinion Foundation – Leonid Perlov, a geography professor.

While expert voices are present, there is also a great number of references to regular people and civilians, giving a more "human" flavour to a piece of otherwise exclusively hard news. However, there is an important distinction to make between the two articles in the *NYT* with regard to this category of participants. In the story from 27 December, these people are more anonymous and presented collectively, whereas the article on the protests from 13 January gives names to the marchers and thus a face to the people referenced. While experts, institutions, and media remain anonymous, those

who have so far been referred to as “Russians”, “Russian citizens”, or “Russian society” come to life in the stories.

Below is an example of the participants most referenced in the *NYT* articles:

- Officials: Vladimir V. Putin – Russian officials – the government – President Obama – lawmakers – the Parliament – the State Department – Congress – the Kremlin.
- Children: Russian children – orphans – adoptees – newly adopted son – orphaned children – adopted children – Dima Yakovlev.
- Adopters: American families – American parents – adoptive father – American citizens – Americans.
- Other: Russians – adoption agency officials – caregivers – Russian families – a judge – activists – news agency – protesters.

As it is evident from the chains, the “official” participants are political figures. The words “children”, “orphan”, and “adopted” are repeated a lot throughout the articles, but used in different combinations. Adoptive parents and prospective adopters are referred to by their nationality. The articles seem to almost underline the fact that they are American, which is interesting because the main audience is also American, thereby suggesting a connection between the readers and the subjects in the story. Moreover, the fact that the articles stress these people’s nationality can also be interpreted as a way to separate them clearly.

The last group of participants encompasses different groups of people, to be sure, but some repetitions emerge. Media representatives, Russians/Russian citizens taken collectively, expert sources, relatives of the children involved, and marchers specifically in the second article that covers the January protests in Moscow, are the most frequent references.

On the other hand, the *NYP* articles focus attention on such participant groups as Children and Other, as well. Below is a list of the main elements each group of references in the *NYP* articles refers to:

- Officials: Russia – President Vladimir Putin – Russian officials – Russian politicians – a Kremlin spokesperson – the State Department.
- Children: Orphans – kids – children – toddlers – son – infants – Landon – two boys from Russia.
- Adopters: Liz Jackson - Americans – American parents – adoptive parents – Russell Moore.
- Other: Americans – adult – Sergei Magnitsky – adoption experts – a Harvard professor – David Satter of the Hudson Institute – Adam Pertman, executive director of the New York-based Donaldson Adoption Institute – other cultures – this country – human-rights violators – rights advocate Lyudmila Alexeyeva – writer Oleg Shargunov – nongovernmental groups - Russians.

In this case, the presence of “Other” participants is rather evident. Interestingly, while most of them turned out to be “regular” people in the *NYT*, especially when named, the opposite happens in the *NYP* stories where the references are mostly to expert sources.

At the same time, the long references in Children are worth noticing, if only for the subtle repetitions.

[Children]: 46 orphans – dozens of orphans – Russian children – 46 kids – our poor children – orphans – the kids – children – son – Landon – friends – most toddlers – Landon – an American 1-year-old – Russian children – these kids – two boys from Russia – these children – infants – these children – these orphans – generations of kids – more orphans – 650,000 orphans – social orphans – the same child – children – Landon – Landon’s friends – hundreds of thousands of other orphans.

These frequent repetitions are so noteworthy in connection to the element they refer to, because readers are constantly reminded of the human factor of the issue by the recurrent use of words –often the same, but in different combinations – connoting children, thus appealing to something everyone can relate to. Interestingly, the articles in the *NYP* only use one first name, but

also use the more colloquial term “kids”, which is not present in the *NYT* articles. The *NYT* stories mention more first names and, despite the absence of more informal words attributable to certain stylistic standards, here too the articles show a repeated occurrence of some words, such as “children”, “orphan”, and “adopted”, and combinations of these three, for example “adopted children/orphans”, “orphaned children”.

Finally, there are two elements in the reference chains of Children that are not synonyms of the word, but rather an impersonal representation of the social actor corresponding to Children (Fairclough, 2003, 146). In the article about the January protests, they are referred to as “pawns” in a direct quote from one of the marchers accusing Russian lawmakers and President Putin of using the issue to their own ends (*NYT*, January 14, 2012). A second instance appears in the first *NYP* article, also in a direct quote from rights advocate Lyudmila Alexeyeva, who condemns the use of children “in a political game” as immoral.

**Table 4.2 – Social Participants**

	<b>NYT</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>NYP</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Pronouns</b>	Officials	13	11	Officials	1	2
	Children	9	7	Children	9	15
	Adopters	8	6	Adopters	3	5
	Other	14	12	Other	6	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	Officials	28	23	Officials	5	9
	Children	11	9	Children	12	20
	Adopters	13	11	Adopters	8	14
	Other	25	21	Other	15	25
	<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>68</b>
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Named</b>	Officials	7	14	Officials	2	9
	Children	4	8	Children	1	5
	Adopters	4	8	Adopters	3	14
	Other	6	13	Other	6	29
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Classified</b>	Officials	10	20	Officials	1	5
	Children	9	18	Children	1	5
	Adopters	4	8	Adopters	2	9

	Other	5	11	Other	5	24
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>Tot.</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>43</b>
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

The referent chains for social participants give a more detailed account of the frequency in each category for the two newspapers. What has been already observed becomes clearer. Official participants are referenced the most in the *NYT* in three out of four categories, followed by “Other” participants, also in three out of four categories. Again, this shows that the *NYT* refers to official and expert sources to validate the facts reported. On the other hand, the social participants most referred to in the *NYP* are “other” and children.

Overall, as is clear from the table, more nouns and classifications are used than names and pronouns in the *NYT*. Nouns prevail with a presence of 64%, followed by classifications with 57%. Names have an incidence of 43% and pronouns occur with a total of 36%.

Figures from the *NYP* are very close, especially in the upper half of the table. Nouns still occur the most, with 68%, but the second highest total percentage refers to named participants, with 57%, followed by classified participants, with 43%, and pronouns, 32%.

Of the first two categories, there are far more nouns than pronouns in both newspapers, while the divergence is not so evident in the next two categories, “Classified” and “Named”. The highest percentage of pronouns used in the *NYT* is found at 12% in reference to Other participants, followed by Officials with a figure of 11%. Pronouns referring to Children occur at 7% and finally, Adopters at 6%. On the other hand, the situation appears slightly different in the *NYP*, where pronouns referring to Children are present in 15% of the articles, followed by Other participants at 10%, Adopters, 5%, and Officials, 2%. These references show a choice in each publication for a specific group of participants, which sets the tone and gives an idea of the goal of the articles.

The contents of the articles are well conveyed in the category of Nouns as well. Again, there is a clear divergence between this category and Pronouns, as nouns total 77 and pronouns 44 in the *NYT*, and 40 and 19 respectively in the *NYP*.

In this category, the highest percentage of nouns in the *NYT* is 23% for Officials, while Other participants are 2 figures below with 21%. Children are the least referenced, with 9%. Finally, figures for Adopters occur with a percentage of 11%.

More pronouns are used to refer to Children and Adopters than nouns, and while it is a minimal difference for Adopters, with 17% of nouns and 18% of pronouns, the divergence is a little clearer for Children. The highest references of nouns occur in Other, with 25%, marking a not surprising difference with the figures in Pronouns, with 10%. Likewise, more nouns are used to reference Adopters, with 14%, than pronouns.

Comparing the results for the two newspapers, the occurrence of nouns referring to Official participants in the *NYT* is significantly higher than in the *NYP*, with figures of 23% and 9% respectively. Conversely, nouns referring to Children occur at 20% in the *NYP* and 9% in the *NYT*. The results for Adopting and Other participants are much closer, but they are higher in the *NYP* in both cases.

In sum, Nouns were used in both newspapers more often than Pronouns.

While there is no sharp difference between the percentages of pronouns and nouns between the two papers, the divergence between the general figures for Classified and Named features is more evident. In fact, 43% of the occurrences in the *NYT* are named Participants whereas the corresponding figure for the *NYP* is 57%. Vice versa, the total percentage of classified Participants in the *NYT* is 57%, while the figure is 43% in the *NYP*.

Official and Other participants are the most named elements in the *NYT*, at 14% and 13%, respectively, while both Children and Adopters occur with figures of 8%. However, the internal differences in participants in the *NYP* show a great discrepancy between Other and Children. While the first demonstrates the highest occurrence at 29%, Children are named only once in the two articles. Likewise, Official Participants and Children are also classified only once in the *NYP*, while they stand quite high in the *NYT*, with occurrences of 20% and 18% respectively. Conversely, named and classified Adopters and Other participants both have higher occurrences in the *NYP* than in the *NYT*.

#### 4.1.4 Grammatical level

This part of the analysis deals with transitivity and draws conclusions from the tables below, representing the Processes, Participants, nominalisations, and passive/active constructions and the presence or lack of agents in passive sentences.

**Table 4.3 – Transitivity. Processes**

		NYT		NYP	
		N.	%	N.	%
<b>Processes</b>	Material	52	32	19	43
	Relational (attributive, identifying...)	29	18	5	11
	Verbal	54	33	16	36
	Mental	22	14	3	7
	Existential	3	2	0	0
	Behavioural	3	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

Material and verbal processes are the most frequent in the articles from the two American newspapers. Material processes are the highest occurrence in the *NYP* at 43%, and at 32% in the *NYT*, while 33% of processes in the *NYT* are verbal, and 36% in the *NYP*. Even though they are the highest for both newspapers, the values for material and verbal processes in the *NYP* are higher than in the *NYT*. Conversely, relational, mental, and existential processes occur more often in the *NYT* than in the *NYP* and, in the case of existential processes, they are not present at all in the *NYP*. However, there is a substantial difference between the percentages of material and verbal processes and the other processes, in both newspapers.

