

Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
Educational and Scientific Institute of Philology
Department of English Philology and Intercultural Communication

**POLITICAL EVENTS IN UKRAINE
IN WESTERN MASS MEDIA (2014-2023)**

Bachelor's paper
written by student of the 4th year
of studies of bachelor's programme
“English philology and two foreign languages”
Field of science – 03 “Humanities”
Specialty – 035 “Philology”
Navizivska Anastasia Oleksandrivna

Supervised by:
Pavlichenko Larysa Vasilivna, PhD

«Допущено до захисту»

Протокол засідання кафедри англійської філології

та міжкультурної комунікації

Протокол № 10 від 29.05.2023

Завідувач кафедри _____ проф. Белова А.Д.

Kyiv – 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Mass media holds significant sway over public consciousness as it serves as a primary source of information, disseminating ideas through newspapers, magazines, and television programs. Within the realm of modern linguistics, there exist at least two perspectives on the definition of "media discourse."

Media discourse represents a distinct form of speech and cognitive activity that is specific to the field of media communication. It is essential to differentiate media discourse from other distinct types of discourse, such as political, religious, scientific, and so forth (R. A. Budagov [5]).

Media discourse is the result of communication by mass media actors, driven by specific purposes that determine its content. These objectives can encompass describing and explaining, influencing the identity of the recipients, shaping their consciousness, assessing reality, predicting future situations, and more (V. S. Matyushenkov, [17]).

Given that media discourse engages society as a whole, it relies on an evaluative vocabulary that is commonly shared, employing linguistic elements and socio-political terminology that hold social significance and are widely accepted. When examining the classification of mass media texts, it is crucial to recognize that these various forms of mass information should be considered as a unified flow of social information.

Ukraine's geopolitical significance, implications for regional stability, and its ongoing conflicts and war determine the **relevance** of studying media discourse and political events in Ukraine in Western mass media. Western media outlets cover Ukraine to provide insights into geopolitical shifts, assess democracy and governance, monitor international relations, analyze conflict and security, evaluate human rights and freedom of the press, examine disinformation and propaganda, and engage with Ukrainian diaspora communities.

The **object** of the paper is political events covering Ukraine published in Western mass media.

The **subject** of the study is discursive strategies of media discourse implemented in articles of Western media covering events in Ukraine.

The **material** of the research comprises 110 pages (46148 words) of articles published in newspapers and journals such as The Daily Mail, The Financial Times, The Guardian, The New York Times, The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, BBC, and others.

The **aim** of the work is to analyse the utilization of discursive strategies of media discourse in context of events in Ukraine represented in Western mass media. The aim of the paper has predetermined the following **objectives** of the investigation:

- to explore the theoretical basis of media discourse studies, including its definition in modern linguistics;
- to outline the distinctive features of modern media discourse, in terms of political and ecological media discourse;
- to examine the methods of analysis used in media discourse studies, including discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis;
- to analyze the discursive strategies employed in media discourse, focusing on their implementation in the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of the topic of war and ecology in Western media applying discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis;

General and special **methods** of linguistics are applied in the work for the complete inventory and systematization of the analysed material:

- a method of sampling;
- a descriptive method;
- semantic-component analysis;
- quantitative and qualitative analyses;
- discursive analysis;
- critical discursive analysis;
- multimodal discourse analysis.

These objectives aim to contribute to the academic understanding of media discourse, its strategies, and its effects on public perception, while shedding light on the specific case of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of war and ecology in Western media.

The **novelty** of the paper lies in its comprehensive exploration of media discourse, including its theoretical basis, distinctive features, and methods of analysis. It incorporates a complex analysis of a discourse based on various theoretical frameworks such as positioning theory, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis to analyze discursive strategies employed in the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of war and ecology in Western media. This interdisciplinary approach adds a new perspective to the study of media discourse and expands our understanding of its complexities.

The **theoretical significance** of the paper is reflected in its contribution to the field of linguistics by examining the influence of media and the Internet on language behavior. It highlights the importance of analyzing media discourse in shaping public opinion, influencing narratives, and impacting the democratic process. By focusing on political media discourse and ecological media discourse, the paper sheds light on the specific uses of language and communication to persuade, rally audiences, and promote sustainability. It also introduces ecolinguistics as a relevant field of study in understanding the relationship between language and the environment.

The **theoretical significance** of the study also lies in the emphasis of the importance of critical analysis of media discourse to ensure a balanced and ethical representation of conflicts and environmental issues. It highlights the strategic use of language, communication, and visual materials in shaping perception and fostering awareness and action. By identifying and analyzing discursive strategies such as labelling, personalization, and evidentiality, the paper provides insights into how media messages are constructed and how they influence public understanding.

The paper is organised as follows: an introduction, two sections, conclusions, summary and references. The work is illustrated with tables (Appendix).

The introduction outlines the relevance, defines the aim, object, subject, gives the insight into the theoretical significance of the scientific research and provides information about the structure.

The first Chapter " Theoretical basis of the media discourse studies" explores media discourse, political media discourse and ecological media discourse as well as such methods of analysis as discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis and multimodal discourse analysis.

The second chapter "Discursive strategies and their implementation in media discourse" analyses topics of positioning, war and ecology and employment of discursive strategies in verbal and non-verbal materials.

The general conclusion summarizes the results of the research. The appendix provides the results of the study.

I. THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE MEDIA DISCOURSE STUDIES

1.1. Media discourse in Modern Linguistics

The late 20th century to the early 21st century marked a significant surge in the expansion of media and the emergence of new information technologies. The dynamic advancements in traditional media platforms, along with the widespread adoption of the Internet, have played a crucial role in shaping a unified information landscape characterized by the convergence of various media streams. Recognized as a dominant force in mass communication, the Internet and its associated technologies serve as vital resources for processing and disseminating extensive data sets. Consequently, media exert a profound influence on the language behavior of communicants, significantly impacting how individuals express themselves and interact with others.

In today's society, the media has become deeply ingrained in our lives and wields immense influence over the human mind. The language used in media discourse is highly responsive to changes in public consciousness, reflecting and shaping its state. It is within the language of the media that we can observe new trends in language learning approaches, which can be traced in modern linguistics (Алексеєва, [1]).

Extensive research has been conducted on the structure, typology, and methods of analyzing media discourse by scholars such as R. Fowler [53], V.G. Kostomarov [12], T.G. Dobrosklons'ka [7], and others.

Classification of media discourse has become a significant concern in contemporary linguistics. The study of this task contributes to addressing various topical issues in media linguistics, including clarifying the essence and hierarchy of the media phenomenon, defining the structure of this discourse type, understanding the interaction of its components, and systematizing knowledge about its functional features (I.H. Miroshnychenko, [19]).

Analyzing media discourse enables us to determine the thinking peculiarities of individual speakers and groups of people who consume specific media products and methods of influencing the audience. Moreover, modern media discourse is a sphere of language functioning characterized by intensive development and a consistent tendency toward transformative processes. By reacting to innovative societal changes, media discourse signifies the development of society and its positive and negative shifts during a particular period.

Regarding the definition of media discourse, I.A. Kozhemyakin [17] distinguishes two approaches. The first approach views media discourse as a distinct verbal-mental activity unique to the realm of information mass media space. This perspective differentiates media discourse from other discourse types, such as political, religious, and scientific discourse, based on parameters such as language usage and the communicative sphere in which it operates. The second approach argues that media discourse encompasses any form of discourse realized within the media space and produced by mass media. Therefore, it is possible to identify political, religious, and scientific media discourse characterized by the specificities of mass information formation, interpretation, and broadcasting.

In contemporary times, media discourse is increasingly aimed at influencing and stimulating the audience due to the growing role of different types of discourse in the media space. The media sphere encompasses moral and international legal relations that shed light on the actions and motives of subjects. Consequently, current studies on media discourse focus on critical discourse analysis and the functional approach, which emphasize intentional and linguistic-cognitive factors in communication.

1.2. Distinctive features of modern media discourse

In addition to generating knowledge and evaluating objects, media discourse elucidates the diverse methods of disseminating information. This suggests that the primary focus of media discourse is not the social-political processes themselves but rather the ways in which these processes are described (I.A. Kozhemyakin [17]).

Consequently, media discourse serves as a means of mediation. Therefore, the analysis of media discourse aims to highlight the crucial elements involved in the creation and dissemination of meaning, while also determining the role of the media context in shaping the meaning-making process.

M.R. Zheltuhina defines distinctive features of media discourse that include [9]:

- group correlation (the author shares the views of his group);
- publicity (focusing on mass addressee);
- disens orientation (creating conflict with its following discussion);
- staging and mass orientation (impact on several groups simultaneously).

Furthermore, it is important to note that media discourse serves as a reflection of the societal condition, capturing both positive and negative transformations during a specific period of its evolution. When selecting linguistic units, grammatical forms, or structures, communicators not only demonstrate their personal language preferences and habits, but also provide insights into the language proficiency of particular social classes and groups, thereby offering glimpses into the linguistic landscape of a given historical era. (O.O. Cycka [24]).

1.2.1. Political media discourse

Political media discourse refers to the communication and language used in the realm of politics, particularly in the context of media platforms such as news outlets, social media, and political campaigns. It involves the dissemination of information, opinions, and ideas related to political events, policies, and actors. Political media discourse plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, influencing political narratives, and mobilizing support for specific ideologies or candidates.

In political media discourse, language is used strategically to persuade, convince, and rally audiences. It often employs rhetorical devices, such as persuasive appeals, framing techniques, and emotional appeals, to shape public perceptions and attitudes towards political issues. Political media discourse can include speeches,

debates, press releases, interviews, articles, and online content, among other forms of communication.

The connection between politics and the media has been characterized as an "interdependent exchange system" (Sarcinelli [54]) or a "mutually beneficial relationship" (Boorstin [27]), where politicians provide information in exchange for media publicity. This relationship has become increasingly intertwined as the media industry becomes more influenced by commercial pressures (Tenscher [60]).

Due to the significance and ongoing evolution of the subject of political media discourse, numerous scholars are actively involved in its advancement. Anna Belova [2003] is engaged in research on political discourse and its influence on the formation of public opinion. Her work focuses on the analysis of the rhetoric of political leaders, the use of language strategies and the manipulation of political communication. Olga Yashenkova [4] specializes in the study of political and critical discourse using the methods of discourse analysis. Her work draws attention to the social and political aspects of language, such as the construction of identity, power, and opposition in political communication. Others include Vusyk, H. M.[6], Dyachenko, N. M. and V. V. Khalin[8], Iznets, O. P., and I. V. Pylypiv[11], Lakhtionova M.[14], Mykashovska, L. O. and I. L. Bilyuk [18].

Media discourse virtualizes political reality and transforms politics into an ideological construct. The constructed virtual picture of political reality in media discourse becomes media reality, which is "embedded in the symbolic field of politics and significantly influences political consciousness of citizens" (O. F. Rusakova, [22]).

The primary purpose of political media discourse is to shape the collective political perspective by producing and disseminating specific meanings, images, ideological themes, value systems, and political preferences. German researcher W. Schulz [55] identified four social change processes in which the media play a crucial role:

1. Extension: Media technologies expand the possibilities of human communication in terms of time, space, and form. Mediatization, in this context, refers to the increasing potential of communicative activities over time.
2. Substitution: Media fully or partially replace social practices and institutions, with medial forms of communication gradually replacing or significantly influencing non-medial forms. This phenomenon demonstrates the process of mediatization, such as computer games replacing face-to-face interactions.
3. Amalgamation: Activities related to media usage are increasingly intertwined with other types of activities. Mediatization, in this sense, blurs the boundaries between medial and non-medial forms of engagement.
4. Accommodation: Activities in various domains, including sports and politics, are increasingly influenced by the "logic of the media." For instance, the media not only create employment opportunities in the media industry but also function as economic agents that contribute to the GDP alongside other participants in this sector.

Hence, political media discourse is a vital component of modern politics, as it influences public opinion, shapes political narratives, and plays a significant role in the democratic process.

1.2.2. Ecological media discourse

Ecological media discourse refers to the communication and representation of ecological issues and environmental concerns through various media platforms. It encompasses the language, narratives, and discursive practices used by the media to convey information, shape public perceptions, and influence attitudes and behaviors towards the environment.

In ecological media discourse, the focus is on highlighting ecological realities, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, deforestation, and sustainability. The media plays a significant role in disseminating information, raising awareness, and advocating for environmental protection and conservation.

Within the broader context of the "ecological turn" in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Stibbe [58]), ecolinguistics has emerged as a discipline that examines the interplay between language and the environment, exploring their reciprocal influence. Ecolinguistics encompasses two main approaches: one focuses on the impact of the environment on language, commonly known as "language ecology" or the "Haugenian approach" in reference to Haugen's [43] influential work "The Ecology of Language"; the other approach investigates the influence of language on the environment, often referred to as "ecological linguistics" or the "Hallidayan approach" in recognition of Halliday's [42] seminal publication "New Ways of Meaning: The Challenges to Applied Linguistics", as identified by Fill [34].

From an ecolinguistic standpoint, the concept of world experience revolves around the connections between humans and nature, humans and society, as well as the interactions among the various elements within nature and society. The way we perceive and portray our experiences is shaped by diverse ecological factors, resulting in the manifestation of different ecological characteristics.

To judge ecological property of experiential meaning in discourse through transitivity analysis is an effective way to raise people's ecological mind and further improve their behavior (Zhang and He [71]).

Given the ongoing degradation of the environment, numerous researchers opt to specialize in the realm of ecological media discourse, for instance Babire O. V. [2], Balyuta E. G. [3], Ivashyshin O. M. [10], Ovseichyk S. V. [20], Rozmaritsa I. O. [21] and others.

The analysis of ecological media discourse involves examining the language, rhetoric, imagery, and narratives employed by the media to represent and discuss environmental issues. It seeks to uncover the discursive strategies, power dynamics, and framing techniques used to construct meanings, shape public opinion, and influence policy agendas. So, ecological media discourse plays a vital role in shaping public discourse on environmental issues, influencing public attitudes, and driving environmental awareness and action.

1.3. Methods of analysis

1.3.1. Discourse analysis

In everyday language, the term "discourse" is often used interchangeably with "discussion" or "dialogue." Discourse analysis focuses on examining the content of these discussions or dialogues. Its goal is to uncover patterns and underlying principles regarding how language is employed and narratives are constructed.

Thus, discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary method that investigates the utilization of language in social settings, centering on the organization, patterns, and purposes of communication, drawing from various fields within the humanities and social sciences, including linguistics, literary studies, anthropology, semiotics, sociology, psychology, and speech communication. It involves studying spoken, written, or visual texts to uncover the underlying meanings, social dynamics, and power relations that shape and are shaped by language.

Foucault [35] is frequently recognized as the pivotal figure who expanded the scope of discourse analysis from linguistics to encompass the social sciences. His writings highlight a sociopolitical perspective on discourse analysis, emphasizing the significance of discourse as a manifestation of power. This shift in understanding has transformed the way discourse is critically examined.

As van Dijk [61] states, there is a general consensus that for a thorough examination of the connections between discourse and society, it is essential to contextualize discourse within the framework of society. This involves understanding discourse as a social practice or as an interaction among members of social groups or institutions.

Among the modern Ukrainian developers of this topic are L. Sologub [23], O. Losyk [15] and others.

Discourse analysis is not a theory in itself but rather an analytical approach, and its increasing popularity stems from the growing fascination with qualitative

research and methodologies for analyzing the data it generates, which emerged towards the end of the previous century.