Of the least frequent processes, mental processes in the *NYT* are twice as many (14%) as in the *NYP* (7%), stressing prevalence of verbs indicating perception, cognition and affection, which typically characterise this type of process. However, relational processes are slightly higher than mental processes.



**Table 4.4 – Transitivity. Participants.**

		NYT		NYP	
		N.	%	N.	%
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Material Processes</b>				
	Actor	42	49	17	48
	Goal	24	28	15	43
	Scope	14	16	1	3
	Beneficiary	3	3	2	6
	Recipient	3	3	0	0
	Attribute	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Relational Processes</b>				
	<i>Attributive clauses</i>				
	Carrier	20	35	3	23
	Attribute	21	37	4	31
	<i>Identifying clauses</i>				
	Identifying	2	4	1	8
	Identified	2	4	1	8
	Token	6	10	2	15
	Value	6	10	2	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Verbal Processes</b>				
	Sayer	50	59	15	53
	Verbiage	25	29	8	29
	Receiver	7	8	0	0
	Target	3	4	5	18
	<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Mental Processes</b>				
	Senser	22	54	1	33
	Phenomenon	19	48	2	67
	<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Existential Processes</b>				

	Existent	3	100	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Behavioural Processes</b>				
	Behaver	2	67	1	100
	Behaviour	1	33	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

As far as the participants are concerned, the *NYT* articles make far more use of material participants than the *NYP*. Attributes are absent in both newspapers. The total of ‘Scope’, ‘Beneficiary’ and ‘Recipient’ is 19% in the *NYT*, compared to 9% in the *NYP*, where recipient participants do not occur at all.

The results for participants in relational processes present a notable difference in attributive clauses. In fact, the *NYT* has a higher occurrence of participants in attributive clauses, with a total of 72% of Carriers and Attributes, whereas the corresponding figures for the *NYP* are at 7%.

Verbal participants rates are quite similar. ‘Sayer’ is the highest participant with 59% for the *NYT* and 53% for the *NYP*, while ‘Verbiage’ appears at 29% in both newspapers. Receiver participants do not appear in the *NYP* articles, but occur in the *NYT* at 8%. One visible difference regards Target participants, which occur 18% of the time in verbal clauses in the *NYP* and only 4% in the *NYT*.

As for mental clauses, 54% of the participants in the *NYT* are ‘Senser’, while Phenomenon participants are close behind with 48%. The situation is reversed for the *NYP* where Phenomenon has a higher frequency rate of 67% than Senser (33%).

The results are quite direct in the last two Processes. Since there are no existential processes in the *NYP*, there are no participants either, and while the *NYT* has both ‘Behaver’ and ‘Behaviour’ in behavioural clauses, the *NYP* only has one ‘Behaver’.

**Table 4.5 – Nominalisations and passive sentences**

	<b>NYT</b>	<b>NYP</b>
<b>Nominalisations</b>	43	13
<b>Passive sentences</b>	20	10

Nominalisations are more frequent than passive constructions in both newspapers, although there is a striking difference between the *NYT* and the *NYP*. Nominalisations occur 43 times in the former, while there are only 13 in the *NYP*. While there is still some difference, the leap is not too large as far as passive sentences are concerned, with the *NYT* having 20 occurrences and the *NYP* having half as many. Nominalisation facilitates depersonalisation, guaranteeing a certain degree of objectivity through avoiding directly claiming responsibility or blame and “it can also obfuscate agency, and therefore responsibility, and social divisions” (Fairclough, 2003, p.144). According to Helen Sword (2012), nominalisation “fails to tell us who is doing what.”

The results in the table above show that *NYT* authors have taken advantage of this tool more than their colleagues at the *NYP*.

Similarly, the use of passive sentences is very significant in the examination, especially as regards the presence or absence of agents. Both newspapers present a higher number of agentless passive sentences. In the *NYT*, 15 out of 20 passive sentences had no agent, whereas in the total 10 occurrences of passive constructions in the *NYP* only 1 had an agent. This one occurrence in the *NYP* actually presents a relevant case, in connection to the passive construction that immediately follows it in paragraph 15 (*NYP*, January 2, 2013). The following example is a direct quote from David Satter of the Hudson Institute:

“‘social orphans’ who *have been abandoned by their parents or taken away* from them”.

While both constructions refer to the orphans, only one agent is named, i.e. the parents who abandoned them, but there is no mention of who takes the

orphans away from their parents. The idea of anonymity that the omission conveys, though subtle, stresses the effect that the absence of an agent has in leaving out responsibility of action and, in this case, resulting in an incomplete account of the facts.

Another interesting case is the following:

“[Russian officials] *accused* of human rights violations”.

Variations of this sentence are present in most of the articles from both newspapers. What makes it interesting is that there is never an agent in all instances. Even when it is “Americans accused of violating Russians’ rights abroad”, (as in *NYP*, December 28, 2012) no accuser is mentioned. This leads to the conclusion that it is not so much an omission for the particular case of Russian officials as it seems a general inclination to leave out the agent who accuses officials from any “side” of violating human rights, almost as if it were a general assumption.

#### **4.1.5 In-group and out-group**

Results for the interpersonal function at this level of the analysis prompt observations on the use of the pronouns ‘you’ and ‘we’, and ‘us’ and ‘them’ in the articles.

The first article from the *NYT* shows a few instances of the use of these pronouns. Partly because the article reports an account of the immediate signing of the Dima Yakovlev bill, two official voices are quoted and use the pronoun “we”. Interestingly, the first is Putin in paragraph 7, who uses “we” in a [seemingly annoyed] rhetorical question in which he refers to the whole of Russia, when he says, “Shall we send all children there or more there *ourselves*?”

Moreover, the whole paragraph presents an action of verbally distancing Russia from “others” through the use of adverbs of place, such as “there” and expressions indicating locality, such as “many places in the world”, opposed by pronouns that express vicinity and with which Russian listeners can easily identify, such as “ours”, “we”, and “ourselves”.

In contrast with the Russian President showing a “popular” face, the following paragraph includes a quote by State Department spokesperson Patrick Ventrell, who uses the term “we” in a political context, meaning that he does not refer to all American citizens, but keeps the tone of his assertion within the boundaries of a diplomatic statement. The idea it conveys is reinforced by the introduction of the whole paragraph in certain tones –it starts with “United States officials” and refers to the “Russian government”.

The remaining three instances in which “we” is used in this article are by the Drewinskys, an American couple in the final stages of adopting a Russian orphan, Alyosha, when the bill was signed. In this case, they are referring to themselves as a family and as prospective parents. The third “we” is used in the very last sentence of the long article, “we melted completely”, almost as if to leave the reader with a lingering feeling of empathy for the couple whose condition as adoptive parents was affected by the bill signed by Putin, to which the headline refers.

“You” is used twice in the article, the first time by the Drewinskys’ older son, whom they adopted 5 years earlier, in reference to his parents, and the second time by Alyosha himself, in the final paragraph, when he asks them “Are you going to be *my* parents?”

Finally, the first person singular is used a lot with “them” in paragraph 27 to evoke heart-breaking images that set the tone for the final paragraphs of the article with a clearly “human interest” flavour.

The second *NYT* article presents instances of the use of “you” and “we” in particular that deserve attention.

The pronoun “we” first appears in paragraph 6, in a very interesting quote. At first, the speaker talks about “*our* children”, and the collective responsibility on Russian orphans (“we should take care of them ourselves”), then uses “you” when she refers to solutions to the issue and two imperative clauses follow the sentence: “first you have to make life better for them here. Give them a chance to study. Give them a chance to get medical treatment”. The speaker is not so much projecting the practical responsibility out of her sphere of competence as she is pointing out the responsibility of a general “you”, which can be construed as the government and the authorities who hold the real power to solve the issue.

Yekaterina Lakhova also refers to “our children”, which seems to be almost a catchphrase in the discourse of authorities, as if to mimic the words of the people they represent and to inspire and convey a sense of collectivity. In the next paragraph, Ms. Lakhova refers to Russia and its position and status in the world, when she says “we do not consider ourselves a third world country, we are in the top 20”. She continues in the next lines stating how many children have been adopted by American citizens, but interestingly constructs the discourse as an act of “giving” at first and then “giving up” children to foreign adoptions. Moreover, she speaks in “national terms”, personalising countries, as she does not refer to American citizens, but “the United States”, therefore changing the perspective and enlarging the focus –it is not an individual family who adopts a Russian child, but the whole country that is almost “rendered” orphans.

Kremlin press secretary Dmitri S. Peskov also uses “we”. Two interpretations can be attributed to the use of this pronoun –as an indication that the actors are members of the Kremlin because Peskov is talking as a spokesperson, but at the same time “we” could refer to the entire Russian population.

Less ambiguously, the “us” on one of the signs described in the story, refers to the Russian people, and in particular those Russians who were angered by the ban and took to the streets to march in protest. Finally, another marcher also uses “we”, to refer to the “people”, as the once passive subject would no longer “swallow it, keep quiet”.

“You” first appears as a possessive determiner in the third line of the article, as part of a protest chant, “Take your hands off children”, most likely referring to the authorities and the officials who passed the adoption ban.

As mentioned before, the “you” in the quote in paragraph 6 is a very interesting case, as it also refers to people who are included in the “we” in the general idea, but are not considered as such by the speaker.

Finally, the last “you” is found in paragraph 14, in the quote from a sign that says “Stop the repressions, you’re making revolutionaries out of *us*.” While the “you” in paragraph 6 is a bit more difficult to separate from the “we”, the sign makes a clear-cut distinction between “you” and “we”, the ruling Russian authorities and the protesting Russian citizens, by putting the former

at the beginning of the clause and the latter (in the object form) at its end, as two opposite poles.

In the first article of the *NYP*, we can discover a recurring thread that is more or less explicit in many of the articles examined. In the fourth paragraph, the expression “our children” refers to the Children of Russian people. In particular, it is noteworthy that the exact expression is “our poor children, orphans, will suffer”, where the repetition specifies the status of these children (“orphans”) and adds to the dramatic effect of the quote and inspires sympathy. Especially as the quote continues and they’re referred to “as tokens in a political game”. The discourse of children being used as pawns and “weapons” to get back at each other is a recurrent theme and a main discourse.

On the other hand, there is no “you”, but a “they” is present in the same quote mentioned above, referred to children used as tokens in a political issue.

In the second article from the *NYP*, “we” is used to refer to Americans and their culture as a whole in paragraphs 19 and 20. While no “you” is used explicitly, certain expressions are used in opposition with “we” (e.g. “in other cultures... but we...” in paragraph 19) or to show a certain distance by use of expression of physical location such as “here” in paragraph 18, presupposing the existence of a “there”, identifiable with the “other cultures” in the next paragraph.

The use of “they” in this article is exclusively in reference to children in three different paragraphs.

#### **4.1.6 Summary**

From the findings above, it is clear that different linguistic choices have been made in the two newspapers. At the word level, the prevalence of one category shows a specific perspective on who the articles focus on, with the *NYP* focusing on Children and the *NYT* being more concerned with experts and Officials. This is also confirmed by findings for pronouns, nouns, named, and classified, where the *NYT* has the highest percentage of Officials in three out of four features. At the grammatical level, results show that the *NYP* has a higher frequency of Verbal Processes, while more Mental Processes and

Relational Processes were included in the *NYT*. As for Participants in the Processes, in most cases those with the highest percentage of occurrence in the articles correspond to phrases in the Subject position (Actor, Senser, Sayer), therefore the majority of Participants is “portrayed as performing actions” (Jones, 2013, p.13). Furthermore, both nominalisations and passive sentences appear more often in the *NYT*. However, in both papers the majority of passive sentences did not have an agent. Avoiding the attribution of agency suggests both an attempt at objectivity and the omission of certain participants. Finally, while the use of *us/them* and *we/you* in the articles is partly predictable, there are some noteworthy cases that clearly illustrate the effects of inclusion and exclusion (Fairclough, 2003) created by the choice of a specific pronoun.

## **4.2 British Newspapers**

### **4.2.1 Articles in The Guardian**

The first article from The Guardian was published on December 28, 2012, when Putin signed the adoption ban. It begins by referring to the disapproval from the US government both in the headline (“US condemns Putin’s adoption ban amid further strain in Russian relations”) and in the lead. The story, written by Matt Williams, editor for The Guardian US, also gives some background information about Magnitsky and the investigations on his death, but its main focus seems to remain on the criticism from the US government. The article contains a total of 605 words and features a photo of President Putin giving a speech, with a caption reading, “Russian officials have attempted to garner support for the US adoption ban by highlighting isolated incidents of abuse.”

The second story from The Guardian, “Moscow adoption march spells the emergence of social protest” is an opinion piece written by Natalia Antonova, an American journalist and blogger based in Russia. The article covers the same event as the second story from the *NYT* –the January protest march in Moscow, but the style is more personal and informal. The journalist bares her concerns about being an American reporter and is caught between being part of the “*we*”-group that is marching and of the more exclusive “*we*”-group she makes up with her American colleague, all the while



reflecting on the value of social protest in a country like Russia. The picture featured in the piece is very similar to the one used in the NYT article covering the same event and focuses on the pickets used in the march.

#### **4.2.2 Articles in the Daily Mail**

The first article from the Daily Mail starts with a quite long headline that tells a lot about the tone of the over-1000-word-long story. It was published on December 30 by Leslie Larson and features the same couple presented in the NYP, the Summers from New Jersey and gives detailed description of their struggles to have a child, putting their individual odyssey within the context of the adoption ban and the similar situation encountered by countless other American families. The core of the article has a less human-interest flavour and gives detailed background information. The story features quite a large number of pictures, 16 in total, almost as a visual parallel to the narration, which are mostly snapshots from American TV news programmes. The first picture shows a close-up of Preston Mackey, the child the Summers were going to adopt. The second picture shows Robert Summers playing with the boy on a swing seat and the third shows Kim Summers holding the boy in her arms. The following pictures show different aspects of the Summers' story, including a close-up of a tearful Robert Summers, but also two pictures referring to the case of the young boy who was sent back to Russia on a plane by his adoptive mother, and three pictures portraying political authorities.

The captions are quite noteworthy because they create a narrative effect. They begin with one or a couple of words, by way of title as if telling a story of their own, and are then followed by additional information. The first four, "hopes and dreams", "family", "love", "anticipation", refer to the Summers and their prospective adoptive child. The following three captions, "rejected", "shocking", and "tragic", refer to the story of Tory-Ann Hansen, the Tennessee woman who sent her son back to Russia one year after the adoption. The next three pictures bring the reader back to the Summers with escalating captions beginning with the following words: "desperate", "child", and "limbo". A few paragraphs below we read "instant connection", referred to the 'family love at first sight' between the Summers and the boy, under a picture showing

the child with other orphans, and “expectation”, showing the Summers looking at pictures of their future son eager to welcome him home.

The last three pictures all portray political figures. The first of these pictures is from the G20 Summit in Mexico and features Presidents Obama and Putin looking at each other straight in the eyes, and the caption begins with the incongruous words “Working together”. The second picture shows U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, with a caption starting with the word “Bilateral”, and finally, a picture with Sergei Magnitsky under which the caption states “International outrage” and explains who is portrayed in the photo.

The second story from the Daily Mail is considerably shorter, with just 682 words. Although it is not replete with pictures as the first story, it presents four rather large photos evenly distributed throughout story covered by Will Steward, the newspaper’s correspondent in Moscow. The piece, published on January 10, 2013, introduces the story of Maxim Kargapoltsev, a 14-year-old orphan who wrote a letter to Vladimir Putin asking to lift the ban on adoptions. The boy suffers from a debilitating genetic disease and had been communicating with the adoptive family for seven years, but his adoption process was also affected by the adoption law which, according to the tabloid, was drafted and passed “in apparent revenge for new US curbs on visas for Moscow apparatchiks involved in a corruption scandal”.

The pictures are quite insistent in the theme. In the same style as observed in the first Daily Mail story, all but one caption begin with one word acting as a title, the first being “Plea”, under a picture of Maxim between the Wallens, his arms on their shoulders. This first picture is followed by the only one with no “title-word” in the caption, showing the Wallens and Maxim. Here, Diana Wallen is sitting, while Maxim is standing next to her and Mil Wallen is right behind her, hugging both. A third picture shows yet another picture of the Wallens hugging Maxim in the middle, and a caption starting with the word “Loving”. This chain is broken by last picture, which quite significantly portrays Maxim alone, and the caption begins with “Hopes”, providing a strong visual aid to the rather tragic story.

### 4.2.3 Word level

The table below shows the results of the analysis on word level for the frequencies of central referent chains in *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*.

**Table 4.6. Central Referent Chains**

	<b>The Guardian</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Daily Mail</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
	<b>Participants</b>			<b>Participants</b>		
	Officials	23	24	Officials	47	26
	Children	13	14	Children	37	21
	Adopters	6	6	Adopters	40	22
	Other	34	35	Other	28	16
	<b>Ban/Adoption</b>	12	12	<b>Ban/Adoption</b>	14	8
	<b>Agreements</b>	9	9	<b>Agreements</b>	12	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>

From the results in the table, we can see that references tend to be more frequent in the articles from the *Daily Mail*. The differences are not too great, except in the case of adoptive parents, where references occur in 22% of the *Daily Mail* stories and in 6% of *The Guardian*. One explanation could be that the *Daily Mail* articles establish a connection with the readers, who are probably parents themselves and of similar age as the people described in the articles, and as such can better relate to these people. This is an example of the agenda-setting function of media and how the direct effects of content on the audience “may be contingent on the characteristics of the media, media workers, and the other environmental forces that shape that content” (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991, p.210). This is not so evident in the American newspapers, however, and while it does not mean that content has a smaller effect on the audience, its lower visibility can be explained by the fact that the issue is directed at American citizens, viz. a large portion of the readership of the two papers.

Furthermore, children are referenced in 21% of the articles in the *Daily Mail* and 14% in *The Guardian*. Therefore, on the one hand, percentages are much closer in the *Daily Mail*, while there is an average 10% difference between results in *The Guardian*.