Hence, it draws on various disciplines such as sociology, socio-psychology, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, communications studies, and literature, reflecting its multidisciplinary nature (Grant et al., [38]). This approach incorporates perspectives from multiple fields of study to provide a comprehensive understanding of discourse.

According to Nielson and Nørreklit [49]) discourse is: "a social practice which constructs social identities, social relations and the knowledge and meaning systems of the social world ... [which] both reflects and produces the ideas and assumptions relating to the ways in which personal identities, social relations, and knowledge systems are constituted through social practice".

Snape and Spencer [57] suggest that discourse analysis has its roots in sociology and is concerned with the following: "Examining the way knowledge is produced within different discourses and the performances, linguistic styles and rhetorical devices used in particular accounts."

According to van Dijk [62], in recent years especially in Europe, there has been an increasing interest for the linguistic, semiotic, cultural, or ideological analysis of news texts and a discourse analytical approach embodies and further integrates and extends these developments. Thus, developments in this new cross-discipline of discourse analysis now allow us to study media text and talk in a more explicit, systematic, and interesting way.

In a broader socioeconomic and cultural context, this type of analysis examines media communication, including news, as a distinct manifestation of social and institutional behavior. Moreover, van Dijk [61] adds that there are a vast number of properties of discourse that may have a potential effect on the formation, change or confirmation of social representations.

There are many types of discourse forms. In sentence syntax alone there are dozens of possible structural forms that might be used to emphasize or de-emphasize meaning. The same is true for the overall schematic forms of discourse, such as argumentative or narrative structures, or the conventional schemata of a conversation, a news article or a scholarly article in a psychological journal (van Dijk [63]).

We can state that, the importance of discourse analysis lies in its ability to provide insights into how language operates beyond the level of individual words and sentences:

Discourse analysis helps uncover how meaning is constructed and negotiated through language. It explores how social, cultural, and ideological factors influence the production and interpretation of texts, shedding light on the diverse interpretations and nuances within communication.

- **Examining Power Relations:** Discourse analysis reveals the ways in which power is embedded in language and discourse. It investigates how social hierarchies, ideologies, and institutional practices shape communication patterns and influence the distribution of power. This perspective helps analyze how language can reinforce or challenge existing power structures.
- **Revealing Social and Cultural Contexts:** Discourse analysis emphasizes the importance of context in understanding communication. It considers the social, cultural, historical, and institutional contexts within which discourse takes place, recognizing that meaning is not solely derived from linguistic structures but is shaped by the broader sociocultural milieu.
- **Uncovering Implicit Messages:** Discourse analysis goes beyond explicit meanings to uncover implicit messages and hidden assumptions within communication. It explores underlying ideologies, presuppositions, and subtext, revealing the ways in which language can subtly shape perceptions, reinforce norms, or challenge dominant discourses.
- **Informing Social and Political Processes:** By examining how language constructs and reflects social realities, discourse analysis provides insights into

social and political processes. It helps understand how discourse contributes to the construction of identities, the negotiation of social relationships, the dissemination of knowledge, and the shaping of public opinion.

- **Applied and Practical Applications:** Discourse analysis has practical applications in various fields. It can inform language teaching, communication strategies, media analysis, political discourse, healthcare communication, legal contexts, organizational communication, and more. By understanding how discourse works, practitioners can enhance their communicative effectiveness and engage critically with societal discourses.

Overall, discourse analysis offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the complexities of communication, uncovering hidden meanings, and examining the intricate relationship between language, power, and society. It enables a deeper understanding of how language both reflects and shapes social reality, making it a valuable tool across multiple disciplines and professional contexts.

1.3.2. Critical discourse analysis

The main representatives of present-day Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are Van Dijk [61]; Wodak [68], KhosraviNik [46]. Norman Fairclough [Fairclough, N. [32] is the father of critical discourse analysis.

Van Dijk defines Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. [64]

Fairclough's [33] Dialectical-Relational Approach to CDA is an essentially Marxist framework, based on research of language, ideology and power, where we find a very influential terminology, including dominance, resistance, hybridisation of discursive practices, technologisation of discourse and conversationalisation of public discourse. Fairclough emphasizes the representation of social conflict through signs and symbols in discourses, which manifests in his fascination with social processes such as social structures, practices, and events.

Van Dijk's [61] Socio-Cognitive Discourse Analysis is an approach characterised by the interaction between cognition, discourse and society. A significant portion of van Dijk's empirical research focuses on stereotypes, the perpetuation of ethnic biases, and the misuse of power by those in positions of authority, as well as the resistance demonstrated by marginalized groups.

The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), as proposed by Wodak [68] aims to examine instances where language and other forms of semiotic practices are employed by those in positions of power to uphold their dominance.

Van Leeuwen's [66] operationalization of analytical categories concerning 'in' and 'out' groups gives greater importance to the socio-semantic dimensions rather than linguistic manifestations. According to him, the meanings already exist within society, and language serves as a means to convey and redefine these meanings. Therefore, the analysis should commence by considering social encapsulations, such as foregrounding or backgrounding, and subsequently explore the linguistic mechanisms that facilitate the expression of these meanings.

CDA aims to uncover how discourse is used to establish and maintain social hierarchies, reinforce dominant ideologies, and shape societal norms and practices. CDA draws on theories from linguistics, sociology, anthropology, and critical theory to analyze texts, both spoken and written, in their social and political contexts.

As critical discourse analysis (CDA) is not confined to a singular research approach, it lacks a unified theoretical framework. While adhering to the broad goals and characteristics outlined earlier, different types of CDA can exhibit substantial theoretical and analytical variations. The plurality of theory and methodology can be highlighted as a specific strength of CDA, to which this research discipline ultimately owes its dynamics (Wodak, [69]).

Chouliaraki and Fairclough [Discourse in Late Modernity: Re-Thinking Critical Discourse Analysis] described this as follows: We see CDA as bringing a variety of theories into dialogue, especially social theories on the one hand and linguistic theories on the other, so that its theory is a shifting synthesis of other

theories, though what it itself theorises in particular is the mediation between the social and the linguistic – the ‘order of discourse’, the social structuring of semiotic hybridity (interdiscursivity).

This heterogeneity of methodological and theoretical approaches that can be found in this field of linguistics would tend to confirm van Dijk’s point that CDA and Critical Linguistics, (CL) ‘are at most a shared perspective on doing linguistic, semiotic or discourse analysis’ [64].

As Van Dijk states it, critical research on discourse has some general properties:

- It focuses primarily on social problems and political issues rather than the mere study of discourse structures outside their social and political contexts.
- This critical analysis of social problems is usually multidisciplinary.
- Rather than merely describe discourse structures, it tries to explain them in terms of properties of social interaction and especially social structure.
- More specifically, CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power abuse (dominance) in society. [64]

Based on the theoretical works of Van Dijk [64]; Fairclough [33]; Wodak [70] and KhosraviNik [46] we can also conclude that critical discourse analysis has such key characteristics:

1. Power and Ideology: CDA emphasizes the role of power in discourse and how language is used to reproduce or challenge power relations. It examines how discourse shapes and reflects social inequalities and ideological perspectives.
2. Social and Political Context: CDA analyzes discourse in specific social, cultural, and political contexts, recognizing that meaning is influenced by the broader social structures and power dynamics in which it is situated.
3. Language as Social Practice: CDA views language as a social practice and examines how it is used to construct and negotiate social identities, relationships, and norms. It explores how language choices and rhetorical

strategies contribute to the exercise of power and the reproduction of social structures.

4. **Critical Stance:** CDA takes a critical stance towards discourse, questioning and challenging dominant ideologies, unequal power relations, and social injustices. It aims to reveal hidden meanings, expose underlying assumptions, and promote social change through a deeper understanding of language use.
5. **Multimodality:** CDA recognizes that discourse is not limited to language alone but can include other semiotic resources such as visuals, gestures, and symbols. It explores how these multimodal elements interact to shape meaning and reinforce or challenge power dynamics.

According to KhosraviNik [46], critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the representations of social groups and discursive qualities of demarcation of Us vs Them on the basis of a variety of factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, region, social class, nationality, language/dialect, gender and sexual orientations have constantly constituted a main bulk of research in CDA studies for the past few decades.

M. KhosraviNik [46] also proposes a three-level text analysis framework:

1. The first level of analysis involves examining the presence and characteristics of social actors.
2. The second level entails analyzing the attributes of social actions, including which actions are associated with the actors (both in and out-groups) and are referenced in the text, considering the range of available options.
3. The third level focuses on the existence and qualities of argumentative strategies. This aspect forms the domain of analysis.

Van Dijk [64] goes on to demonstrate how particular strategies in discourse are employed to influence the beliefs of large social groups. He subsequently outlines the specific discourse strategies utilized to present biased or incomplete representations of events. Additionally, van Dijk discusses the utilization of positive language, exaggeration, and metaphors that accentuate the favorable attributes of the

manipulator. Based on that, within the framework of CDA, he and other researchers have identified and analyzed various discourse strategies used in political communication and media discourse. The main strategies which will be further investigated in this paper include:

- Labelling: This involves using specific terms or labels to categorize individuals or groups, often with the aim of influencing public opinion or reinforcing stereotypes.
- Personalization: This strategy involves focusing on individuals and their personal attributes rather than addressing the broader issues at hand. It can be used to divert attention or discredit opponents.
- Evidentiality: This refers to the use of evidence, facts, and sources to support claims or arguments in discourse. It emphasizes the importance of providing credible evidence to establish the validity of statements.
- Number game: This strategy involves using statistical data or numbers to support or reinforce arguments. It can be used to create an impression of credibility or manipulate perceptions.
- Victimization: This strategy portrays a person or group as a victim of unjust treatment or oppression, often to elicit sympathy or support. It can be used to mobilize public sentiment or justify certain actions.
- Analogy: This involves drawing comparisons or parallels between different situations or events to convey a particular message or create associations. It can be used to simplify complex issues or frame them in a relatable context.

These discourse strategies are analyzed within the broader framework of power relations, ideology, and social context, with the aim of uncovering hidden meanings, ideological biases, and discursive manipulation.

Thus, by examining the discursive practices employed in various domains such as politics, media, education, and everyday interactions, critical discourse analysis provides insights into how language is used to shape and influence social reality. It aims to promote social justice, equality, and critical awareness by uncovering hidden

power structures and offering alternative perspectives on discourse and social practices.

In conclusion, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a multidisciplinary approach that examines the relationships between discourse and society, focusing on social problems, political issues, and power dynamics. CDA adopts a critical stance, aiming to uncover hidden meanings, challenge dominant ideologies, and promote social change. By analyzing social actors, social actions, and argumentative strategies within texts, CDA contributes to our understanding of how discourse shapes social realities, fosters social justice, and promotes critical awareness.

1.3.3. Multimodal discourse analysis

The multimodal approach refers to an analytical method used to examine and interpret large-scale social and news media data. This approach involves analyzing multiple modes of communication, such as text, images, videos, and audio, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. By considering various modalities, researchers can uncover deeper insights into the content, context, and meaning conveyed through different media forms.

Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen [47], along with Michael O'Toole [52], laid the groundwork for multimodal research during the 1980s and 1990s. They built upon Michael Halliday's [41;40] social semiotic approach to language, which views words, sounds, and images as interconnected systems and structures with potential for meaning.

Currently, in the field of MDA (Multimodal Discourse Analysis), the terminology is employed with some flexibility as concepts and approaches continue to develop in this relatively recent area of research (O'Halloran, K. L. [51]). MDA, also known as "multimodality", is referred to by various terms such as "multimodal analysis", "multimodal semiotics", and "multimodal studies". Following Halliday

[41], semiotic resources are systems of meanings that constitute “the reality” of the culture“.

MDA focuses on the theory and analysis of semiotic resources and explores how the combination of different semiotic choices in multimodal phenomena leads to semantic expansions (O’Halloran, K. L. [51]). The field of multimodal research places significant emphasis on the study of inter-semiotic (or inter-modal) relations that emerge from the interaction of different semiotic choices. This phenomenon, referred to as intersemiosis, holds a central position in multimodal research according to Jewitt [45].

The techniques and methodologies that were initially developed in the field of linguistics have been subsequently utilized by various scholars to examine historical paintings and photographs. These analyses focus on the costumes depicted in the artwork as a means of extracting valuable information about aspects such as a person's social status, age, religion, as well as the time period or specific event being depicted. Additionally, these studies consider other elements such as the setting, gestures, and actions portrayed in the artwork to provide further insights and context. (van Leeuwen, [66]).

Van Leeuwen [66] defines multimodality as a form of communication that encompasses additional elements beyond spoken discourse. These elements include features like "voice, gestures, facial expressions, or aspects of self-presentation." Similarly, Kress [47] views multimodality as an interdisciplinary field that draws upon theories and methodologies from various research domains.

Additional approaches to multimodal studies emerged, such as Ron Scollon, Suzanne Wong Scollon [56], and Sigrid Norris' [50] multimodal interactional analysis. This approach, influenced by mediated discourse analysis, draws on the principles of interactional sociolinguistics and intercultural communication.

In the context of big social and news media data, the multimodal approach enables researchers to explore the interplay between different modalities and how they contribute to the overall communication process. It allows for a more nuanced

analysis of the complex relationships between textual information, visual elements, and other forms of media content.

The field is dynamic and continually evolving, incorporating insights from various disciplines such as linguistics, semiotics, sociology, and media studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of how communication occurs through multiple modes. (T. G. Lukyanets [16])

Theoretical and analytical concerns within MDA encompass a variety of topics, such as:

- Modelling semiotic resources which are fundamentally different to language.
- Modelling and analysing inter-semiotic expansions of meaning as semiotic choices integrate in multimodal phenomena.
- Modelling and analysing the resemioticisation of multimodal phenomena as social practices unfold. (O'Halloran, K. L. [51])

So, by employing the multimodal approach, researchers can uncover patterns, identify trends, and extract valuable information from large datasets. This methodology provides a holistic view of media content, facilitating a richer understanding of social phenomena, public opinion, and media representations.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER I

In conclusion, the expansion of media and the Internet has profoundly influenced language behavior, shaping how individuals express themselves and interact. Media discourse has become a significant focus in linguistics, with scholars analyzing its structure and methods.

Political media discourse is vital for shaping public opinion, influencing narratives, and impacting the democratic process. It strategically employs language to persuade and rally audiences, utilizing rhetorical devices and framing techniques. The media-politics relationship is an interdependent exchange system, where politicians provide information in exchange for media publicity.

Ecological media discourse focuses on environmental issues, aiming to raise awareness, advocate for protection, and promote sustainability. Ecolinguistics examines the relationship between language and the environment, uncovering discursive strategies and power dynamics. Analyzing ecological media discourse reveals the language, imagery, and narratives used by the media to represent environmental issues.

Furthermore, discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary method that examines the content, patterns, and underlying principles of discussions and dialogues. It helps uncover how language is employed and narratives are constructed in social settings. Discourse analysis draws on various fields within the humanities and social sciences, reflecting its multidisciplinary nature.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a specific approach within discourse analysis that focuses on the relationships between discourse and power in social and political contexts. It emphasizes the role of power, ideology, and social structures in shaping discourse and aims to challenge dominant ideologies and promote social change.

Van Dijk's [64] work explores the strategies used in discourse to influence the beliefs of large social groups, focusing on biased or incomplete representations of events. He discusses the use of positive language, exaggeration, and metaphors to enhance the image of manipulators. In the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), various discourse strategies in political communication and media discourse have been identified and analyzed. This paper investigates several key strategies, including labeling, personalization, evidentiality, the number game, victimization, and analogy. Each strategy serves a distinct purpose, such as influencing public opinion, diverting attention, providing evidence, reinforcing credibility, eliciting sympathy, or simplifying complex issues. The analysis of these strategies considers power relations, ideology, and social context, aiming to reveal hidden meanings, ideological biases, and manipulative tactics present in discourse.

Multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) is another analytical approach that examines multiple modes of communication, including text, images, videos, and audio. It provides a comprehensive understanding of how meaning is conveyed through different media forms.

Both CDA and MDA offer valuable insights into how language and other semiotic resources are used to construct and negotiate social identities, reproduce power relations, and shape societal norms and practices. These approaches contribute to our understanding of discourse and its impact on social reality, promoting critical awareness and social justice.

II. DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION IN MEDIA DISCOURSE

2.1. Positioning in the representation of the War in Ukraine

Positioning theory is a theoretical framework developed by psychologist Rom Harré and his colleagues (Davies and Harré, [29]; van Langenhove and Harré, [65]) that focuses on examining how identity is negotiated during social interactions.

In other words, positioning in discourse refers to the way individuals or groups establish and negotiate their identities, roles, and relationships through language and communication. It involves how individuals position themselves and others within a specific context or conversation, shaping their social roles, authority, and perspectives.

Positioning is a discursive process where individuals engage in the negotiation of personal and collective identities during interactions by presenting themselves as "characters" in shared narratives. It involves two primary types of positioning: interactive positioning, where individuals position each other, and reflexive positioning, where individuals position themselves.

Positioning theory has gained significance as a valuable analytical framework in the field of interactional sociolinguistics. It is often employed alongside concepts such as 'framing', 'footing' (Goffman, [36]), and 'stance' to examine how participants in a conversation strategically navigate their identities and collaboratively construct their understanding of the situation at hand. This theory allows researchers to explore the ways in which individuals actively manage their roles and shape their collective interpretation of the ongoing discourse.

The positioning triad concept captures the interdependence between storylines, positions, and the force of speech acts. On one hand, storylines and the positions available to participants within them are constructed and sustained through the various speech acts produced by the participants. On the other hand, these speech acts derive their significance and impact from the storylines and positions that shape the

interaction. This mutual influence and constitution between storylines, positions, and the force of speech acts form the core of the positioning triad.

Considering the effective analytical capabilities and adaptability of positioning theory, it is understandable that it has been successfully employed in examining a wide range of interpersonal and public exchanges, encompassing various contexts such as conflicts in personal relationships and news interviews (Haddington, [39]).

Positioning in media discourse refers to the intentional placement of individuals, groups, or ideas within the media to shape public perception and influence audience opinions. It involves the strategic use of language, visuals, and other rhetorical devices to position certain actors or perspectives favorably or unfavorably. This practice plays a significant role in shaping public discourse, constructing social realities, and advancing specific agendas. Understanding positioning in media discourse is crucial for media literacy and critical analysis of media messages.

Positioning in political discourse refers to the strategic use of language, rhetoric, and communication techniques by political actors to shape public opinion, advance their agendas, and establish their political identities. It involves the deliberate presentation of ideas, policies, and individuals in a favorable or unfavorable manner to influence public perception and gain support.

Understanding positioning in political discourse is important for critical analysis and informed political engagement. It allows individuals to assess the strategies employed by political actors, critically evaluate messaging and framing, and make informed decisions based on a deeper understanding of political communication.

2.1.1. The discursive strategy of labelling

The discursive strategy of labelling involves assigning specific names, titles, or categories to individuals, groups, or events in order to shape perceptions and

influence understanding. It can be used to highlight certain characteristics, create associations, or establish a particular narrative.

The discursive strategy of labelling serves several functions and purposes in political media discourse. Here are some of the key functions:

- **Simplification and Categorization:** Labelling helps simplify complex political ideas, positions, and individuals into easily identifiable categories. It allows media outlets to provide shorthand descriptions that can help audiences quickly understand and navigate political discussions.
- **Framing and Persuasion:** Labels play a crucial role in framing political narratives and shaping public opinion. By attaching specific labels to politicians, parties, or policies, media outlets can influence how the audience perceives and interprets them. Labels can evoke emotional responses, convey positive or negative connotations, and sway public opinion in favor of a particular perspective.
- **Identity Formation and Group Affiliation:** Labels in political media discourse contribute to the formation of individual and group identities. They help individuals align themselves with a particular political ideology, party, or movement. Labels provide a sense of belonging and identity, fostering solidarity among like-minded individuals and promoting group cohesion.
- **Polarization and Opposition:** Labels can be used to create divisions and foster polarization in political discourse. By categorizing individuals or groups into opposing labels, media outlets can promote an "us vs. them" mentality, reinforcing ideological differences and strengthening partisan divides.
- **Influence on Policy Debates:** Labelling can influence policy debates by associating specific labels with certain policy positions or values. It can shape public perception of policy proposals, framing them as either beneficial or detrimental based on the attached label. Labels can also be used to discredit opposing policy ideas and delegitimize alternative perspectives.

- **Agenda Setting:** The use of labels in political media discourse can influence the public agenda by highlighting certain issues, individuals, or groups while marginalizing others. Labels can draw attention to specific topics, prioritize certain narratives, and direct public discourse toward specific political priorities or agendas.

Let's dwell upon some examples of the aforementioned discursive strategy from influential Western journals and magazines:

1. *Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24 was a seismic event.* [91]

In this passage, the discursive strategy of labelling is employed through the use of the metaphorical label "*seismic event*" to describe Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The use of the metaphor "*seismic event*" portrays Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a significant and earth-shattering occurrence, emphasizing its magnitude and impact.

2. *"Mr. Putin will go down in history as a butcher"* [90]

Here, the discursive strategy of labelling is implemented through the metaphorical label "*butcher*" to characterize Mr. Putin. The metaphorical label "*butcher*" suggests that Putin is responsible for causing significant harm, suffering, and bloodshed, likening his actions to that of a merciless slaughterer.

3. *Still, at the centre of this tragedy lies one man: Vladimir Putin. He has embarked on a murderous and criminal war....* [89]

In this passage, the discursive strategy of labelling is utilized through the labels "murderous" and "criminal" to depict Vladimir Putin and his actions. The metaphorical label "*murderous and criminal war*" portrays the war initiated by Putin as one characterized by illegal and immoral acts, emphasizing its destructive nature.

4. *Russian President Vladimir Putin has ratcheted up his aggressiveness to a disturbing and dangerous degree over the past few days, both rhetorically and in terms of policy. Perhaps the only thing more brazen than his illegal annexation of four Ukrainian regions, based on a sham referendum in the territories, was the speech he gave on Friday to justify it.* [98]

The discursive strategy of labelling is evident in this passage through the use of the labels "*brazen*," and "*illegal annexation*" a "*sham referendum*" These labels portray Putin's behavior and actions in a negative light. The hyperbolic statement emphasizes the extreme audacity and unlawfulness of Putin's actions in illegally annexing Ukrainian territories, suggesting that it surpasses any other brazen acts.

5. *These actions, intended to freeze a civilian population to death until they surrender, are the definition of a terrorist, genocidal regime: amoral, criminal, barbaric.* [99]

Here, the discursive strategy of labelling is employed to describe the actions of a regime. Labels such as "*terrorist*," "*genocidal*," "*amoral*," "*criminal*," and "*barbaric*" are used to portray the regime's behavior as heinous, highlighting the severity and condemning nature of their actions. The idiom "*freeze a civilian population to death*" helps to express the extent of inhumanity and expresses the strategy of victimization towards civilians.

6. *But their example in 2022 was second to none.* [76]

In this passage, the idiom "*second to none*" is used as a discursive strategy of labelling. It highlights Ukraine's exceptional performance or achievement, emphasizing its prominence and surpassing the accomplishments of others.

7. *Meanwhile Ukraine's army continues to advance across the country, giving Kyiv a viable path to victory.* [75]

In this passage, the discursive strategy of labelling is implemented through the labels "*Ukraine's army continues to advance*" and "*viable path to victory.*" These labels convey a sense of progress and hope for Ukraine, implying that their military forces are gaining ground and moving towards a potential successful outcome in the war. The use of Kyiv as a synecdoche refers to the government or the forces aligned with it, highlighting their progress and suggesting that it leads to a possible victory.

8. *The biggest surprise of 2022 was Ukraine's humbling of Russia's military machine.* [97]

The discursive strategy of labelling is employed through the label "*Ukraine's humbling of Russia's military machine*" in this passage. The personification of Russia's military machine being "*humbled*" suggests that Ukraine's military success significantly weakened or defeated Russia's powerful military forces and represents the strategy of personalization, too. The metaphor "*Russia's military machine*" shows that it was not an easy task.

9. *As the United States has done by warning of "catastrophic consequences" if the Russians should use weapons of mass destruction in Ukraine, we should make it clear to the Russians that they would pay a steep price for any attacks on humanitarian deliveries to Ukraine. [99]*

In this passage, the discursive strategy of labelling is implemented through the labels "*catastrophic consequences*," "*steep price*," and "*attacks on humanitarian deliveries*." "*Catastrophic consequences*" can be considered a form of hyperbole, emphasizing the severity and potential disastrous outcomes of the Russians using weapons of mass destruction in Ukraine. It serves to evoke a sense of urgency and highlight the grave nature of such actions. "*Steep price*" is a metaphorical label to imply that the Russians would face significant consequences or pay a heavy cost for any attacks on humanitarian deliveries to Ukraine.

10. *This is not the first time Ukraine has suffered an attempted genocide at the hands of Moscow. [99]*

The discursive strategy of labelling is employed through the label "*attempted genocide*" in this passage. The label suggests that Moscow's actions towards Ukraine can be seen as an intentional, organized, and systematic effort to eradicate a specific group or population, emphasizing the severity and gravity of the situation. The use of Moscow as a synecdoche refers to the Russian government or leadership, implying that previous attempts at genocide were orchestrated by the entire entity. Moreover, it implies that it is not the first time that Ukraine has been a victim of Russia – victimization.

11. "*The battle for Ukraine is not just a battle for territory; it is a battle of ideas, of historical narratives, and of conflicting visions of the future.*" [88]

In this passage, the discursive strategy of labelling is implemented through the labels "*battle of ideas*," "*historical narratives*," and "*conflicting visions of the future*." These labels broaden the scope of the conflict, highlighting that the war in Ukraine encompasses more than just territorial disputes. The use of "*battle*" as a metonymy refers to the broader conflict in Ukraine, emphasizing that it encompasses not only physical territory but also ideological clashes and differing visions for the future. It suggests that the conflict involves clashes of ideologies, historical interpretations, and competing visions for the future.

12. "*Russia's war on Ukraine is not just a geopolitical conflict, but a clash of ideologies and worldviews.*" [89]

The discursive strategy of labelling is evident through the labels "*war on Ukraine*," "*clash of ideologies and worldviews*" in this passage. These labels emphasize that the conflict goes beyond a mere geopolitical dispute and instead involves a deeper clash between different ideologies and perspectives on the world.

13. "*The war has caused a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, with shortages of food, medicine, and essential supplies.*" [89]

In this passage, the discursive strategy of labelling is employed through the label "*humanitarian crisis*." This label highlights the dire situation in Ukraine, emphasizing the scarcity and lack of essential resources such as food, medicine, and supplies. The mention of the impact on Ukraine's population personalizes the crisis, evoking empathy and underscoring the suffering caused by the war. The statement uses hyperbole to emphasize the severity of the crisis caused by the war, highlighting the extreme shortages of vital resources. Moreover, the strategy of personalization is represented here, as well: "*The war has caused a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine*".

However, it's important to note that the use of labels in political media discourse can be subjective and reflect the biases or perspectives of the authors or

media outlets. Thus, these labels may contribute to shaping public opinion and influencing the narrative surrounding the War in Ukraine.

2.1.2. The discursive strategy of personalization

The discursive strategy of personalization can be implemented through the use of the literary device of personification. Personalization involves attributing human qualities, characteristics, or actions to non-human entities or abstract concepts. By personalizing elements of discourse, it becomes easier to create a sense of connection, empathy, and relatability for the audience. Here's how the strategy of personalization can be achieved through personification in media political discourse:

- **Humanizing political figures:** Personalization can be used to humanize political leaders, portraying them as relatable individuals rather than distant figures. By attributing human qualities, emotions, and actions to these figures, media discourse can create a stronger sense of connection between the audience and the political personalities.
- **Characterizing political parties or movements:** Personalization allows media discourse to give political parties or movements distinct personalities or characteristics. By attributing specific traits or values to these entities, it becomes easier for the audience to identify and understand their positions and agendas.
- **Symbolic representation:** Personalization can be employed to symbolically represent political concepts or ideologies. By assigning human attributes to these symbols, media discourse can make complex political ideas more accessible and relatable.
- **Narrative construction:** Personalization enables media discourse to construct narratives around political entities or ideologies. By creating characters and storylines, the discourse can engage the audience on a more emotional and immersive level. It can also frame political events or conflicts as dramatic

narratives, capturing attention and fostering a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.

- Emotional appeal: Personalization in media political discourse can evoke emotional responses from the audience. By attributing human emotions or experiences to political entities, the discourse can tap into the audience's empathy and garner support or opposition.

Here are some examples of the implementation of this discursive strategy:

1. *Just about everyone has been surprised by the ferocity of the Ukrainian resistance...* [89]

The passage personalizes the Ukrainian resistance by stating that "*everyone has been surprised by the ferocity of the Ukrainian resistance.*" This humanizes the resistance and portrays it as a determined and formidable force, creating a sense of admiration or support for their efforts. The use of hyperbole is seen in this phrase. It exaggerates the level of surprise by suggesting that nearly everyone was taken aback by the intensity of the resistance.

2. *On the front lines in the battlefields, Ukraine is winning.* [91]

This statement personifies Ukraine, treating it as an active participant capable of winning. This characterization instills a sense of optimism and portrays Ukraine as a resilient and capable entity.

3. *The victories have put Kyiv on the front foot, boosting morale and expectations of further success.* [95]

By mentioning that the victories have boosted Kyiv's morale and expectations, the passage personalizes Kyiv, attributing emotional experiences and reactions to the city. This personalization emphasizes the significance of Kyiv's role and its determination to succeed. The phrase "*put Kyiv on the front foot*" employs a synecdoche by using a part (Kyiv) to represent the whole (Ukraine). It symbolizes Ukraine's overall progress and momentum in the conflict. Furthermore, "*to put someone on the front foot*" is an idiom.

4. *Ukraine has every incentive to press on with its counteroffensive and retake as much occupied land as possible while Russia is still reeling from personnel shortages and command woes.* [95]

The passage personifies Ukraine by suggesting that it has incentives and intentions, stating that "*Ukraine has every incentive to press on with its counteroffensive.*" This representation implies agency and strategic thinking, presenting Ukraine as actively pursuing its goals in the conflict. While Russia is also personalized but in a deeply negative aspect.

5. *The Pentagon has vowed to continue arming Kyiv alongside European allies for "as long as it takes."* [95]

The statement that the Pentagon has vowed to continue arming Kyiv personalizes the Pentagon, treating it as a distinct entity capable of making commitments. This personalization highlights external support for Ukraine and suggests a shared determination to see the conflict through. This statement contains a hyperbole by emphasizing an indefinite commitment to providing military support to Kyiv and synecdoche.

6. *Moscow is aiming at civilian targets, intentionally concentrating on energy infrastructure — the pipes and wires that bring heat, electricity, internet and water to the Ukrainian people.* [99]

The passage personalizes Moscow by suggesting that it has intentions and targets, mentioning that "*Moscow is aiming at civilian targets.*" This portrayal emphasizes the deliberate actions of the Russian side and frames Moscow as responsible for the harm caused to the Ukrainian people. The passage utilizes synecdoche by using "*Moscow*" to represent the Russian forces and government. It implies that the actions are directed and influenced by the higher authorities.