The most referenced category in *The Guardian* is Other, with 35%. The list below shows what are the most frequent elements in this category. Most of the words refer to very large and generalised groups of people.

[Other]: Americans – Sergei Magnitsky – citizens – people – Russian and American non-governmental organisations – protesters – activists – the leaders of the protest movement – the adoption experts – society.

Below is an example of the reference chains for the categories in the first article of *The Guardian*:

- Officials: Putin – President – the Kremlin – Moscow – President Vladimir Putin – officers – officials – by Putin – the Russian government – the Russian government – Russian officials – Putin – Putin – opposition figures – Putin – senior Kremlin officials – a spokesman for the president – Moscow – Russia – US – Washington – the US government – the State Department – Washington – the United States.
- Children: Russian children – 52 children – for children – more than 60,000 Russian children – these children – dozens of babies and children – those children – 19 children – Dima Yakovlev, a 21-month-old boy – orphans.
- Adopters: pre-assigned parents – Americans – parents – American families – future parents – families – adoptive father.
- Other: Americans – Americans – corruption lawyer Sergei Magnitsky – Magnitsky – citizens – people – Russian and American non-governmental organisations – person – the lawyer's – Dmitry Kratov, a doctor – Magnitsky – Magnitsky.

It is noteworthy that the second article used the word “jerks” a couple of times to refer to politicians, quoting the name of the protest, “March against the Jerks”. Interestingly, the same march is mentioned in the *NYT* as the “March of the Scoundrels”. Both terms are correct translations of the Russian word

“podlets”, but the choices reflect a semantic difference – while ‘scoundrels’ is a little softer, “jerks” is more colloquial but without crossing the line into foul language.

On the other hand, results for the categories in the *Daily Mail* are much closer, with no particular differences to notice. The most referenced category in the British tabloid is Officials, with 26%. Below is a list of the most frequent elements in this category.

[Officials]: Russian and American governments – Russian President Vladimir Putin – Russian officials – Russia – the Russian Federal Assembly – the Russian Federation – Russian leader – the Kremlin – Moscow – American government – US – Washington.

As can be easily inferred from the list, the majority of official voices in the *Daily Mail* articles refer to Russian authorities. Interestingly, while political figures are extensively present and meetings and agreements between various official actors are reported, especially in the first article, both articles seem to cast more light on the human side of the incident, with the insertion of detailed tragic stories and the abundant use of pictures.

The following example shows the most frequent references in the *Daily Mail* articles.

- Officials: Russian and American governments – Russian President Vladimir Putin – Russian officials – Russia – Russian Foreign minister – the State Duma – the Russian Federal Assembly – the Federation Council – the Russian Federation – Russian leader – Moscow – Kremlin – U.S. State Department – President Obama – U.S.
- Children: the son – baby – child – a boy – Preston Mackey – Russian children – Dima Yakovlev – orphans – citizens of the Russian Federation – Maxim Kargapoltsev – teenager.
- Adopters: a couple – Robert and Kim Summers – American families – adoptive parent – Americans – adoptive U.S. father – U.S. parents – U.S. families – prospective parents – citizens of the United States of America – a family – the Wallens.

- Other: Russians – Sergei Magnitsky – Americans – adoption agencies – supporters.

There is a consideration to make, especially regarding the elements in the Adopters category. The *Daily Mail* seems to emphasize the nationality of the families. One understandable reason is to distinguish between the biological families of some of the children.

**Table 4.7 – Social Participants.**

	<b>The Guardian</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Daily Mail</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Pronouns</b>	Officials	3	6	Officials	9	11
	Children	2	4	Children	12	14
	Adopters	0	0	Adopters	9	11
	Other	8	15	Other	7	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	Officials	12	23	Officials	16	18
	Children	6	11	Children	9	11
	Adopters	5	10	Adopters	10	11
	Other	16	31	Other	14	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>56</b>
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Named</b>	Officials	2	13	Officials	8	18
	Children	2	13	Children	5	11
	Adopters	0	0	Adopters	5	11
	Other	4	26	Other	4	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Classified</b>	Officials	1	7	Officials	9	20
	Children	1	7	Children	7	16
	Adopters	1	7	Adopters	4	9
	Other	4	27	Other	3	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>51</b>
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As with the American Newspapers, the referent chains for social participants present a more thorough account of the actors in the four selected articles.

For the first two categories, the *Daily Mail* has the highest percentage of pronouns, with 44%, while they only occur in 25% of the cases in *The Guardian*, whereas on the other hand, nouns occur in 75% of *The Guardian*

and 56% in the *Daily Mail*. In both cases there is a difference of 19%. In the other two categories the differences are not so large, with a presence of 3% in both cases, and while *The Guardian* has the highest percentage of named participants with 52% against 49% in the *Daily Mail*, classified participants appear in 51% instances in the latter, and 48% in *The Guardian*. Thus, there seems to be balance on the general level.

A closer look at the categories shows that Other participants have the highest percentage of both pronouns and nouns, with 15% and 31% respectively. However, there is a visible leap between this most frequent element and the second most referenced participant in the pronouns category, i.e. Officials, which occurs in 6% of the articles. This participant is followed by Children, with 4%. No pronouns are used to refer to Adopters which, in general, do not rank very high in *The Guardian* references.

Likewise, there is a similar leap in the category of Nouns, even though the results are overall higher than in the previous group. The second highest percentage in this category is again Officials, with 23%, followed by Children with 11% and Adopters with 10%. One reason why Other participants occur so frequently in *The Guardian* can be found in the content of the articles, especially in the second story covering the Moscow protests, where the Other participants are the various protesters that participated in the January march in the beginning of 2013. They are relevant Participants as they were affected by the adoption ban as Russian citizens. The relevance here is twofold. On the one hand, for once a story does not focus on the effect the ban has had on American citizens exclusively but, using the protests as a context, it describes how part of the Russian population has reacted. On the other hand, these Participants are not Officials or expert sources but civilians just like the American protagonists of the cases presented, thus a parallel seems to be created because of their status and because of the general opinion they share on the issue. However, the choice to voice the opinions of these people does not extend to those other Russian civilians who do not share the same views, partly because the article covers the anti-adoption ban protests, although this does not entirely justify it.

On the other hand, results for the first two categories in the *Daily Mail* are quite consistent, with the highest percentage for the Pronouns category

occurring for Children with 14%, and followed by Officials and Adopters, both with 11%, and Other participants with 8%. Likewise, the highest percentage for the Nouns category is 18% for Official participants and is followed by Other participants with 16%, and Children and Adopters with 11%.

Looking at the remaining two categories of Named and Classified participants, a few interesting results arise. The highest percentage in both categories for *The Guardian* occurs in Other participants just as it happened for the first two. The participants are named in 26% of the articles and classified in 27%. Again, this predominance of Other participants is attributable to the topic of the second article in particular, and for this the results appear consistent. Moreover, following the observation that most of Other participants were part of the crowd in the protest, it can be assumed the classifications followed whenever participants were named.

Officials and children are also named with the same frequency of 13% and no adopters are named, but all three participants are classified each in 7% of the articles.

Similarly, official participants are the most named, with 18% and classified, with 20%. Except for the pronouns category, officials appear to be the most referenced participants in articles from the *Daily Mail*. As was already observed for the central referent chains, this frequency can be explained as some sort of compensation for the general tone of the articles, which emphasise the human aspect of a tragic incident to obtain a more emotional effect.

In the Named category, children and adopters occur 11% of the time each and are followed by Other participants with 9%.

#### **4.2.4 Grammatical level**

The next section of the analysis covers transitivity. The discussion examines the results for processes and the participants of each verbal process first, and concludes with nominalisations and passive sentence constructions.



**Table 4.8 – Processes**

		<b>The Guardian</b>		<b>Daily Mail</b>	
		<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Processes</b>	Material	22	31	55	43
	Relational	22	31	20	15
	Verbal	19	27	36	28
	Mental	7	10	15	12
	Existential	1	1	1	1
	Behavioural	0	0	2	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>71</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100</b>

Results for Processes for the two newspapers seem very parallel to each other. Material processes occur the most in both newspapers, with 43% in the *Daily Mail*. However, *The Guardian* presents two Processes with the highest percentage of frequency, namely Material and Relational Processes, with 31%. Similarly, the second most frequent processes are Verbal Processes with 28% in the *Daily Mail* and 27% in *The Guardian*. Relational Processes appear in 15% of the articles in the *Daily Mail*. The rest of the results are even more straightforward. Mental Processes occur at 12% and 10% in the *Daily Mail* and *The Guardian* respectively. Existential Processes occur in 1% of the articles in both newspapers and 1% of the processes in the *Daily Mail* articles are Behavioural. No Behavioural Processes are present in *The Guardian*.

**Table 4.9 – Participants**

		<b>The Guardian</b>		<b>Daily Mail</b>	
		<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Material</b>				
	Actor	19	51	40	48
	Goal	13	35	18	22
	Scope	5	14	16	19
	Beneficiary	0	0	0	0
	Recipient	0	0	6	7
	Attribute	0	0	3	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Relational Attributive clauses</b>					
	Carrier	14	30	8	21
	Attribute	18	40	9	24

	<i>Identifying clauses</i>				
	Identifier	4	9	6	16
	Identified	4	9	6	16
	Token	3	6	5	12
	Value	3	6	4	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Verbal</b>				
	Sayer	15	46	16	17
	Verbiage	11	33	12	10
	Receiver	0	0	4	3
	Target	7	21	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Mental</b>				
	Senser	6	46	12	43
	Phenomenon	7	54	16	57
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Existential</b>				
	Existent	1	100	1	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>Behavioural</b>				
	Behaver	0	0	1	100
	Behaviour	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 refers to the results for the participants in each process in the two newspapers.

Results for participants in Material Processes in *The Guardian* concentrate around Actor, Goal, and Scope, with no Beneficiaries, Recipients or Attributes. The order of frequency is also quite straightforward in the table. The most frequent participant for both newspapers is Actor, with close percentages, 51% in *The Guardian* and 48% in the *Daily Mail*. However, there is a clear difference between Actor and Goal in both newspapers. The frequency of Goal in *The Guardian* is 35%, about 16% less than Actor. The difference in the *Daily Mail* is even greater, 26%, as Goal has a frequency of

22%. While Beneficiary is absent in both papers, 7% of participants in material clauses in the *Daily Mail* are Recipient, indicating some interaction in material processes. Furthermore, 4% of participants in material clauses in the *Daily Mail* are attributes, which is the only case in all the articles examined.

Attributes are also the most frequent participants in Relational clauses, with 40% in *The Guardian* and 24% in the *Daily Mail*. The tabloid also presents more participants for identifying clauses overall.

The difference between Verbal participants is rather sharp. *The Guardian* has a much higher percentage for all participants of Verbal processes except Receiver. The most frequent for both newspapers, Sayer, has a difference of 29%, with *The Guardian* having a much higher percentage of 46% and the *Daily Mail* 17%. Likewise, Verbiage occurs 33% in *The Guardian* and only 10% of the articles in the *Daily Mail*. As for the last two participants, Receiver and Target, the former is absent in *The Guardian* and the latter in the *Daily Mail*. Receiver participants are the least frequent in the Verbal Processes in the *Daily Mail*, with 3%, and Target participants have the lowest percentage for *The Guardian*, although the results show a certain overall frequency, with 21%.

Finally, participants in Mental processes are quite frequent, with Phenomenon occurring in more than 50% of the clauses, namely 54% in *The Guardian* and 57% in the *Daily Mail*. Senser participants are also very close, with 43% in the *Daily Mail* and 46% in *The Guardian*.

The next table shows the results for nominalisations and passive constructions in the two British newspapers.

**Table 4.10 – Nominalisations and passive sentences.**

	<b>The Guardian</b>	<b>Daily Mail</b>
<b>Nominalisations</b>	26	27
<b>Passive Sentences</b>	18	53

Nominalisations in the two papers yield very similar results, with 26 in *The Guardian* and 27 in the *Daily Mail*.

Results for passive sentences, however, show a much more interesting outcome. Passive constructions in the *Daily Mail* appear almost three times as much as in *The Guardian*. Of the 18 passive sentences in *The Guardian*, only 6 have an agent, while 12 have no agent. On the other hand, 31 sentences in the *Daily Mail* have no agent, while 22 have an agent. Furthermore, both headline and the subheadings in the second *Daily Mail* article contain a passive sentence. Of the two articles in the tabloid, the first contains 33 passive sentences.

The first article of *The Guardian* is quite balanced as regards the presence of agents, which are found in 6 sentences but are absent in 7. On the other hand, of the 5 passive constructions in the second article only one contains an agent. Three of the four sentences without an agent contain the verbs “criticise”, “accuse”, and “ban”.

Similarly, the difference between sentences with agents and those without an agent in the *Daily Mail* articles is also quite small.

As was the case with the American newspapers as well, many passive sentences where someone is accused of something do not have an agent in these newspapers as well. This happens to be the case with sentences where the verb “ban” is present too.

A couple of interesting examples arise from the two articles. Both cases show the effects of the use of passive constructions beyond stylistic purposes.

The first example, in paragraph 20 of the second article from the *Daily Mail* contains a passive sentence with an agent, and a rather evaluative adjective:

“Around 1,000 orphans a year –many seriously disabled – *have been adopted* by caring US parents”

One line down, the next sentence, conveying a similar type of message as the one above, has no agent:

“Some 60,000 children *have been adopted* to the US”.

Here the author uses a different way to reinforce the role of the agent from the previous sentence and avoid repetition at the same time. Furthermore, “to the US” gives the idea that the country as a whole adopted 60,000 children since 1991. This example casts some light on the use or absence of agents.

The choice to use a passive construction can add some slight nuances in the readers’ reception. This is because, while a clause in the active voice and its passive equivalent may share a “semantic relationship” (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p.74), the choice or “selection of a difference thematic structure changes the focus of the clause in significant functional ways” (ibid.). However, while the choice of a passive voice may be telling, it should be understood that choice does not necessarily suggest a conscious process. A professional writer certainly possesses a degree of awareness of the alternative forms they could use and in a sense all human beings have a certain degree of self-consciousness. The term ‘choice’ is therefore used neutrally. An illustrative example that elucidates the contrast between active and passive sentences is in the first *Daily Mail* article where two sentences with exactly the same meaning, but different details, are expressed in two different ways. At first, paragraph 13 reads:

“The bill *was signed* into law by President Obama on December 14”

whereas four paragraphs down, a similar sentence reads:

“President Putin signed the law on December 28”

Even though they depict the same action, the first sentence is in the passive form, while the second uses an active construction. The difference is that the active form gives the idea of a more intentional action, while the passive form seems to convey the idea that something happened that was out of the agent’s power. Such interpretation is also supported by Fairclough (2003) who states that in clauses with an active voice and participant, “their capacity for agentive action, for making things happen, for controlling others and so forth is accentuated” (ibid., p.150), while in passive sentences “what is accentuated

is their subjection to processes, them being affected by the actions of others, and so forth" (ibid.).

#### 4.2.5 In-group and out-group

This last part of the analysis includes an article-by-article review of the use of “we”, “you” and “them”, to get a glimpse of the potential in-group and out-group discourses present in the two newspapers.

“We” appears in paragraph 7 of the first article of *The Guardian*:

"We are further concerned about statements that adoptions already under way may be stopped, and hope that the Russian government would allow those children who have already met and bonded with their future parents to finish the necessary legal procedures so that they can join their families."

This is a quote of the US response to the signing of the bill. No specific official voice is mentioned, just the inanimate “US response” in the paragraph preceding it<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, in this case “we” refers to the American government and, by proxy, the American citizens, especially those who intend to adopt a Russian child.

While no “you” is used in this article, “they” is found in the same paragraph as “we”.

At this point, it is apparent that “they” often refers to children in the articles examined (and in this particular instance, children who have met their future parents). In this case, there is no opposition between the two groups, but rather a way to make a connection. The long quote has a clear direction: it starts from “we”, goes through the “Russian government” and ends with “they”.

The second article of *The Guardian* is a particular case, since it is an opinion piece. In fact, the article begins with “We”, followed by “all”:

We’ve all heard about the ongoing recent political protests in Russia,”

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<sup>16</sup> One speculation could be that it refers to the State Department quoted in paragraph 4. However, no real speaker is mentioned in that instance either.

The “we” in this instance is used to establish a connection between the writer and the readers, by including the latter in the group of people who have heard of the recent developments in Russia, and beyond. Thus, the people “we” refers to are spectators of the events listed, including the adoption controversy.

Later, “we” is used in a quote by satirist Dmitry Bykov, who refers to “we” as the Russian people and the responsibility they have to themselves and to their country after Putin’s potential departure. The “we” can be interpreted as referring to either the specific group of Russians who participated in the protest or all Russian citizens as a whole.

The third “we” refers to the author and her colleague, who were reporting the march. The journalist shares her worries about being pointed out as a scapegoat by critics of the protest due to her “obvious American English” accent and “accused of being provocateurs” as it had happened at another protest. In this sense, the author identifies herself and her co-worker as American members of the protest group, therefore not distancing themselves completely from the Russian participants but still marking a slight difference between them.

Finally, the last “we” is used in a general sense and does not refer to a specific group. One assumption is that “we” refers to the wider public and thus, again, includes the readers in the general discussion.

While no “you” is used in this article, “they” is present in a couple of instances.

The first case is in the sixth paragraph and refers to adoptive parents and adoption experts. “They” points out an out-group in the sense that these people are specific actors affected by the issue and not marchers, but because of that, there is a connection with the marchers who are protesting against the law that would have a massive impact on them.

The second instance where “they” is used marks a greater difference, as it refers to the Russian government making some changes in social programmes. The author questions how successful “they” will be and lets time decide.

“You” is also absent from the first article in the *Daily Mail*. However, “we” is used three times. In paragraph 5, Robert Summers speaks for his wife

and himself and appeals to President Putin on WLNY-TV. “We” clearly alludes to a specific small group, the Summers, in opposition to President Putin, who has a decisive role in their lives.

Four paragraphs later, “we” is used again, in a clear example of an “us v. them” contraposition. Spokesperson Mark Toner represents the U.S. State Department and his “we” (and “us”) is used to oppose “them”, Russia. In his words, it sounds like there have been talks between the two, and therefore Russia is not expected to be surprised.

Finally, Russian Foreign minister uses “we” and “our country” to announce what Russia is going to do and express the reasons why. Here the definition of “we” as an in-group is most clear.

“They” is used throughout the article in two senses. The first is in paragraph 9, in opposition to “we”. The second is repeated in the article and is used to refer to children or officials, mostly.