7. *The war entered its 100th day with no end in sight, death tolls and destruction mounting and prolonged repercussions on global food and energy supplies.* [96]

The passage personifies the war by stating that it entered its 100th day, implying that the conflict has a lifespan and progression of its own. This characterization highlights the enduring nature of the war and its consequences, creating a sense of gravity and urgency. The passage uses hyperbole in the phrase "*no end in sight*" to emphasize the prolonged and uncertain nature of the war. It exaggerates the absence of a resolution or conclusion.

8. *Ukraine has vowed to fight on until it drives Russia from its territory; meanwhile, the grinding conflict has only appeared to deepen the resolve of Putin to seek victory, despite heavy battlefield losses and western sanctions that have crippled Russia's economy.* [79]

By stating that Ukraine has vowed to fight on until it drives Russia from its territory, the passage personifies Ukraine, attributing determination and resolve to the country. This characterization underscores Ukraine's commitment to its territorial integrity and portrays it as unwavering in the face of challenges. The personalization of conflict, battlefield losses and western sanctions helps to represent the escalation of the situation. The phrase "*the grinding conflict*" employs a metaphor to describe the prolonged and difficult nature of the war. It portrays the conflict as an arduous, relentless process.

9. *The West should do whatever it takes to help Ukrainians survive the winter.* [99]

The passage calls for the West to help Ukrainians survive the winter, emphasizing the need to support and protect the Ukrainian people. This personalization appeals to the audience's empathy and highlights the human consequences of the conflict. "*Survive the winter*" is an idiom.

10. *Vladimir Putin has spent the past week doubling down on his war in Ukraine. But his bluster belies a simple fact: Russia is losing the war, and he knows it. The despot is desperate. His army is in tatters, his battleplans shot, he's burning through his cash reserves at an unsustainable rate, and winter is looming.*
[75]

The passage personifies Russia to imply that the Russians are losing the war. This characterization and personalization of Putin as despot portrays an individual with emotional reactions and acknowledges the challenges and vulnerabilities faced by Russia in the conflict. The passage contains several examples of hyperbole, such as *"doubling down on his war in Ukraine," "Russia is losing the war, and he knows it,"* and *"his battleplans shot."* These exaggerated statements heighten the negative portrayal of Putin and the dire situation faced by Russia.

11.*Ukraine has survived half a year, but the war is probably not half over.* [100]

The passage portrays Ukraine as a victim by stating that it has survived half a year but implies that the war is far from over. This victimization strategy also used here highlights the resilience and endurance of Ukraine in the face of a prolonged conflict. The statement employs hyperbole *"probably not half over"* by exaggerating the duration of the war relative to the time elapsed. It emphasizes the prolonged and challenging nature of the conflict and implies that the situation is more difficult than anticipated.

12.*"The battle for Ukraine is now entering a critical phase, with Russian-backed separatists launching a new offensive in the east, while western support for Ukraine remains divided and hesitant."* [88]

Here we can trace the personification of the battle which, as described, is moving forward. Human emotions are assigned to the support of Western countries to show their inconsistency. The passage also labels the Russian-backed separatists as the aggressors by describing them as launching a new offensive. This labeling positions the separatists as the instigators of the conflict and suggests a negative judgment of their actions. It uses metaphor to portray the conflict as a battle, emphasizing its intensity and significance. The term "critical phase" implies a pivotal moment in the conflict, highlighting its importance.

13.*The day also marked six months since Russia invaded its next-door neighbor, throwing the entire world into turmoil for the sake of Russian President*

Vladimir Putin's dreams of extinguishing Ukrainian democracy and restoring Russian power — and in flagrant violation of international law. [100]

The passage victimizes Ukraine by attributing the turmoil and violation of international law to Russia's invasion, specifically mentioning Russian President Vladimir Putin's dreams and ambitions. This personalization portrays Ukraine as the innocent victim and emphasizes the unjust nature of the conflict and Russia as an aggressor. The passage uses hyperbole in the phrase "*throwing the entire world into turmoil*" to exaggerate the global impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It implies that the event caused widespread disruption and chaos.

14. The Russian military is losing on the battlefields of Ukraine, so Moscow is trying to freeze Ukrainians into submission. We cannot let them. [99]

The passage personalizes Moscow by suggesting that it is trying to freeze Ukrainians into submission which is an idiom used to present the situation more descriptively. This representation characterizes Moscow as an active and malicious entity, emphasizing the need to resist their actions and protect Ukraine.

15. Every strike has chipped away at Ukraine's capacity to produce power. [91]

The passage personifies Ukraine by suggesting that every strike has chipped away at its capacity to produce power. This portrayal presents Ukraine as a vulnerable entity under attack and highlights the impact of the conflict on its infrastructure. The sentence utilizes a metaphor to describe the gradual erosion of Ukraine's ability to generate power. It portrays the impact of strikes as gradually diminishing Ukraine's power capacity.

16. "Russia's invasion of Ukraine has violated international law and undermined the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty." [89]

Here we can trace the personalization of invasion itself, making it almost human. The passage also labels Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a violation of international law and undermines the principles of territorial integrity and

sovereignty. This labeling positions Russia as the aggressor and suggests a negative judgment of its actions.

17. "The UK has also expressed support for Ukraine and called on Russia to de-escalate the situation." [72]

The passage mentions the UK expressing support for Ukraine, personalizing the UK as an actor taking a stance in the conflict. This personalization highlights international involvement and solidarity with Ukraine.

18. "The US and EU have responded to Russia's actions in Ukraine by imposing targeted sanctions on Russian officials and individuals close to President Putin." [72]

The passage mentions the US and EU responding to Russia's actions by imposing targeted sanctions, personalizing these entities as actors in the conflict. This personalization emphasizes their role in the response to the crisis.

19. "The crisis in Ukraine has highlighted the broader tensions between Russia and the West over issues such as democracy, human rights, and geopolitical influence." [72]

The passage highlights the broader tensions between Russia and the West, personalizing the crisis in Ukraine as a manifestation of these tensions. This personalization frames the conflict as part of a larger geopolitical struggle.

20. The fact that Ukraine has survived, preserving most of its territory, that long — defying initial expectations of swift victory for Russia's much larger military — is a tribute first and foremost to its people. [100]

The passage attributes Ukraine's survival and preservation of its territory to its people, personalizing the Ukrainian people as the driving force behind this resilience. This personalization emphasizes the agency and strength of the Ukrainian people in the face of adversity. The passage uses hyperbole in the phrase "*defying initial expectations of swift victory for Russia's much larger military*" to exaggerate the

initial assumptions about the conflict. It emphasizes Ukraine's resilience and the unexpected challenges faced by Russia despite its military advantage.

It's important to note that while personification can enhance the personalization and impact of media political discourse, it also carries the risk of oversimplification, bias, or manipulation. Nevertheless, critical analysis and interpretation of the intent and consequences of personalization within media discourse are essential to ensure a balanced and ethical representation of political entities and ideologies.

Overall, the implementation of the discursive strategy of personalization through the literary device of personification in these passages aims to evoke emotional responses, create relatable narratives, and emphasize the agency, motivations, and experiences of the various actors involved in the War in Ukraine.

2.1.3. The discursive strategy of evidentiality

Evidentiality is a discursive strategy that pertains to the way information is presented in discourse, specifically with regards to the source or evidence supporting the information. It involves indicating the degree of certainty or the source of knowledge for a particular statement. Evidentiality helps establish the credibility and reliability of the information being conveyed.

In discourse analysis, the discursive strategy of evidentiality can be observed through various linguistic cues and markers. These cues can include specific verbs, adverbs, modal verbs, and other linguistic devices that indicate the source or basis of information. By employing evidentiality markers, speakers or writers can indicate whether the information is firsthand knowledge, hearsay, inference, speculation, or based on some other source of evidence.

In media political discourse, the discursive strategy of evidentiality plays a significant role in shaping the presentation and interpretation of information. Journalists and media outlets employ various linguistic devices and markers to convey the source and credibility of the information they report. The use of

evidentiality in media political discourse helps establish the authority and reliability of the information presented to the audience.

Here are a few examples of how the discursive strategy of evidentiality is implemented in media political discourse:

- Attribution: Information is often attributed to specific sources or experts to establish its credibility. They may use phrases such as "according to," "as reported by," or "stated by" to indicate the source of the information. For example, "According to government officials, the new policy will be implemented next month."
- Direct quotations: Directly quoting individuals involved in political events or decision-making processes adds a sense of immediacy and credibility to the information. By using quotation marks, journalists signal that the words being presented are directly sourced from a particular individual.
- Expert analysis: Media political discourse often incorporates expert opinions and analysis to provide a well-rounded perspective on political issues. By referring to experts in the field, journalists emphasize the expertise and knowledge backing their claims.
- Statistical data: The use of quantitative data and statistics is another way to employ evidentiality in media political discourse. Presenting data from reputable sources or citing official reports adds an element of objectivity and reliability.
- Official statements: Media outlets often report on official statements made by political leaders, government agencies, or international organizations. These statements carry weight and are presented as primary sources of information.

Here are a few passages which show utilization of the discursive strategy of evidentiality:

1. *Ukraine's government called it "a full-scale attack from multiple directions."*
[94]

In this passage, the information is attributed to the Ukrainian government. By using the phrase *"Ukraine's government called it,"* the article directly attributes the statement to an official source, indicating that it is based on the government's assessment of the situation. The use of the phrase *"called it"* suggests that this is the official characterization of the event. The phrase *"a full-scale attack from multiple directions"* uses a metaphor to describe the intensity and scope of the attack. It implies that the attack was comprehensive and came from various sources.

2. *A Ukrainian military commander recently said that once the ground freezes, there will be more opportunities for Ukraine to press a counteroffensive.* [91]

In this passage, the information is attributed to a Ukrainian military commander. The use of the phrase *"a Ukrainian military commander recently said"* indicates that the statement is sourced from a specific military official. By including the qualifier *"recently,"* the article emphasizes the timeliness of the information and suggests that it is based on up-to-date knowledge from a relevant authority.

3. *Officials in Ukraine and elsewhere have warned against any peace talks that would give Moscow breathing room at this juncture.* [95]

In this passage, the information is attributed to *"officials in Ukraine and elsewhere."* Although the specific individuals or agencies are not mentioned, the use of the term "officials" suggests that the statement is based on the positions and warnings expressed by various authoritative figures involved in the conflict. The inclusion of *"elsewhere"* broadens the scope of the sources to indicate that similar concerns have been raised beyond Ukraine. The use of *"Moscow"* represents the Russian government and its actions which is a synecdoche. It implies that peace talks with Moscow would provide an opportunity for Russia to regroup and strengthen its position. The phrase *"breathing room"* uses a metaphor to suggest that allowing peace talks would give Moscow an opportunity to relax or gain an advantage.

In the provided passages, the discursive strategy of evidentiality is implemented to attribute information to specific sources or individuals, thereby

establishing the credibility and authority of the information presented. Here is an analysis of the implementation of evidentiality in each passage.

By attributing information to specific sources such as the Ukrainian government, military commanders, and officials, the discursive strategy of evidentiality provides a sense of credibility and authority to the information presented in these passages. It allows readers to understand the origin of the information and the perspectives of relevant actors involved in the war in Ukraine.

Thus, by employing evidentiality markers and techniques, media political discourse aims to provide transparency, accuracy, and credibility in the information it presents to the public. However, it is important to critically analyze the sources and evaluate the veracity of the information to ensure a comprehensive understanding of complex political issues.

2.1.4. The discursive strategy of number game

The discursive strategy of number game in discourse analysis refers to the use of numerical data or statistics to support or strengthen an argument or claim. This strategy involves presenting quantitative information as evidence to lend credibility and authority to the discourse. By incorporating specific numbers, figures, or percentages, speakers or writers aim to create a sense of objectivity and factual basis for their statements.

The effectiveness of the number game strategy relies on the assumption that numbers carry persuasive power and lend an air of precision and reliability to the discourse. However, it's important to critically evaluate the sources, methodologies, and interpretations behind the presented numbers to ensure their accuracy and relevance.

In political media discourse, the number game can take various forms, including the presentation of statistical data, polling results, economic indicators, demographic figures, and other quantifiable information. These numbers are used to make assertions, comparisons, predictions, or evaluations regarding policy proposals,

the performance of political leaders, the state of the economy, public opinion, and other relevant aspects of the political landscape.

The strategic use of numbers in political media discourse aims to create an impression of objectivity, authority, and factual accuracy. By presenting data and statistics, political actors seek to bolster their arguments, make their claims appear more grounded in evidence, and sway public opinion in their favor.

Let's analyze some examples of the number game strategy in Western press:

1. *Those strikes have also fallen on towns and cities, inflicting a horrific toll on Ukrainian civilians, tens of thousands of whom are believed to have been killed.* [93]

The passage states that "*tens of thousands*" of Ukrainian civilians are believed to have been killed. This numerical figure is used to convey the magnitude of the loss of life and the devastating impact on civilians. Here, the use of hyperbole can be observed with the phrase "*inflicting a horrific toll*," which exaggerates the severity of the damage caused by the strikes. This also presents the strategy of victimization, making towns, cities and civilians the victims.

2. *Artillery has flattened towns and sent millions of civilians fleeing to safer cities in Ukraine's west or across its borders.* [93]

The use of the phrase "*flattened towns*" implies significant destruction caused by artillery, and the mention of "*millions*" of civilians fleeing adds a numerical dimension to the scale of displacement and the impact on the population. This passage utilizes hyperbole with the word "*flattened*," which exaggerates the extent of destruction caused by artillery. It also includes a metonymy by using "*artillery*" to represent the military action itself.

3. *Nearly 10 months on, the loss of lives has been staggering on the battlefield and the suffering of millions of Ukrainian civilians is still growing.* [91]

The phrase "*the loss of lives has been staggering*" provides a general assessment of the magnitude of casualties, without specifying a specific number. This

use of qualitative language still emphasizes the significant human cost of the war. However, here are still mentioned “*10 months*”, “suffering of millions of Ukrainian civilians is still growing” that give us more specific information. This sentence employs hyperbole through the word “*staggering*,” which emphasizes the magnitude of the loss of lives and presents Ukraine and its citizens as victims.

4. *The W.H.O. expects between two million and three million Ukrainians to leave their homes “in search of warmth and safety” this winter, Mr. Kluge said. [92]*

The numerical range given by the World Health Organization (between two million and three million) for Ukrainians expected to leave their homes “*in search of warmth and safety*” adds a quantitative dimension to the scale of displacement during winter. This number reinforces the narrative of a large-scale humanitarian crisis.

5. *After eight years of war there, claiming over 14,000 lives, its people now face a relentless barrage of missiles as Moscow attacks along a 300-mile front. [83]*

The passage states that the war has claimed “*over 14,000 lives*.” This specific number is used to quantify the death toll over the eight-year duration of the conflict, highlighting the protracted and deadly nature of the war. This sentence uses hyperbole by describing the missile attacks as a “*relentless barrage*,” emphasizing the intensity and continuous nature of the assault. It also includes a synecdoche with “*Moscow*” representing the Russian government or military.

6. *Russia has more than three times the population of its neighbour and is trying hard to destroy infrastructure in Ukraine and degrade it as a functioning state.... [78]*

The statement that Russia has “*more than three times the population*” of Ukraine is a numerical comparison used to underscore the power imbalance between the two countries. It suggests that Russia's greater resources and population size contribute to its ability to exert pressure on Ukraine.

7. *"Thousands of Ukrainians are fleeing their homes in the country's eastern regions as fighting between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed separatists escalates."* [80]

The use of the term *"thousands"* implies a significant number of Ukrainians fleeing their homes due to escalating fighting. While the specific number is not provided, the use of the word *"thousands"* helps convey the scale of displacement and human suffering. This sentence utilizes the hyperbole of *"thousands"* to indicate a significant number of people fleeing their homes. It also includes metonymy with *"Ukrainian forces"* and *"Russian-backed separatists"* representing the military groups involved.

In general, the implementation of the discursive strategy of the number game in these passages involves the use of specific numerical figures, numerical ranges, and comparative numbers to highlight the scale of casualties, destruction, displacement, and other quantitative aspects of the war in Ukraine. These numbers serve to emphasize the magnitude of the conflict and its impact on the Ukrainian population, strengthening the portrayal of a humanitarian crisis and the severity of the situation.

We can conclude that analyzing the implementation of the number game strategy in political media discourse involves examining the types of numerical data used, the frequency of their presentation, the sources cited, and the ways in which these numbers are framed and interpreted. This analysis helps to understand the persuasive techniques employed, the potential impact on public perception, and the potential limitations or biases that may arise from the strategic use of numbers in political communication.

2.1.5. The discursive strategy of analogy

The discursive strategy of analogy in discourse analysis involves drawing comparisons between different situations, events, or concepts to enhance understanding or persuade the audience. It is used to establish connections, highlight similarities or differences, and provide a frame of reference for the topic being

discussed. Analogies can be powerful tools for persuasion, as they tap into familiar or relatable experiences to make a point or convey a particular message.

In discourse analysis, the implementation of the discursive strategy of analogy can be observed through the use of explicit comparisons or implicit similarities. By establishing connections between different concepts or events, analogies can be persuasive in shaping public opinion or influencing attitudes towards a particular issue.

In media political discourse, the discursive strategy of analogy is often used to draw comparisons between political events, policies, or situations to enhance understanding, persuade the audience, or shape public opinion. Analogies help to make complex or abstract concepts more relatable by relating them to familiar or well-known scenarios.

Here are some of the passages that illustrate the strategy of analogy by comparing current situation in Ukraine and some other historical events:

1. *More than 7.8 million people have fled Ukraine as refugees since February, according to the United Nations refugee agency, the largest displacement of people in Europe since World War II. [92]*

The analogy in this passage compares the displacement of people in Ukraine to the largest displacement in Europe since World War II. By drawing a parallel to such a significant historical event, the analogy emphasizes the scale and severity of the refugee crisis caused by the war in Ukraine.

2. *We should send massive numbers of portable generators, fuel, repair parts for electricity generation and distribution nodes, blankets, winter clothes, camp stoves, plastic sheeting, building repair supplies, internet connection devices, other communication networks, and food. We should send these supplies by rail, road, sea and air. We have done this before. In 1948 the Soviets blocked roads, railways and canals into West Berlin, cutting off food, coal and electricity. The*

United States and Britain mounted a massive humanitarian airlift that lasted 18 months. [99]

This passage utilizes an analogy by comparing the proposed delivery of supplies to Ukraine with the massive humanitarian airlift during the Berlin Blockade in 1948. The analogy suggests that a similar effort should be undertaken to provide essential aid and support to the Ukrainian people in their time of need.

3. This is not the first time Ukraine has suffered an attempted genocide at the hands of Moscow. Joseph Stalin engineered a famine that killed some 4 million Ukrainians in 1932-33 in what the Ukrainians call the Holodomor — death by starvation. The world did nothing. The West did little to stop the Holocaust in World War II, little to stop the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and virtually nothing as hundreds of thousands of Syrians were killed — with Vladimir Putin's assistance. We cannot look away again. Never again must mean never again. We must act. Now. [99]

The analogy in this passage connects past instances of mass atrocities, such as the Holodomor, the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, and the Syrian conflict, to the current situation in Ukraine. By evoking these historical events, the analogy highlights the urgency and moral imperative for the international community to take action and prevent further suffering in Ukraine.

4. Vladimir Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 launched the biggest land conflict in Europe since the second world war. [81]

The analogy in this passage likens Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine to the biggest land conflict in Europe since World War II. This comparison emphasizes the magnitude and significance of the conflict, positioning it as a major historical event with far-reaching implications.

5. "The crisis in Ukraine has brought the relationship between Russia and the West to its lowest point since the cold war. ["Ukraine crisis: an essential guide to everything that's happened so far"]

The analogy in this passage compares the crisis in Ukraine to the tensions between Russia and the West during the Cold War. By drawing a parallel between these two periods, the analogy underscores the severity and high-stakes nature of the crisis, suggesting that it has strained relations between Russia and the West to a similar extent as the Cold War.

In all these examples, analogies are used to enhance understanding, evoke emotional responses, and provide a frame of reference for the audience. They help to make the war in Ukraine relatable by drawing connections to significant historical events or well-known situations, thereby influencing how the audience perceives and interprets the ongoing conflict.

2.2. The topical theme of war and ecology in Western media

Over the past years, humanity has faced a multitude of unavoidable challenges that endanger its very survival. These include wars, which result in widespread devastation and environmental and humanitarian disasters, as well as technological crises and the pressing issue of climate change. The aftermath of armed conflicts is intricately connected to all the aforementioned risk factors that affect any ecosystem. Consequently, the cultivation of environmental awareness and eco-linguistic consciousness within society plays a pivotal role in achieving harmony and balance. (Materynska O. [48]; Heuberger R. [44])

During armed conflicts, habitats can be destroyed or severely damaged. The ongoing war in Ukraine has had significant impacts on the ecology of the affected regions:

- **Destruction of Natural Habitats:** The conflict has resulted in the destruction of natural habitats, including forests, wetlands, and wildlife reserves. Artillery shelling, bombings, and military operations have caused direct damage to these ecosystems, leading to the loss of biodiversity and disruption of ecological balance.

- **Soil and Water Contamination:** The use of heavy weaponry and explosives during the war has caused soil and water contamination. Explosions, chemical spills, and the destruction of industrial infrastructure have released hazardous substances into the environment, posing risks to human health and ecosystems. Soil contamination can have long-term effects on agricultural productivity and the growth of vegetation.
- **Pollution from Military Activities:** Military activities, including the burning of fuel, release of emissions from vehicles and machinery, and disposal of military waste, contribute to air and water pollution. The combustion of fossil fuels and the release of pollutants can have negative effects on air quality, ecosystem health, and climate change.
- **Disruption of Wildlife and Ecosystems:** The war has disrupted wildlife populations and ecosystems. Large-scale displacements of people, destruction of habitats, and increased hunting and poaching activities have put pressure on wildlife populations. The loss of key species can disrupt ecological balance and have cascading effects on other organisms within the ecosystems.
- **Damage to Infrastructure and Industrial Sites:** Infrastructure, such as power plants, factories, and pipelines, has been targeted during the conflict. This has led to the release of hazardous materials and pollution, with potential long-term consequences for the environment and public health. The damage to infrastructure also hampers post-war reconstruction efforts and impedes environmental restoration.
- **Impacts on Agricultural Practices:** The war has disrupted agricultural practices in Ukraine, affecting food production and rural livelihoods. Farming activities, including livestock breeding and crop cultivation, have been hampered due to the destruction of infrastructure, disruption of supply chains, and displacement of farmers.
- It is important to note that the severity and extent of ecological impacts can vary depending on the specific conflict, the weapons used, the duration of the war, and the region's ecological sensitivity. Efforts to mitigate the

environmental impact of war and promote post-conflict environmental recovery are crucial for sustainable peacebuilding and conservation.

2.2.1. The discursive strategy of labelling

Labelling is a discursive strategy commonly employed in media ecological discourse analysis. In media ecological discourse analysis, the focus is on understanding the interplay between media, communication, and their impact on society and the environment. Labelling is an essential aspect of this analysis as it reflects the power dynamics, ideologies, and values embedded within media discourses.

Let's analyse the following examples of the labelling strategy in media ecological context:

1. *Rishi Sunak said the destruction of the Kakhovka dam in Ukraine would mark a "new low" in the conflict if Russian forces were found to be responsible.* [74]

In this passage, the label "new low" is used to characterize the destruction of the dam as an extreme and morally reprehensible act. By associating this label with Russian forces, it aims to create a negative perception of their actions and their role in the conflict. In this passage we can see the discursive strategy of evidentiality "Rishi Sunak said", as well. The phrase "new low" is a litotes, a figure of speech that uses understatement to emphasize a point. Instead of directly stating that the destruction of the dam would be a significant escalation, it is described as a "new low," implying that it would be an extreme and morally reprehensible action.

2. *Mr Sunak, speaking to reporters as he travelled to Washington for talks with US President Joe Biden, said if it was an intentional act to blow up the dam it would be "the largest attack on civilian infrastructure" since the start of Vladimir Putin's war.* [74]

The label "largest attack on civilian infrastructure" serves to emphasize the scale and significance of the potential act of blowing up the dam. By framing it as such, it amplifies the gravity of the situation and portrays it as a severe violation of

international norms and humanitarian principles. The discursive strategy of evidentiality is used too “*Mr Sunak, speaking to reporters*”.

3. *He said that attacks on civilian infrastructure were “appalling and wrong”.*
[74]

This statement uses the label “*appalling and wrong*” to condemn attacks on civilian infrastructure, including the destruction of the dam. The intention is to evoke strong negative emotions and foster a sense of moral outrage against such actions. The phrase “*attacks on civilian infrastructure*” uses synecdoche, a figure of speech in which a part represents the whole. Here, “*civilian infrastructure*” represents the broader act of aggression and violence in the war, emphasizing the specific target and its impact on civilians.

4. *Evacuations of civilians were already underway after the “ecocide” attack amid reports that some parts of Kherson and villages were already under water.*
[74]

The term “*ecocide*” is a label that conveys the deliberate destruction of the environment, suggesting that the attack on the dam has severe ecological consequences. The mention of evacuations and the victimization of the affected civilians further amplifies the gravity of the situation. The term “*ecocide*” is a metaphor that characterizes the attack on the dam as an act of environmental destruction on a massive scale. It suggests that the damage inflicted is akin to the intentional killing of an ecosystem or natural environment.

5. *Mr Zelensky ordered an emergency meeting of his National Security and Defence Council and blamed the attack on the “Russian terrorists”.* [74]

The label “*Russian terrorists*” is used by Mr. Zelensky to assign responsibility for the attack. By using this label, he portrays the attackers as not only enemies of Ukraine but also as individuals involved in acts of terrorism. The term “*Russian terrorists*” uses metonymy by referring to individuals or groups associated with

Russia who are engaged in acts of terrorism. It attributes the actions to a broader category rather than specifying individual actors.

6. *Kherson's regional head Oleksandr Prokudin also accused Moscow of committing "yet another act of terror" and warned that water levels in the Dnipro River will be "critical" within five hours.* [Article: "Ukraine war: Rishi Sunak says destruction of dam would be 'new low' if Russia responsible" [74]

The label "*act of terror*" is employed by Kherson's regional head to characterize the attack on the dam as a deliberate act of violence and intimidation. This label is associated with Moscow, reinforcing the notion that the attack is linked to Russia. The warning about water levels reaching critical levels adds a sense of urgency and further emphasizes the potential ecological consequences. "*Kherson's regional head Oleksandr Prokudin also accused*" represents the strategy of evidentiality.

7. *Foreign Secretary James Cleverly tweeted: "The destruction of Kakhovka dam is an abhorrent act."* [74]

The label "*abhorrent act*" used by Foreign Secretary James Cleverly (evidentiality) expresses strong disapproval and condemnation of the destruction of the dam. This label aims to evoke a sense of moral outrage and emphasizes the negative implications of the action.

8. *"Intentionally attacking exclusively civilian infrastructure is a war crime."* [74]

This statement labels the intentional attack on civilian infrastructure, including the dam, as a "*war crime*." By employing this label, it highlights the violation of international law and underscores the severity of the action.

9. *EU president Charles Michel said it was a "war crime," adding: "We will hold Russia and its proxies accountable."* [74]

Similar to the previous passage, the label "*war crime*" is employed by EU president Charles Michel (evidentiality) to categorize the destruction of the dam. By

associating this label with Russia and its proxies, it signifies their responsibility and sets the stage for potential accountability measures.

10. *The occupiers blew up the dam of the Kakhovka Reservoir in a panic - this is an obvious act of terrorism and a war crime, which will be evidence in an international tribunal...* [74]

In this passage, the label "*act of terrorism*" and "*war crime*" is used to characterize the destruction of the dam. These labels serve to depict the action as both a violation of international law and a deliberate act of violence against civilians and infrastructure. The mention of an international tribunal further suggests the intention to hold the alleged perpetrators accountable. The phrase "*act of terrorism*" uses metaphorical language to portray the intentional destruction of the dam as a violent and criminal act, comparable to acts.

11. *A major dam and hydro-electric power plant in Russian-occupied southern Ukraine suffered a collapse early Tuesday, prompting mass evacuations and fears for large-scale devastation as Ukraine accused Moscow's forces of committing an act of "ecocide."* [77]

The label "*act of 'ecocide'*" is employed here to depict the destruction of the dam and power plant as a deliberate and catastrophic assault on the environment. This label emphasizes the severe ecological impact of the collapse and portrays it as an intentional act of environmental destruction. The phrase "*Moscow's forces*" uses metonymy, referring to the military forces of Moscow as representative of the Russian forces involved in the conflict.

12. *But even the fragmented data available reveal a picture of environmental catastrophe.* [77]

In this passage, the label "*environmental catastrophe*" is used to portray the overall impact of the war on the environment in Ukraine. By characterizing the situation as a catastrophe, it underscores the magnitude of the damage and suggests a sense of urgency in addressing the ecological consequences.

13. *“The darkness that has engulfed the east of our region is catching up also with those protecting the environment,” the source said. “Aside from the sheer injustice, this a massive blow to conservation at a global scale.” [87]*

While this passage does not explicitly use a specific label, the description of *“massive blow to conservation at a global scale”* characterizes the impact of the war on the environment as highly detrimental. It emphasizes the significance of the damage caused and positions it as a setback for global conservation efforts. The phrase *“the darkness that has engulfed”* personifies darkness, attributing it with the ability to consume or cover a region. It creates a vivid and emotive description of the situation.

14. *Thousands of people have been forced to flee their homes and an ecological disaster has been unleashed on southern Ukraine by the collapse of a major hydroelectric dam on the Dnipro River, which Kyiv said was blown up by Russia in a desperate attempt to ward off a Ukrainian counteroffensive. [85]*

The label *“ecological disaster”* is employed in this passage to highlight the gravity of the situation resulting from the collapse of the dam. By using this label, it emphasizes the significant ecological consequences of the event and positions it as a disaster. The mention of a desperate attempt by Russia further contributes to the portrayal of the event as a deliberate act with severe ecological implications. We can also see the strategy of personalization in *“Kyiv said was blown up by Russia”* as they are referred to as able to talk and blow up things.

15. *Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, declared the destruction of the Nova Kakhovka dam an “environmental bomb of mass destruction” and said only liberating the entire country could guarantee against new “terrorist” acts. [85]*

The label *“environmental bomb of mass destruction”* is used by President Zelenskiy (evidentiality) to depict the destruction of the dam as a highly destructive event with far-reaching ecological consequences. The term *“environmental bomb of mass destruction”* is hyperbolic, equating the destruction of the dam to a catastrophic

explosive device. The label "*terrorist*" adds a moral and political dimension to the act, positioning it as an intentional and criminal assault on the environment.