There are no “we” or “they” in the second article from the *Daily Mail*. There are a couple of “I”s used in direct quotes from Maxim expressing his love for the potential adoptive family, and marchers Margarita Pavlova and Yekaterina Lakhova expressing their opinions.

Paragraph 10 includes “you” three times in a quote of Maxim’s tweets to the Wallens, the family he had met and who were going to adopt him until the adoption bill was signed into a law, “I remember you ever day! I miss you very, very much!!!”; and then later in the paragraph, “I love you to the moon and back!!!” Here “you” is not an out-group, but there is a direct correspondence with the speaker, Maxim, the “I” in the tweets, uniting the two into an implicit “we”. There are no sentences including a plural first person explicitly, though, because of the contingent situation, underlining the subtle distance of these two pronouns struggling to be united into one whole “we”.

#### **4.2.6 Summary**

At word level, *The Guardian* shows a higher focus on Other and Official participants, just like the *NYT*, while the *Daily Mail* shows a high frequency of Officials and Adopters. The results for both newspapers are supported by findings for pronouns, nouns, named, and classified which show that Other participants have the highest occurrence in all features in *The Guardian*.



At the grammatical level, the majority of processes present in the articles from *The Guardian* are Material and Relational with exactly the same frequency. Therefore, action verbs, copular verbs, and verbs of possession appear more often in the stories. On the other hand, the most frequent processes in the *Daily Mail* are Material, followed by Verbal processes. As for agency in the Processes, there is a similar balance in both newspapers between those Participants in the subject position which perform the action (Actor and Sayer) and those in a non-subject position, which have an action performed to or for them (Attribute and Phenomenon).

While both newspapers show almost the same amount of nominalisations, there is a stark difference in the amount of passive sentences present in the articles, and the *Daily Mail* has a considerably higher number of passive sentences. The choice to conceal agents shows some nuances and indeed “one common motivation for using the passive voice is that it permits us to omit certain participants” (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, pp.117-118).

Finally, both ‘we’ and ‘they’ are used most frequently to “represent and construct groups and communities” (Fairclough, 2003, p.149), while ‘you’ is only used in three instances in one article.

### **4.3. Comparative discussion**

In this final part of the analysis, I present a comparison between the American and the British newspapers, to observe the similarities and differences in their coverage. I will first move to compare American newspapers and British newspapers, then I will look at the results based on the type of newspaper.

#### **4.3.1 American and British newspapers**

This section introduces a comparison between the articles based on the nationality of the newspapers where they were published. The comparison is structured in the same way as the analysis in this chapter, beginning with the results at word level and then presenting the findings at the grammatical level, concluding with a view at the choice of personal pronouns as means of group inclusion/exclusion.

Table 4.11 below reports the results from the word level analysis. Central referent chains and the use of pronouns/nouns and names/classifications in the American and British newspapers are presented.

#### 4.11 – Word Level Analysis. Central Referent Chains and Social Participants

	American Newspapers		British Newspapers	
	N.	%	N.	%
<b>Central Referent Chains: Participants</b>				
Officials	75	20	70	25
Children	85	23	50	18
Adopters	52	14	46	17
Other	105	29	62	23
<b>Ban/Adoption</b>	39	11	26	9
<b>Agreements</b>	12	3	21	8
<b>Tot.</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Social Participants</b>				
<b>Pronouns</b>				
Officials	14	8	12	9
Children	18	10	14	10
Adopters	11	6	9	6
Other	20	11	15	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Nouns</b>				
Officials	33	18	28	20
Children	23	13	15	11
Adopters	21	12	15	11
Other	40	22	30	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Sum</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Named</b>				
Officials	9	13	10	17
Children	5	7	7	12
Adopters	7	10	5	8
Other	12	17	8	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Classified</b>				
Officials	11	16	10	17
Children	10	14	8	13
Adopters	6	9	5	8
Other	10	14	7	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Sum</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.11 shows that there are no great discrepancies in the percentages for the referent chains. The most visible difference is in the category Agreements, where American newspapers show a frequency of 3% and British newspapers 8%, meaning that the latter were a little more concerned with legislations. Overall, however, both sets of newspapers showed a certain similarity in the focus of their coverage. Furthermore, there is a visible balance in the results for the social participants from the two corpora. British newspapers tend to use pronouns and naming a little more often, while American newspapers show higher frequency in the use of nouns and classification, but on the whole the differences are minimal, indicating a high similarity in the choice of representation of social participants in both American and British newspapers.

Results from the comparative analysis at the grammatical level are presented in Table 4.12 below.

#### 4.12 – Grammatical Level.

	American Newspapers		British Newspapers	
	N.	%	N.	%
<b>Processes</b>				
Material	71	45	77	39
Relational	34	22	42	21
Verbal	20	13	55	28
Mental	25	16	22	11
Existential	3	2	2	1
Behavioural	3	2	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>101*</b>
<b>Participants</b>				
<b>Material Processes</b>				
Actor	59	48	59	49
Goal	40	33	31	26
Scope	15	12	21	17
Beneficiary	5	4	0	0
Recipient	3	3	6	5
Attribute	0	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Relational Processes</b>				
<i>Attributive Clauses</i>				
Carrier	23	33	22	26
Attribute	25	36	27	32

<i>Identifying clauses</i>				
Identifier	3	5	10	12
Identified	3	5	10	12
Token	8	11	8	10
Value	8	11	7	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>101*</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Verbal Processes</b>				
Sayer	65	58	31	48
Verbiage	33	29	23	35
Receiver	7	6	4	6
Target	8	7	7	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mental Processes</b>				
Senser	23	52	18	44
Phenomenon	21	48	23	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Existential Processes</b>				
Existent	3	100	1	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Behavioural Processes</b>				
Behaver	2	67	1	100
Behaviour	1	33	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Nominalisations</b>	56		53	
<b>Passive sentences</b>	30		71	

\* Figures were all rounded up and in some cases this resulted in a total of 101%.

Table 4.12 tells us that the biggest difference in the frequency of process types occurs in three, which are Material, Verbal, and Mental processes. Verbal processes show the most significant difference, with 28% in the American corpus and 13% in the British corpus. On the other hand, the *NYT* and *NYP* used Material processes 45% of the total and against the 39% used by *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*. Finally, the difference in the use of Mental processes, indicating the presence of verbs of cognition and emotion, is 16% for American newspapers and 11% for British newspapers. The remaining processes showed only a slight difference between the countries.

The results for the comparative analysis of Participants show that there are virtually no differences between the two corpora. The only visible differences appear in Participants from Verbal and Mental processes. In Verbal processes, there is a 10% discrepancy in the use of Sayer, with 58% in the American newspapers and 48% in the British newspapers. There was also an evident difference in Verbiage, where British articles used the participant 35% of the time against 29% in the American articles. As for the Participants in the Mental process type, there was a difference of 8% between the two corpora in both Participants. However, the total was higher in the American corpus in the case of active participant Sayer while the British corpus that showed a higher percentage of the participant Phenomenon. The remaining results show very little difference in the use of Participants.

Nominalisations were similarly used with the same frequency in both corpora. However, passive sentences show much higher frequency of occurrence in the British articles with 71 instances, in contrast to 30 passive sentences in the American articles. These figures indicate that British journalists in these articles showed a preference towards choosing specific linguistic tools that result in concealing agents, and therefore those people responsible for the actions described in the passive constructions.

Finally, the most frequent pronoun used in the American corpus is 'we', denoting a preference towards inclusion by whoever uses the pronoun in each article. The pronoun 'we' is used by adoptive parents and official sources. On other occasions, the pronoun 'you' is used, often in contraposition to 'we', while the pronoun 'they' is used only to refer to the children. Similarly, the most used pronoun in the British corpus is 'we' which, in addition to referring to adoptive parents and officials, also refers to the journalist on one occasion. Another pronoun used more often than in the American articles is 'they', which refers to the children as well but is also used in opposition to 'we'. Thus, instances of an 'us v. them' contrast are more visible in the British articles.

In conclusion, based on the presentation of the results thus far, it is clear that similar choices were made in the articles from both countries.

### 4.3.2 Broadsheets and tabloids

The next, and final, section of the chapter presents the results from the comparative analysis of the articles based on the type of newspaper. The results are presented in the same fashion as in the paragraphs above.

### 4.13 – Word Level Analysis. Central Referent Chains and Social Participants

	Broadsheets		Tabloids	
	N.	%	N.	%
<b>Central Referent Chains: Participants</b>				
Officials	86	24	69	23
Children	65	18	70	24
Adopters	38	11	60	20
Other	111	31	56	19
<b>Ban/Adoption</b>	37	10	28	10
<b>Agreements</b>	20	6	13	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Social Participants</b>				
<b>Pronouns</b>				
Officials	16	9	10	7
Children	11	6	21	15
Adopters	8	5	12	8
Other	22	13	13	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Nouns</b>				
Officials	40	23	21	15
Children	17	10	21	15
Adopters	18	10	18	12
Other	41	24	29	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Sum</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>101*</b>
<b>Named</b>				
Officials	9	14	10	15
Children	6	9	6	9
Adopters	4	6	8	12
Other	10	16	10	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Classified</b>				
Officials	11	17	10	15
Children	10	16	8	12
Adopters	5	8	6	9

Other	9	14	8	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Sum</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>99*</b>

\*Figures were all rounded up and in some cases this resulted in a total of 101% or 99%.

Table 4.13 shows a striking difference of 12% in the frequency of Other participants, where the percentage is 31% in broadsheets in contrast to 19% in tabloids, meaning that articles from the broadsheets focus their attention on expert sources and ‘third party’ people more than tabloids. Results also show that tabloids focus their attention more on Children and Adopters than broadsheets, with differences of 9% and 6% respectively.

Results from the analysis of social participants show that tabloids prefer naming participants and use more pronouns while nouns and classification are used to a higher extent in broadsheets. The differences in use of the pairs of variables are not linear in the two types of newspaper and in some instances are clearer. In particular, the figures show that the difference in the use of pronouns is more visible in Children, with 15% in tabloids and 6% in broadsheets. Conversely, the most evident difference in the use of nouns in broadsheets is in Officials, with 23% against 15% in tabloids. In short, broadsheets show higher use of more common features, such as nouns and classification, while tabloids show a higher preference for naming and pronouns. Similar findings appeared in Gjesdahl’s (2008) analysis of social participants in British and Norwegian broadsheets and tabloids that would support the assumption that these tendencies are typical of the type of newspaper.

Table 4.14 below shows the results from the analysis at the grammatical level.

**Table 4.14 – Grammatical Level.**

	<b>Broadsheets</b>		<b>Tabloids</b>	
	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Processes</b>				
Material	74	32	74	42
Relational	51	21	25	14
Verbal	73	31	52	30
Mental	29	13	18	10
Existential	4	2	1	1
Behavioural	3	1	13	7

<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>104*</b>
<b>Participants</b>				
<b>Material Processes</b>				
Actor	61	50	57	48
Goal	37	30	33	28
Scope	19	16	17	14
Beneficiary	3	2	2	2
Recipient	3	2	6	5
Attribute	0	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Relational Processes</b>				
<i>Attributive Clauses</i>				
Carrier	34	33	11	21
Attribute	39	38	13	25
<i>Identifying Clauses</i>				
Identifier	6	6	7	14
Identified	6	6	7	14
Token	9	9	7	14
Value	9	9	6	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>101*</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Verbal Processes</b>				
Sayer	65	55	31	52
Verbiage	36	30	20	33
Receiver	7	6	4	7
Target	10	9	5	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mental Processes</b>				
Senser	28	52	13	42
Phenomenon	26	48	18	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Existential Processes</b>				
Existent	4	100	1	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Behavioural Processes</b>				
Behaver	2	67	2	100
Behaviour	1	33	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Nominalisations</b>	69		40	
<b>Passive sentences</b>	38		63	

\* Figures were all rounded up and in some cases this resulted in a total of 101% and in one case 104%.



Three striking differences emerge from the figures for process types in Table 4.14. Tabloids have higher frequencies of Material processes, with a difference of 10% compared to broadsheets, appearing at 42% and 32% respectively. While this difference appears in one of the most common process types, there is a discrepancy of 6% in Behavioural processes, which is quite significant for this less common type, where tabloids have higher frequency at 7% against 1% in broadsheets. Finally, broadsheets show evident higher frequencies of Relational processes, with 21% in contrast of 14% in tabloids.

As for Participants, the two types of newspaper are again quite similar, with very little difference between results in most cases, overall. Only two clear differences are found in Relational processes and in Mental processes. In Relational processes, broadsheets show a higher frequency of Carrier and Attribute participants in attributive clauses, with discrepancies of 12% and 13% respectively. Differences in Mental processes amount to 10% for both Participants, but while Senser, the active Participant, is more frequent in broadsheets, the participant Phenomenon, which represents what is being thought/felt/perceived, is more frequent in tabloids. Overall, based on the findings from Table 4.14, even when the differences are not so great, broadsheets show higher occurrences of active Participants in the other process types as well, leading to the conclusion that they focus more on what agents do, sense, say, are, rather than what is done, sensed, or said.

In support of the observation that broadsheets use more active agents than tabloids, the frequency of passive constructions is much higher in tabloids, with a total of 63 against 38. However, broadsheets do also show some tendency to conceal agents in the use of nominalisations, which amount to 69 against 40 in tabloids.

Finally, in the interpersonal dimension, the pronoun 'we' is the most used in both types of newspapers. However, while 'we' is chosen to represent different people in broadsheets, in tabloids it seems to be used mainly to portray a clear-cut opposition between 'we' and 'they'. Similarly, 'they' is used in tabloids mainly in opposition to 'we', often appearing in the same sentences or quotes. While the use of these two pronouns and 'you' in broadsheets is

more varied, this is not equivalent to a total absence of an opposition between two groups or of the use of the pronouns to include or exclude certain people. It may merely point to the creation of a more subtle contrast or to the fact that this type of newspaper puts less emphasis on the in- out-group polarity.

## 5. Conclusions

This final chapter returns to the three main research questions with answers based on the results discussed in the previous chapter. It then concludes with suggestions for further study.

### 5.1 'We' as a link between Participants

RQ1: What is the focus of information revealed by the linguistic choices in the articles?

As the results show, the focus of information in the central reference chains falls on the category Participants. Some Participants are more frequent than others. More specifically, in three out of the four newspapers, Officials was the subcategory with the highest percentage of references. Only the *NYP* showed higher frequencies for the subcategory Children. The common high frequency of Officials, under which were classified political figures and representatives of governmental bodies, leads to the conclusion that the main focus of information from the referential point of view is of a political nature.

Results from the analysis on processes show that the most frequent types are Mental and Verbal processes. However, there are some instances where other process types are also rather common. This is evident in the broadsheets and will be further discussed in the answer to the third RQ as this fact is indicative of a trait of this type of newspaper. Nonetheless, it is important to point out already that Relational and Mental process types are also strongly present in the newspapers, especially in the *NYT* and in *The Guardian*. Therefore, in addition to action and reporting verbs, the newspapers also make use of verbs of cognition and emotion and verbs that characterise and identify.

On the other hand, in connection with results on the process type, Actors are present in all four newspapers as one of the most common participants. This can be easily explained by the high frequency of Material processes, but a more interesting finding is the high frequency of Phenomenon participants. These occur in three out of four newspapers and present the highest results in those three instances, indicating a clear focus on a participant that is not the active agent in clauses, but rather what "is thought, felt or perceived by the conscious Senser" (Eggins, 2004, p.227).

The focus or lack of focus on agents was also clear in the results for nominalisations and passive sentences. With the sole exception of the *NYT*, which showed much higher levels, in most cases results show a balanced use of nominalisations throughout the articles. Agency was also observed in passive sentences and results showed a similar pattern, except for a considerably higher amount of passive constructions in the *Daily Mail*. Furthermore, the majority of passive sentences did not include agents, therefore the clauses provided information about actions while frequently omitting those participants responsible for them. This omission results in an unclear and indefinite presentation of the facts. Van Dijk (1988) states that the use of linguistic tools such as nominalisations, “passives or similar constructions is a semantic and rhetorical operation of vagueness and suggestion” (ibid., p.274).

Finally, the linguistic choices of certain reveal a focus on ‘we’ in most instances. ‘We’ is a complex pronoun to interpret. Isolated and decontextualized, it can be perceived as a pronoun that generally includes participants but, within a particular context and used in opposition to other pronouns such as ‘you’ or ‘they’, it indicates exclusion. Moreover, in a written text the perception of ‘we’ as pronoun of inclusion/exclusion depends on the identity and/or subjective interpretation of the reader. In the articles analysed, ‘we’ is sometimes used in contrast with ‘they’ and at times ‘you’ to create a clear opposition between the group that recognises itself as ‘we’ and the ‘other’, represented by the other two pronouns. The oppositions have different levels of intensity. Some are simply representing a statement of the participants’ roles in a true-false manner (in the sense that, for example, if an adoptive parent uses “we”, that includes the couple and possibly the adoptive child, but not the journalist, the reader, or the president). At the other end of the spectrum, others have more conflictual connotations, as in the case of the protesters in the Moscow march.

Overall, the linguistic choices in operation in the articles reveal a clear focus on the people involved in the event, official figures in particular. These and other Participants have active roles in clauses as the Actors and Sayers of Mental and Verbal processes, especially. These two process types are the most common, accompanied by Relational and Mental processes in some

instances, which give a more complete description of the spectrum of activities reported by the verbs. Indeed, the Phenomenon participant from Mental processes appears the most in the articles, showing a preference for less active participants. These results point to a certain balance between a more descriptive focus and a more personal focus. The two foci are marked by the use of more active Participants in the descriptive instances, whereas their thoughts or feelings are presented in a less direct manner.

In other cases, agency is completely concealed in nominalisations and many instances of passive constructions, indicating choices towards the omission of the 'doer' and a more vague effect. Finally, the use of the pronoun 'we' pervades the articles and shows an intricate interplay between strategies of inclusion and exclusion of participants, including the readers. In this sense, the frequent use of 'we' points to a similar strategy employed in the articles in order to connect

## **5.2 Same language, different traditions**

This section is further divided into three subsections. The first two answer the remaining research questions and present the empirical data, and highlight how the newspapers present similar characteristics when observed according to their nationality but differ more clearly when the type of newspaper is examined instead. The third subsection situates the data in a theoretical frame.

### **5.2.1 The 'passive' exception to similarities by nationality.**

RQ2: Are there any significant differences in the linguistic choices depending on the nationality of the newspapers?