16. *This is the largest man-made environmental disaster in Europe in decades.* [85]

The label "*largest man-made environmental disaster*" is employed to underscore the magnitude and significance of the ecological consequences resulting from the collapse of the dam. It positions the event as a major catastrophe and implies that it has long-lasting and far-reaching implications.

17. *Germany's chancellor, Olaf Scholz, said at a televised town hall meeting: "By all accounts, this is aggression by the Russian side to stop the Ukrainian offensive, to defend its own country. This shows that this is a new dimension."* [85]

The label of "*aggression*" by the Russian side highlights the intentional and hostile nature of the act. It suggests that the attack on the dam is not only a military action but also an ecological assault that represents a new level of severity and escalation in the conflict.

18. *Ukrainian authorities call for people living downstream of Nova Kakhovka dam to evacuate in face of potentially deadly flooding.* [85]

The labelling utilized in "*potentially deadly flooding*" conveys the seriousness and urgency of the situation. It suggests that the ecological impact of the dam's collapse can result in life-threatening consequences, emphasizing the need for immediate action.

19. *Dead dolphins: how nature became another casualty of the Ukraine war.* [82]

The label "*casualty of the Ukraine war*" is employed to illustrate the detrimental effect of the conflict on nature and the environment. The phrase "nature became another casualty of the Ukraine war" uses metaphorical language to equate the harm inflicted on nature to the harm caused to human casualties in the war. It emphasizes the destructive impact on the environment.

20. *'This is a fossil fuel war': Ukraine's top climate scientist speaks out.* [84]

The label "fossil fuel war" is used by Ukraine's top climate scientist to emphasize the role of fossil fuels in the conflict and its subsequent ecological impact. The phrase "*a fossil fuel war*" uses metaphorical language to characterize the war as being driven by conflicts and interests related to fossil fuels. It suggests that fossil fuel resources play a significant role in the conflict.

Overall, the implementation of the discursive strategy of labelling in these passages aims to shape the perception of the war in Ukraine and its impact on the environment. These labels contribute to the portrayal of severe ecological consequences, deliberate acts of environmental destruction, and the gravity of the overall situation.

2.2.2. The discursive strategy of personalization

The discursive strategy of personalization in ecological media discourse involves presenting environmental issues in a way that emphasizes their impact on individuals or human societies. It aims to create a connection between the audience and the ecological concerns by framing them in personal terms. This strategy can be seen in various ways, such as:

- **Humanizing Nature:** Personalization often involves portraying nature or the environment as having human-like qualities or emotions. For example, using phrases like "Mother Nature," "Nature's revenge," or describing environmental disasters as "nature's fury" anthropomorphizes nature and creates an emotional connection with the audience.
- **Impact on Daily Lives:** Personalization involves emphasizing how environmental issues directly affect people's daily lives. This can include discussing the consequences of pollution on public health, the disruption of ecosystems on livelihoods, or the impact of climate change on food security. By highlighting these personal implications, media discourse aims to generate concern and motivate action.

- Emotional Appeals: Personalization often employs emotional appeals to evoke empathy, compassion, or a sense of urgency. By framing environmental issues in emotional terms, such as describing endangered species or devastated landscapes, media discourse aims to engage the audience on a personal level and elicit a response.

Let's look at the examples:

1. *Ukraine's military accused Russia's forces of blowing up the dam "in panic."* [73]

The personalization strategy is employed by using the word "*panic*." Personification is used to attribute human emotion (panic) to Russia's forces. It adds a dramatic element to the accusation, emphasizing the urgency and chaotic nature of the act.

2. *The war has devastated Ukraine's environment, too.* [77]

This statement personifies the war and blames the deterioration of the environment on it. It suggests that the audience should consider the environmental impact as a significant and relatable concern.

3. *Other dangers, notably the risk of damage to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, occupied by the Russians since early March, lurk ahead.* [77]

The use of the word "*lurk*" gives a sense of imminent threat and personalizes the danger posed by the potential damage to the nuclear power plant. It creates a sense of concern for the audience.

4. *The war has poisoned large areas of Ukrainian farmland.* [77]

The statement employs personalization by emphasizing the impact on caused the war which "poisoned" farmland. By connecting the environmental issue to agricultural land, it highlights the potential consequences for food production and, by extension, people's well-being.

5. *Ukraine war deals 'massive blow' to nature as Belarus's largest wildlife NGO shut down.* [87]

This headline uses personalization by emphasizing the impact of the war on nature. Metaphor is employed through the phrase "*massive blow*" to describe the impact of the war on nature. It portrays the damage caused by the war as a powerful and devastating force, similar to a physical strike.

6. *Bomb craters also threaten coastal life.* [82]

The personalization strategy is employed by using the phrase "*bomb craters also threaten*" the ecosystems and organisms living near the coast. It highlights the vulnerability of these ecosystems to the impact of bomb craters, evoking a sense of concern for the audience.

To conclude, in these passages, the discursive strategy of personalization is employed to highlight the impact of the war on the environment in relatable and human terms, aiming to evoke.

2.2.3. The discursive strategy of evidentiality

The discursive strategy of evidentiality in ecological media discourse refers to the use of linguistic devices and markers to convey the source or type of evidence supporting a statement or claim regarding environmental issues. It involves signaling the origin, reliability, and credibility of the information presented, thereby influencing the perceived validity and trustworthiness of the discourse. Evidentiality is implemented in ecological media discourse by the use of reported speech, citing scientific studies or research, referring to official reports or documents, describing observable evidence.

Here are some examples of the utilizing of this discursive strategy in Western press:

1. *There were reports that homes on the left bank of the giant Dnipro River were flooding, cattle drowning and that water levels could reach critical highs around midday.* [74]

The use of "reports" indicates that the information is based on sources or accounts of the events happening during the flooding.

2. *Military experts have said the flood of water could destroy some Russian defences but also hamper the long-awaited Ukrainian counter-offensive. [74]*

By attributing the information to military experts, the passage appeals to the authority and expertise of these individuals, suggesting that their analysis is grounded in professional knowledge.

3. *The Prime Minister said the immediate priority was the humanitarian response to the catastrophe, which has flooded villages, endangered vital crops and threatened drinking water supplies. [74]*

The attribution to the Prime Minister signals that the information comes directly from a high-ranking government official, lending credibility to the description of the situation. Here we can also trace the strategy of personalization as catastrophe is the one who flooded territories.

4. *President Volodymyr Zelensky said the "deliberate" attack would not affect Kyiv's drive to retake territory. [74]*

The use of direct speech and attribution to President Zelensky serves as evidence of the president's perspective and position on the matter, adding credibility to the statement. Moreover, the attack is labeled as "*deliberate*".

5. *Russian forces blew up the dam "in a panic", Ukraine's military intelligence agency said on Tuesday, amid reports that Kyiv forces could have used its road for a major counter-offensive. [74]*

The attribution to Ukraine's military intelligence agency, along with the mention of "reports," indicates that the information is based on intelligence and sources within the military.

6. *“The Kakhovka (dam) was blown up by the Russian occupying forces,” the South command of Ukraine’s Armed Forces said on Tuesday on its Facebook page.* [74]

The direct quotation and attribution to the South command of Ukraine's Armed Forces provide evidence of their assertion that the dam was destroyed by Russian occupying forces.

7. *In a statement, UkrHydroEnergo was reported to have said: “Russia blew up Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant in the early hours of 6th June.”* [74]

The reference to a statement from UkrHydroEnergo as the source of the information adds evidential weight to the claim of the power plant being blown up by Russia.

8. *Residents downstream from the Nova Kakhovka dam on the Dnipro River in Kherson were told to “do everything you can to save your life,” according to the head of Ukraine’s Kherson region military administration, as video showed a deluge of water gushing from a huge breach in the dam.* [73]

The attribution to the head of Ukraine's Kherson region military administration, along with the mention of video evidence, provides tangible evidence and supports the urgency of the situation.

Overall, the analyzed passages primarily focus on conveying factual information rather than utilizing literary devices for stylistic or figurative purposes. In all of these passages, the discursive strategy of evidentiality is employed through attributions to authoritative sources, direct quotations, references to reports, intelligence agencies, government officials, and video evidence. These strategies aim to establish the credibility and reliability of the information presented, enhancing the persuasive impact of the discourse and shaping the audience's understanding of the events related to the war in Ukraine.

2.2.4. The discursive strategy of number game

The discursive strategy of number game in ecological media discourse refers to the use of numerical data, statistics, and figures to support arguments, emphasize the scale of an issue, or provide evidence in discussions related to the environment. It involves presenting quantitative information to make a persuasive or impactful statement.

This strategy is commonly employed in ecological media discourse to convey the magnitude of environmental problems, highlight the extent of damage or impact, and underscore the urgency for action. By using numbers, the discourse aims to make a stronger case, enhance credibility, and create a sense of urgency among the audience.

Examples of the discursive strategy of number game in ecological media discourse may include:

- Presenting statistics on the decline of a specific species or the loss of biodiversity to emphasize the urgency of conservation efforts.
- Citing the number of acres of forest lost or the rate of deforestation to highlight the scale of the issue and its impact on climate change.
- Providing data on the increase in greenhouse gas emissions or global temperature rise to demonstrate the severity of the climate crisis.
- Using numerical data to illustrate the amount of plastic waste in oceans or the quantity of microplastics found in marine life, drawing attention to the issue of marine pollution.
- Highlighting the economic costs associated with environmental degradation or the financial benefits of investing in renewable energy, emphasizing the importance of sustainable practices.

The examples of implementation of this discursive strategy in context of how the war in Ukraine influences the environment are:

1. *At least 22,000 people were believed to be at risk from the flood threat as millions of litres of water gushed out of the dam. [74]*

The passage mentions that at least 22,000 people were believed to be at risk from the flood threat, indicating the potential number of individuals affected by the situation. The use of the specific number highlights the scale of the potential disaster.

2. *One river was reported to be rising at 15cm an hour as Russia was being increasingly blamed for the dam breach as the expected widespread flooding could hamper a major Ukrainian counter-offensive. [74]*

The passage states that one river was reported to be rising at 15cm an hour, emphasizing the rapid rate at which the water level was increasing. This numerical detail underscores the urgency and the severity of the situation, suggesting the potential for widespread flooding.

3. *At least 300 homes were reported to have been evacuated, with similar emergency operations in a number of settlements in the Nova Kakhovka district, according to local officials. [74]*

By providing a specific number, the discourse aims to convey the scale of the evacuation efforts and emphasizes the immediate impact on the affected residents. “According to local officials” is an example of evidentiality.

4. *The dam, 30 metres (yards) tall and 3.2 km (2 miles) long, was built in 1956 on the Dnipro river as part of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant. [74]*

The passage provides numerical details about the dam, mentioning its height of 30 meters (yards) and length of 3.2 km (2 miles). These specific measurements provide a clear understanding of the dam's size and further enhance the description of its significance and potential destruction.

5. *Amid growing signs that a major Ukrainian offensive may have started, the Ministry of Defence tweeted: “Over the last 48 hours there has been a*

substantial increase in fighting along numerous sectors of the front, including those which have been relatively quiet for several months.” [74]

By mentioning the time frame of "48 hours," the number game strategy provides a specific period, enhancing the credibility of the statement regarding the recent increase in fighting. Besides that, we have "numerous sectors" and "several months" which adds to the strategy. Evidentiality is also implemented "the Ministry of Defence tweeted".

6. *The dam holds back around 18 cubic kilometers of water in the Kakhovka Reservoir, about equal to the Great Salt Lake in the US state of Utah. [73]*

The passage states that the dam holds back around 18 cubic kilometers of water in the Kakhovka Reservoir, comparing it to the Great Salt Lake in the US state of Utah. This comparison through numerical equivalence helps readers visualize the volume of water at stake, emphasizing the potential impact of the dam's destruction.

7. *The country's President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Telegram that there were "about 80 settlements in the flood zone" and that he has ordered evacuations. The cities include Kherson, a city that was home to some 300,000 people before Moscow's invasion. [73]*

The passage mentions that there are about 80 settlements in the flood zone and that evacuations have been ordered. Although the exact number of settlements is not specified, the use of "about 80" provides a general idea of the affected areas and the scale of the evacuation efforts. By stating that the city was home to "some 300,000 people" the passage gives us an idea of how big is the city.

8. *He added that about 1,335 houses on the west bank of the Dnipro River, which is located near the dam, "appear to be underwater." [73]*

The passage states that about 1,335 houses on the west bank of the Dnipro River, located near the dam are underwater. This numerical detail highlights the immediate impact on the affected households and the severity of the flooding.

9. *Since the start of the war, Ukraine's environment ministry has recorded almost 2,300 instances of environmental damage caused by the fighting. [77]*

This numerical information quantifies the extent of environmental harm resulting from the war and suggests a widespread impact on the natural surroundings.

10. *Another 3m hectares of forests, about a third of the total, have been affected by the fighting already. Of these, at least 23,300 hectares have completely burned down. [77]*

The passage states that another 3m hectares of forests, about a third of the total, have been affected by the fighting, with at least 23,300 hectares completely burned down. These numbers emphasize the scale of the forest devastation and provide concrete data on the extent of destruction caused by the war.

11. *In only ten months, over 42m tonnes of carbon dioxide, roughly the same as the annual emissions of Bulgaria, have been released into the atmosphere as a result of the war, the ministry says. [77]*

The passage mentions that over 42m tonnes of carbon dioxide, roughly the same as the annual emissions of Bulgaria, have been released into the atmosphere as a result of the war. This numerical comparison helps readers grasp the environmental consequences of the conflict and its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

12. *The Frankfurt Zoological Society has lost more than a third of its European programme due to the war in Ukraine, where it had been doing conservation work for two decades. [87]*

Although the specific numerical figure is not provided, the mention of "more than a third" highlights the substantial impact on the organization's conservation efforts and for two decades implies the huge scope of work.

13. *Almost 400,000 hectares and 14 Ramsar sites [wetlands designated to be of international importance by Unesco] along the coastline and lower reaches of the Dnipro river are under threat. [82]*

The use of the numerical figure "400,000 hectares" highlights the vast area at risk, indicating the potential extent of environmental damage. Additionally, the use of "14 Ramsar sites" underscores the significance of these designated areas and emphasizes their vulnerability due to the war.

So, the discursive strategy of number game aims to leverage quantitative information to make a persuasive case, evoke emotional responses, and influence public opinion and policy-making in the context of ecological issues. By presenting numerical data, it seeks to provide a factual basis for discussions and strengthen the argument for environmental protection and sustainability.

2.2.5. The discursive strategy of victimization

The discursive strategy of victimization in ecological media discourse involves presenting individuals, communities, or entities as victims of environmental issues or disasters. This strategy aims to evoke empathy, sympathy, and a sense of urgency among the audience by highlighting the suffering, vulnerability, and injustice experienced by the victims. It often seeks to assign blame to specific actors or entities responsible for causing or exacerbating the environmental problems.

By portraying individuals or communities as victims, this discursive strategy aims to mobilize support for environmental causes, raise awareness about the consequences of environmental degradation, and advocate for actions to alleviate the suffering and protect the affected parties. It may involve highlighting personal stories, testimonies, or narratives that depict the struggles and hardships faced by the victims.

Let's analyze some of the examples:

1. *Before the Russian invasion, people from nearby villages used to flock to the banks of the Oskil reservoir, which stretches for about a hundred kilometres south of Kupyansk, in eastern Ukraine, to swim, listen to birdsong and catch fish. Today, much of the area is changed beyond all recognition. Destroyed villages, recaptured by the Ukrainians during a counter-offensive four months*

ago, charred trees and the husks of Russian tanks line the reservoir's eastern banks. [87]

The passage victimizes the people and the area surrounding the Oskil reservoir. It describes how the area used to be a place where people enjoyed recreational activities, but now it has been changed beyond recognition due to the Russian invasion. The use of terms like "destroyed villages" and "charred trees" portrays the area as a victim of the war, highlighting the loss and devastation experienced by the community. The metaphor "*changed beyond all recognition*" compares the current state of the area to its previous condition, emphasizing the significant and drastic transformation caused by the Russian invasion. The synecdoche "*destroyed villages*" and "*the husks of Russian tanks*" represents the larger scale of destruction and conflict that has taken place in the area.

2. Forests ravaged by fires caused by relentless shelling, or cut down to build trenches; groundwater and soil contaminated by heavy metals and toxic chemicals from detonated munitions; and wild animals killed or driven from their habitat: these are some of the less talked-about victims of the war in Ukraine. [87]

The passage victimizes forests, groundwater, soil, and wild animals as less talked-about victims of the war. By attributing harm and destruction to these entities, it portrays them as victims of the relentless shelling, contamination, and habitat loss. The use of the phrase "*less talked-about victims*" suggests neglect or oversight, further emphasizing their victimization. The hyperbole "*forests ravaged by fires*" exaggerates the extent of destruction caused by relentless shelling, emphasizing the severity of the impact on the natural environment.

3. Such contamination can harm local ecosystems and crops decades after the guns have gone quiet, says Olexiy Angurets, the author of an upcoming report on the war's impact on the environment. [87]

The passage victimizes local ecosystems and crops, suggesting that contamination can harm them even after the guns have gone quiet. The phrase "*the*

guns have gone quiet" uses a metaphor to represent the end of the conflict. By presenting this information as a quote from Olexiy Angurets, an author of an upcoming report on the war's impact on the environment, it adds evidentiality and credibility to the victimization discourse.

4. *You can see drainage of wetlands and commercial forestry going ahead because no one is there to argue against it. The forests and peatlands of Belarus are the most pristine in Europe. If they are drained or degraded or cut down they will be the last forests and wetlands of their kind in Europe.* [87]

The passage victimizes wetlands and commercial forestry, emphasizing their pristine nature and uniqueness in Europe. By stating that the absence of people to argue against their drainage, degradation, or deforestation will lead to their loss, it portrays them as victims of potential destruction. The use of phrases like "*the last forests and wetlands of their kind in Europe*" evokes a sense of urgency and victimization.

5. *"The damage caused by armed conflicts goes far beyond that caused by the fighting itself. By destroying governance, the reverberating ecological consequences of conflicts can last decades."* [87]

The passage victimizes the environment by suggesting that the damage caused by armed conflicts extends beyond the fighting itself. The statement "*the damage caused by armed conflicts goes far beyond*" employs hyperbole to emphasize the extensive and wide-ranging impact of conflicts. By highlighting the destruction of governance and the long-lasting ecological consequences, it portrays the environment as a victim of the conflict. This victimization discourse emphasizes the profound and enduring impact of the war on the environment.

6. *Towns along its path were inundated, complete houses could be seen floating away in the waters, while pets and wild animals scrambled to survive.* [85]

The passage victimizes towns along the path of the dam collapse, describing houses floating away and pets and wild animals struggling to survive. By depicting

the immediate consequences of the collapse, it portrays the towns and their inhabitants as victims of the disaster. The use of imagery and evocative language adds to the sense of victimization.

7. *In Nova Kakhovka, all the animals except ducks and geese drowned, according to the animal welfare organisation Uanimals. “We tried hard to preserve the zoo during the occupation and now it no longer exists,” the group quoted the zoo management as saying. [85]*

The passage victimizes animals in Nova Kakhovka, stating that all the animals except ducks and geese drowned. By quoting the animal welfare organization and the zoo management's statement about the zoo no longer existing, it presents the animals and the zoo as victims of the flood caused by the collapse of the dam. The use of evidentiality through the organization's report further strengthens the victimization discourse.

In summary, the discursive strategy of victimization in these passages involves portraying various entities and elements, including people, communities, nature, ecosystems, and animals, as victims of the war in Ukraine. This strategy aims to evoke empathy, compassion, and a sense of injustice by highlighting the suffering, loss, and devastation experienced by these entities.

It is also important to note that while the discursive strategy of victimization can be a powerful tool for raising awareness and advocating for environmental protection, it should be used responsibly and ethically to ensure accurate representation and avoid exploitation of vulnerable individuals or communities.

2.3. Analysis of non-verbal materials: photos and cartoons of Western media on political events in Ukraine

Political cartoons are an art and communication form that uses humour and irony to express political and social ideas, commentary and criticism. They usually present depictions of well-known political figures, events or symbols, often with exaggeration or distortion of certain features or characteristics. The main purpose of

political cartoons is to provoke emotional reactions, make people think and raise public debate about important political issues. Cartoons often serve as a vehicle to highlight corruption, power, inequality and to express the political preferences and beliefs of the artist. They play an important role in the freedom of expression and the ability to critically analyse the political sphere.

The number one cartoon depicts dictatorial political leaders Vladimir Putin and Joseph Stalin while discussing the "successful seizure" of territories, using as an example the seizures of other states of the USSR: Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania, Poland.

It is important to remember that both politicians do not reckon with their resource in the form of the army: and throw away pawns as soon as they are bored or become unnecessary. It should also be kept in mind that these two politicians had a dictatorial regime and a maniacal desire to take over the world and "save the people".

This image effectively demonstrates the application of the analogy strategy by drawing a comparison between the ongoing war and the oppressive political regime imposed by Stalin. Simultaneously, it can be considered a form of labelling, as Putin is depicted as a contemporary version of Stalin, implying shared ideologies and beliefs. Additionally, all the mentioned countries are portrayed as victims, as they are depicted as being on the verge of being "saved" or rather occupied. (Appendix 4)

Caricature number two depicts Putin, the President of Russia, in the form of Thanos from the Avengers. Thanos is the main antagonist of the Universe, who exterminates 50% of the population for the pseudo salvation of humanity. He does not spare even his daughter, sacrificing her in order to achieve his goals. On the table, he has instructions on how to buy Thanos' costume and his deadly weapon. This serves as a clear illustration of the analogy strategy, drawing a parallel to the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Additionally, the presence of a map of Ukraine with plans for capturing and attacking, along with a German dictionary referencing Putin's past involvement in the GDR's secret services, the Stasi, serves as another analogy. It not only references Putin's personal history but also makes a direct allusion to Hitler.

Putin is depicted engaged in a phone conversation, attempting to ascertain his subordinates' opinions on Ukraine's weaponry. (Appendix 5)

In the third illustration, there is a depiction of Putin riding a bear, symbolizing Russian military forces under his command. The bear is shown attempting to seize a portion of Ukrainian territory, portraying Ukraine as the victim and representing the strategy of victimization. This can be seen as a form of labelling, associating the bear with Russian military forces. Standing in opposition to them is US President Biden, portrayed with a bat, symbolizing his support for Ukraine and its protection. Biden is depicted vigilantly observing the actions of the antagonistic dwarf. (Appendix 6)

In the fourth cartoon, Putin is portrayed as a bear, attempting to chew on Ukraine, which symbolizes his aggression towards the country. The cartoon also mocks the ban on expressing Putin's position in political discourse, highlighting his self-confidence and disdainful attitude towards Europe. The portrayal of Putin as a bear serves as a clear labelling, representing him as an antagonist. Furthermore, the depiction of Ukraine being partially consumed by the bear signifies the implementation of the strategy of victimization, emphasizing the harm and suffering inflicted upon Ukraine by Putin's actions. (Appendix 7)

The fifth cartoon portrays the insidiousness of propaganda. Vladimir Putin is depicted riding in a tank while half-naked, and he publishes a post stating that he is going on vacation for the weekend. Meanwhile, his soldiers express admiration for the supposedly truthful content they find just posted, contrasting it with what they perceive as the "lying" narrative from the West regarding the war and casualties. The pointer indicating the direction they are moving highlights Ukraine as their main victim. This cartoon exemplifies the strategy of victimization, as it presents Ukraine as the targeted and oppressed party in the conflict. (Appendix 8)

In the sixth picture, propaganda is once again depicted. Putin is shown wearing an American tribal helmet while giving an interview. He evades the topic of war and instead veils it under the theme of peace. A journalist-translator sarcastically translates his words into what is presented as the "truthful" language of American political legitimacy discourse. This portrayal can be seen as an example of the

strategy of evidentiality, as it highlights the presence of two conflicting sources of information. The picture suggests that relying solely on one source of evidence may not always be reliable and emphasizes the need for fact-checking and critical analysis. (Appendix 9)

The seventh caricature depicts tanks moving at night in a covert manner, trying to remain unseen and unnoticed. Despite their claims of not being a threat, all the vehicles are equipped with explosives, ammunition, and missiles. Standing next to them is Putin, who ironically denies being Russian. This caricature highlights Russia's perceived unfair fighting tactics, including killing people at night without warning and shifting blame onto others while remaining detached. The presence of a tank riding over the road sign "Ukraine" reinforces the strategy of victimization, portraying Ukraine as the main target. Additionally, Putin is labelled as a liar, emphasizing the perception of his dishonesty. (Appendix 10)

Caricature 8 juxtaposes the military forces of World War II with the present-day situation. This cartoon presents a clear analogy between the two armies from different historical periods, highlighting the contrasting attitudes and circumstances faced by soldiers. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the modern-day Ukrainian soldier in the caricature labels the impending threat, represented by Russia, as a thing of the past. This implies that there is a strong belief or determination that Ukraine will never be associated with Russia again in the future. (Appendix 11)

The final caricature, number 9, portrays Putin's gut and his fear. He is depicted facing death and suggesting that it should target women and children first. This metaphor and irony highlight the corrupt nature of the man. The caricature serves as a stark representation of the current situation where Putin orders attacks on civilians, particularly those who are defenseless. It is one of the most explicit examples of victimization, illustrating the targeting of vulnerable individuals. (Appendix 12)

So, in the course of the analysis of non-verbal materials, such as photographs and cartoons used by Western media to illustrate political events in Ukraine, we can assert

The analyzed cartoons depict various strategies employed in political discourse, such as analogy, labeling, victimization, and evidentiality. These strategies are used to convey specific messages and highlight the artist's political preferences and beliefs. The cartoons draw parallels between historical events, fictional universes, and present-day political situations, shedding light on the actions and behaviors of political leaders.

Moreover, the cartoons emphasize the importance of freedom of expression and critical analysis in evaluating the political sphere. They provide a platform for artists to express their views, challenge authority, and raise awareness about social and political injustices. By encouraging public engagement and discussion, political cartoons contribute to a more informed and participatory society.

In general, the analysis of political cartoons underscores the significant role they play in shaping public opinion, stimulating dialogue, and facilitating a deeper understanding of complex political issues. They serve as a visual medium for social and political commentary and act as a catalyst for change and progress.

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER II

In conclusion, the positioning in the representation of the War in Ukraine involves the negotiation of identities, roles, and relationships through language and communication. Positioning theory provides a framework to analyze how individuals position themselves and others in specific contexts, shaping their social roles and perspectives. This theory is widely used in interactional sociolinguistics to examine how individuals actively manage their roles and collectively interpret discourse.

The examples presented in this chapter highlight several discursive strategies employed in the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of war and ecology in Western media. The use of these strategies influences perception, shapes public opinion, and fosters awareness and action.

In analyzing influential Western journals and magazines, the use of these discursive strategies was observed.

Metaphorical labels were employed to portray the war and the actors involved; personalization was achieved by humanizing Ukrainian resistance and attributing agency to Kyiv; evidentiality was employed through the attribution of information to specific sources; the number game strategy is implemented by presenting specific numerical figures or ranges; the strategy of analogy is employed by comparing the current situation in Ukraine with historical events such as World War II, the Berlin Blockade, the Holodomor, the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, the Syrian conflict, and the Cold War.

By examining the frequency of discursive strategies employed in the examples provided in point 2.1, it can be inferred that personalization was the most commonly utilized strategy, accounting for 38% of the cases. Following personalization, labelling was the second most prevalent strategy, representing 25% of the examples. The number game ranked third with a frequency of 13%, while analogy came in fourth place at 10%. Victimization accounted for 8% of the cases, and evidentiality was the least frequently used strategy, comprising only 6% of the examples. (Appendix 10)

In the context of war and ecology, labelling seeks to shape perceptions by employing specific labels to convey the severity of the situation and condemn the perpetrators with the most frequent use of such labels as “*terrorist act*”, “*ecocide*” and “*war crime*”; personalization aims to create a connection between the audience and the environmental concerns by highlighting the personal implications, humanizing nature, and appealing to emotions; the discursive strategy of evidentiality involves the use of linguistic devices and markers to convey the source or type of evidence supporting a statement or claim regarding environmental issues; the discursive strategy of number game relies on the use of numerical data, statistics, and figures to support arguments, emphasize the scale of an issue, or provide evidence; the discursive strategy of victimization involves presenting individuals, communities, or entities as victims of environmental issues or disasters.

Based on an analysis of the discursive strategies used in the examples given in point 2.2, it can be concluded that labeling was the most frequently used strategy, comprising 38% of the instances. The second most common strategy was the number game, which accounted for 25% of the examples. Evidentiality was the third most prevalent strategy, appearing in 15% of the cases, while personalization ranked fourth at 12%. Victimization constituted 10% of the instances. (Appendix 11)

When examining the utilization of linguistic devices, we can observe that strategies like evidentiality, the number game, and analogy rely predominantly on factual information. Conversely, labelling employs metaphors, idioms, hyperbole, and litotes, personalization employs synecdoche, personification, idioms, and hyperbole, while victimization employs idioms, metaphors, synecdoche, and hyperbole. (Appendix 12)

After examining the discursive strategies employed in non-verbal materials in section 2.3, it can be deduced that victimization emerged as the most commonly utilized strategy, accounting for 44% of the occurrences. Labelling and personalization shared an equal percentage, each representing 25% of the instances. Evidentiality accounted for 6% of the occurrences. (Appendix 13)

In summarizing the findings of our research, encompassing both verbal and non-verbal materials, it can be asserted that labeling emerged as the most prevalent strategy, with a total of 37 instances. Personalization followed as the second most frequently employed strategy, observed in 26 cases. The number game claimed the third position with 20 occurrences, while victimization ranked fourth, appearing in 17 cases. Evidentiality held the fifth position, with 12 instances, and analogy represented the least frequent strategy, with a total of 9 cases. (Appendix 14)

Regarding the representation of Ukraine and Russia in photos and cartoons of Western media, symbolism, emotional impact, and stereotypes were identified. Visual materials are chosen to effectively convey messages and emotions, and symbols are employed to reflect political or ideological concepts. Political cartoons employ various strategies to convey messages about political discourse. They use analogy,

labeling, victimization, and even evidentiality to highlight political preferences and beliefs. The cartoons draw parallels between historical events, fictional universes, and current politics, shedding light on the actions of political leaders. They emphasize the importance of freedom of expression and critical analysis in evaluating politics. The use of humor, satire, and criticism in cartoons aims to provoke emotional reactions, encourage critical thinking, and raise public debate about political issues. However, it is important to be mindful of potential biases in these representations.

Overall, the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of war and ecology in Western media involve the strategic use of language, communication, and visual materials to shape perception, influence understanding, and generate discussions. Critical analysis is necessary to ensure a balanced and ethical representation of the conflict and its environmental consequences.