Based on the nationality of the newspapers, the similarities outnumber the differences in linguistic choices in most cases. There are some slight differences in the central referent chains, where American newspapers make use of expert sources, as shown by the high frequency of 29% of Other participants. Children also appear quite often, and with 23% occurrences it is the second most referenced participant in this corpus. British newspapers similarly use Other participants quite frequently, but the most frequent participant referenced in the corpus is Officials, with 25%.

Results from the analysis of the variable pairs for Social Participants show that both corpora use nearly identical amounts of pronouns, nouns, names, and classifications for Other, Children, and Official participants.

Similarly, the grammatical analysis also shows very few differences between the two corpora. While Material processes are the most common in both groups, there are some differences in the second and third most frequent process types. In particular, where Mental processes are one of the most common types in American newspapers, in the British corpus this place is held by Verbal process types.

Even less divergent is the use of Participants, which present similar numerical results for the same Participants, with one exception in Mental processes. Here American newspapers have a higher percentage of Senser participants (52%), while Phenomenon is more common in British newspapers. Even though the fact that these participants have different roles in the clauses might suggest a discrepancy between the two corpora, active participants are the most frequent participant types in both American and British newspapers.

Remaining in the context of agency, while the two corpora use nominalisations with similar frequency, it is in passive sentences that a very evident difference arises. While passives amount to 30 instances in the American corpus, they appear 71 times in the British corpus. This significant divergence highlights a different information flow in the British newspapers allowing to leave out certain elements that may or may not be known by the writer, such as agents. The exclusion of agents is quite frequent in the corpora and, in the case of the British corpus, it signifies a choice towards concealing the person or event starting the action narrated.

Finally, frequent instances of 'we' are found in both corpora, used mostly by adoptive parents and official figures. On the other hand, the pronoun 'they' usually refers to the children but it also works more generally as opposite of 'we'. Overall, the idea of inclusion/exclusion and of contrast between a 'we'-group and a 'they'-group is conveyed more distinctly in the British newspapers.

### **5.2.2 Stronger lines in tabloids. Variation in Broadsheets**

RQ3: Are there any significant differences in the linguistic choices depending on the type of newspaper?

The types of newspapers also show similar tendencies, but there are more differences than between the two nationalities. In referent chains, Official participants are the second most common for broadsheets and tabloids, therefore both corpora put significant emphasis on the more political aspect of the story. However, they differ in the primary focus of participants. In fact, on the one hand, broadsheets show higher results in Other participants, external sources and expert voices that complement what is presented in the articles. On the other hand, the primary focus of tabloids is on Children, participants directly involved in and affected by the events.

Social Participants are used more similarly in the two types of newspapers. The only significant difference appears in the use of pronouns, where broadsheets show a preference towards Other participants, while tabloids tend to prefer pronouns in reference to Children. However, nouns were the group that showed the highest number of total instances and a similar trend in the corpora, as both broadsheets and tabloids used nouns to refer to Other participants the most.

The analysis of process types shows that Material and Verbal processes are the two most common in both broadsheets and tabloids. However, broadsheets show high occurrences of Relational processes as well, in one case as high as Material processes, suggesting that the use of verbs of identification and characterisation may be a trait of this type of newspaper.

The corpora also make use of Participants quite similarly, with a major difference in Mental processes, where Senser participants are higher in broadsheets and Phenomenon participants are higher in tabloids. As was observed in the analysis discussion, broadsheets tend to use active participants more often than tabloids. However, this tendency is less clear in the use of nominalisations, as broadsheets report substantially higher instances of these constructions. This can be interpreted as a form of counterbalance for the more frequent use of agents in the texts. On the other hand, passive structures are very common in the tabloids, suggesting

emphasis on the action, as in passive sentences the stress is not on the agent or their responsibility (Fowler, 1991). This particular result can be correlated with the findings from the comparative analysis of the newspapers by nationality, where British corpora showed a substantially higher number of passives. This is due to the fact that the majority of those passive constructions was found in the *Daily Mail*, a tabloid, which seems to confirm the finding that this type of newspaper generally employs a greater amount of passive sentences.

Finally, once again “we” is the most common pronoun. Depending on the type of newspaper, there is a significant difference in the idea of inclusion/exclusion conveyed by the pronoun. The use of ‘we’ in broadsheets shows more variation and, while the out-group can often be construed by logic, in most instances the pronoun is not used to create a distinction between the group the speaker belongs to and its opposite. The division between ‘insider’ and ‘outside’, often realised with the opposition of ‘us’ and ‘them’, is stronger in tabloids, which use the two pronouns in a more direct correspondence with each other.

### **5.2.3 Theoretical observations on the two variables**

In sum, what do these similarities and differences indicate? The numerous similarities between the two corpora can be ascribed to linguistic reasons, because both newspapers are written in English by journalists whose native or main working language is English. The linguistic structure of English might explain some basic similarities, but factors such as the similar topic of the news stories also play a role. Therefore, the combination of a similar language, an identical event, and also a cultural closeness between the two countries would explain the similar results. Furthermore, Gjesdahl (2008) suggests another important factor, noting that, “news accounts are generally similar, due to influence of global news production routines” (ibid., p.3). However, on the other hand, differences in cultural, historical, and journalistic tradition account for differences in the way the events are presented and the few differences observed in the comparative analysis of the corpora based on nationality. If we examine the use of passives under this light, the reduced use of such constructions in the American newspapers can



be explained by the fact that the American journalistic model tends to be more information-oriented (Hardy, 2008, p.129). On the other hand, because the European tradition is characterised by advocacy journalism of the “voices of organised groups” (Mancini, 2000, p.271), it comes as no surprise that in-groups and out-groups are more recognisable in the British corpus. Similarly, the differences between types of newspapers can be attributed to different stylistic tendencies that characterise broadsheets and tabloids. For instance, as Brown & Yule (1983) point out, passive constructions are often listed as one of the main features of tabloid language. Coincidentally, findings for passive clauses were much higher in tabloid newspapers than in broadsheets.

### **5.3 Limitations and suggestions**

This concluding section identifies the limitations of the present study and advances some suggestions for future investigations.

First of all, the sample analysed might appear small in size. However, the goal of the study was to observe the use of linguistic choices in a small sample of articles, not look at the entire coverage of the adoption ban issue. At the same time, it would be useful to use a larger sample of both articles and newspapers and use the present results as a basis for future analysis. At the other end of the spectrum, it could also help to reduce the focus to headlines and analyse a larger number of newspapers. Moreover, a future analysis might include other elements to examine that were not included in the present study, such as metaphors, hyponyms, synonyms, and other semantic and lexical items.

While the selection had a reasonable motivation, future study might expand the scope to other nationalities and thus include newspapers in other languages as well. In particular, it would be interesting to carry out a comparative analysis of how the issue is (re-)presented in American and Russian newspapers.

Finally, time and space have limited observations on pictures in the study, which were taken into account but not included in the analysis. However, due to the large quantity of pictures featured in some of the articles in particular, it would make a more interesting case for a future analysis that would include photos and captions as well.

Recent studies in linguistic research of media (Gjesdahl, 2008) and the emergence of a branch of analysis called 'media linguistics' (Catenaccio et al., 2010; Corner, 1997; Dobrosklonskaya, 2008, 2013; Perrin, 2013) are opening doors to a new perspective that moves away from the more traditional focus on the relationship between language and ideology at its basis (Fowler, 1979, 1991; Trew, 1979). The present study is but a very small contribution to this expanding area of investigation and to the examination of language in use in a news text. The linguistic choices observed in the articles showed certain tendencies and models that cast some light on the nature of the newspapers selected. They tell us a little more about the style and the angle of the story. Yet, they are often primarily unconscious or unconsciously reproduce acquired stylistic patterns, to the point that they resemble the paradoxical coincidence of finding the right port in a storm of potential words.

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## Appendix 1

### Timeline of the events

<b>8 July 2008</b>	Dima Yakovlev (Chase Harrison) dies of heat stroke
<b>November 2008</b>	Sergei L. Magnitsky is arrested
<b>Dec. 2008/Jan. 2009</b>	Miles Harrison, Dima Yakovlev's adoptive father, is acquitted of involuntary manslaughter
<b>16, November 2009</b>	S. L. Magnitsky dies in prison (possibly heart attack, but he already suffered from other conditions)
<b>October 2010</b>	US Senator John McCain co-sponsors the Justice for Sergei Magnitsky Act
<b>January 2011</b>	Juan E. Mendez, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, opens an investigation on Magnitsky's death and the causes that led to it
<b>June 2012</b>	The Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 is passed
<b>November 2012</b>	Provisions to the Magnitsky Act bill are attached
<b>1 November, 2012</b>	A previously ratified adoption agreement between Russia and the U.S. goes into effect
<b>6 December, 2012</b>	The US Senate passes the House version of the Magnitsky law
<b>14 December, 2012</b>	Obama signs the Magnitsky law
<b>19 December, 2012</b>	The State Duma votes in favour of the adoption ban
<b>21 December, 2012</b>	The State Duma passes the bill
<b>27 December, 2012</b>	The Federal Council passes the bill
<b>28 December, 2012</b>	Putin signs adoption bill; Ander Turchak, governor of the Pskov Oblast, suspends 2 officials over investigation on their involvement in Dima Yakovlev's adoption
<b>1 January, 2013</b>	Adoption ban goes into effect
<b>14 January, 2013</b>	About 20,000 people march in protest of the anti-Magnitsky law in Moscow