CONCLUSION

Concluding, this bachelor's paper has examined the influence of media and the internet on language behavior, specifically focusing on media discourse in political and ecological contexts.

First, the theoretical basis of media discourse studies was explored, including its definition in modern linguistics. The distinctive features of modern media discourse, particularly political and ecological media discourse, were outlined, highlighting their influence on public opinion and environmental awareness. Political media discourse plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing the democratic process, while ecological media discourse aims to raise awareness and advocate for environmental protection.

The methods of analysis used in media discourse studies, such as discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA), and multimodal discourse analysis (MDA), were examined, providing insights into the study of language and communication in media contexts.

These approaches have provided valuable insights into the relationships between discourse, power, and social change. In this framework Van Dijk [64] and other researchers have identified and analyzed particular discourse strategies used in media discourse. These strategies include labelling, personalization, evidentiality, number game, victimization, and analogy. Each strategy serves a specific purpose in shaping public opinion and influencing beliefs.

In the practical part of the paper, the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of war and ecology in Western media were analyzed. The findings revealed the prevalence of discursive strategies such as labeling, personalization, evidentiality, the number game, victimization, and analogy in shaping perceptions and influencing public opinion.

The findings of the analysis indicated that personalization was the most frequently utilized strategy in representing the War in Ukraine (38%), followed by labeling (25%), the number game (13%), analogy (10%), victimization (8%), and evidentiality (3%). When examining the context of war and ecology, labeling

emerged as the most prevalent strategy (38%), followed by the number game (25%), evidentiality (15%), personalization (12%), and victimization (10%).

We found that these strategies employed various linguistic devices. It was observed that evidentiality, the number game, and analogy primarily relied on factual information, while labeling, personalization, and victimization made use of vast range of metaphors, idioms, hyperbole, personification and synecdoche.

Furthermore, the use of non-verbal materials, such as photos and cartoons, in Western media's portrayal of political events in Ukraine was investigated. Symbolism, emotional impact, and stereotypes were identified in the visual representations. Political cartoons, in particular, employed strategies such as analogy, labeling, victimization, and evidentiality to convey political messages and stimulate critical analysis.

In the analysis of non-verbal materials, victimization was the most commonly employed strategy (44%), followed by labeling (25%) and personalization (25%). Evidentiality was observed to be less frequently used in visual representations.

The analysis of the findings indicates that labeling was the most commonly employed strategy in both verbal and non-verbal materials (37), with personalization (26), the number game (20), victimization (17), evidentiality (12), and analogy (9) following in order of prevalence.

Based on the conclusions from the theoretical and practical parts of the paper, it can be concluded that media discourse plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and influencing societal perspectives. The strategic use of language, communication techniques, and visual materials in media discourse highlights the importance of critical analysis and ethical representation.

In conclusion, media discourse studies provide valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of communication in the media sphere. Further research in this field can contribute to a deeper understanding of how language, communication, and visual representations shape our perceptions and influence societal dynamics.

SUMMARY

The bachelor's paper explores the utilization of discursive strategies in media discourse, specifically focusing on the representation of political events in Ukraine in Western mass media.

The main points of the research indicate that media discourse plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and influencing societal perspectives. The strategic use of discursive strategies such as labeling, personalization, evidentiality, the number game, victimization, and analogy are frequently employed in media discourse to shape perceptions and influence beliefs.

The **object** of the paper is political events covering Ukraine published in Western mass media.

The **subject** of the study is discursive strategies of media discourse implemented in articles of Western media covering events in Ukraine.

The **material** of the research comprises 110 pages (46148 words) of articles published in newspapers and journals such as The Daily Mail, The Financial Times, The Guardian, The New York Times, The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, BBC, and others.

The **novelty** of the paper lies in its comprehensive exploration of media discourse, including its theoretical basis, distinctive features, and methods of analysis. This interdisciplinary approach adds a new perspective to the study of media discourse and expands our understanding of its complexities.

Ukraine's geopolitical significance, implications for regional stability, and its ongoing conflicts and war determine the **relevance** of studying media discourse and political events in Ukraine in Western mass media. Western media outlets cover Ukraine to provide insights into geopolitical shifts, assess democracy and governance, monitor international relations, evaluate human rights and freedom of the press, examine disinformation and propaganda.

The **aim** of the work is to analyse the utilization of discursive strategies of media discourse in context of event in Ukraine represented in Western mass media. The aim of the paper has predetermined the following **objectives** of the investigation:

- to explore the theoretical basis of media discourse studies, including its definition in modern linguistics;
- to outline the distinctive features of modern media discourse, in terms of political and ecological media discourse;
- to examine the methods of analysis used in media discourse studies, including discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis;
- to analyze the discursive strategies employed in media discourse, focusing on their implementation in the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of the topic of war and ecology in Western media applying discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis;

General and special **methods** of linguistics are applied in the work for the complete inventory and systematization of the analysed material:

- a method of sampling;
- a descriptive method;
- semantic-component analysis;
- quantitative and qualitative analyses;
- discursive analysis;
- critical discursive analysis;
- multimodal discourse analysis.

The theoretical basis of media discourse studies was examined, highlighting its definition and the distinctive features of political and ecological media discourse. Various methods of analysis, such as discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA), and multimodal discourse analysis (MDA), were discussed, providing valuable insights into language and communication in media contexts.

The analysis of the representation of the War in Ukraine and the coverage of war and ecology in Western media demonstrated the prevalence of such strategies as labeling, personalization, evidentiality, the number game, victimization, and analogy in shaping perceptions and influencing public opinion.

Metaphorical labels were employed to depict the war and the involved actors. Personalization techniques were utilized to humanize Ukrainian resistance and attribute agency to Kyiv. Evidentiality was employed by attributing information to specific sources, adding credibility to statements. The number game strategy was implemented by presenting numerical figures or ranges to support arguments or emphasize the scale of the issues. The strategy of analogy was used by drawing comparisons between the current situation in Ukraine and historical events like World War II, the Holodomor, and others.

In the context of war and ecology, labeling aimed to shape perceptions by using specific labels to convey the severity of the situation and condemn perpetrators. Labels such as "*terrorist act*," "*ecocide*," and "*war crime*" were frequently employed. Personalization aimed to establish a connection between the audience and environmental concerns by highlighting personal implications, humanizing nature, and appealing to emotions. The discursive strategy of evidentiality involved using linguistic devices and markers to indicate the source or type of evidence supporting statements or claims regarding environmental issues. The number game strategy relied on numerical data, and figures to support arguments, highlight the scale of the problems, or provide evidence. The discursive strategy of victimization involved presenting individuals, communities, or entities as victims of environmental issues or disasters.

Our findings revealed that personalization was the most commonly used strategy in the representation of the War in Ukraine, followed by labeling, the number game, analogy, victimization, and evidentiality. In the context of war and ecology, labeling was the most prevalent strategy, followed by the number game, evidentiality, personalization, and victimization.

Different linguistic devices were employed in these strategies. It was observed that evidentiality, the number game, and analogy relied predominantly on factual information, while labeling, personalization, and victimization employed metaphors, personification, idioms, hyperbole, and synecdoche.

Regarding the representation of Ukraine and Russia in photos and cartoons, symbolism, emotional impact, and stereotypes were identified. Political cartoons employed various strategies, including analogy, labeling, victimization, and evidentiality, to convey political messages and highlight political preferences and beliefs. The use of humor, satire, and criticism aimed to provoke emotional reactions, encourage critical thinking, and stimulate public debate about political issues.

In the analysis of non-verbal materials, victimization emerged as the most commonly utilized strategy, followed by labeling and personalization. Evidentiality was less frequently observed in visual representations.

Based on the overall findings, labeling was identified as the most prevalent strategy across both verbal and non-verbal materials, followed by personalization, the number game, victimization, evidentiality, and analogy.

The practical analysis demonstrated the strategic use of language, communication techniques, and visual materials in shaping perception, influencing understanding, and generating discussions about the War in Ukraine and war and ecology in Western media. Critical analysis is crucial for ensuring a balanced and ethical representation of the conflict and its environmental consequences.

Further research in this field can contribute to a deeper understanding of how language, communication, and visual representations shape our perceptions and influence societal dynamics.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1

Picture 1



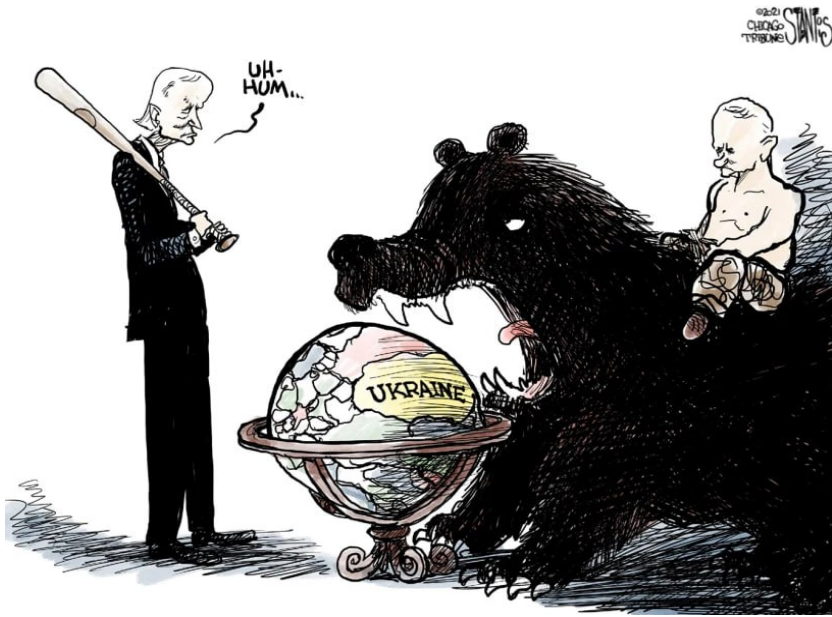
APPENDIX 2

Picture 2



APPENDIX 3

Picture 3



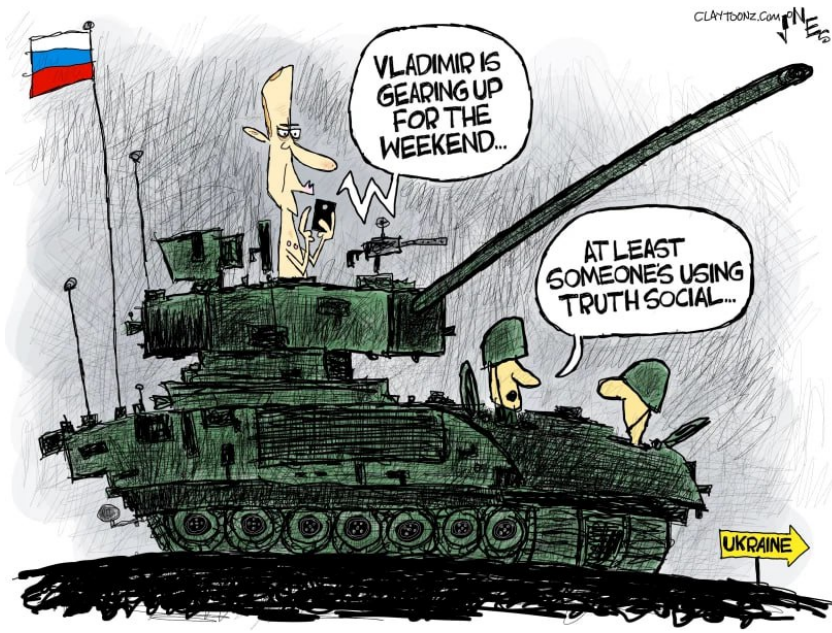
APPENDIX 4

Picture 4



APPENDIX 5

Picture 5



APPENDIX 6

Picture 6



APPENDIX 7

Picture 7



APPENDIX 8

Picture 8



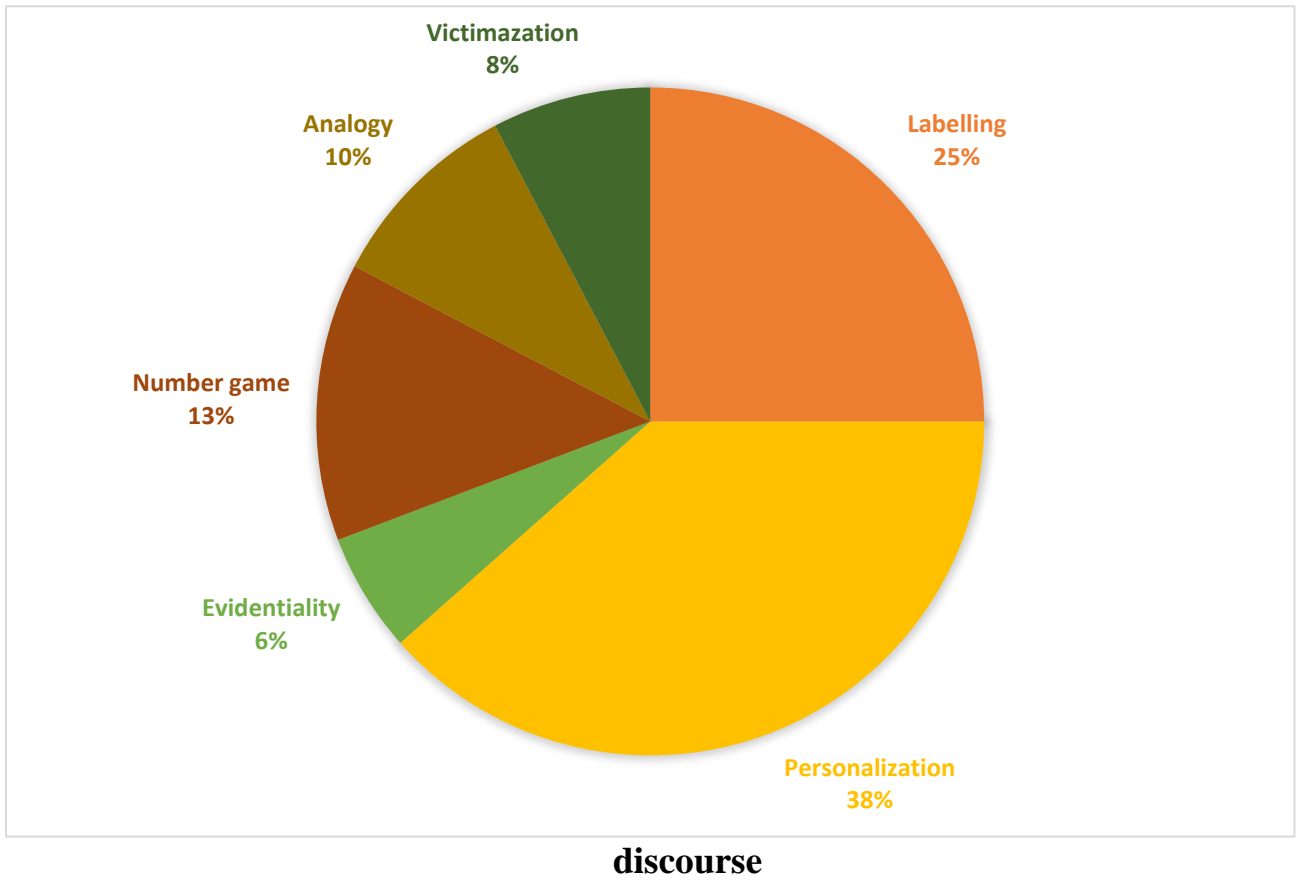
APPENDIX 9

Picture 9



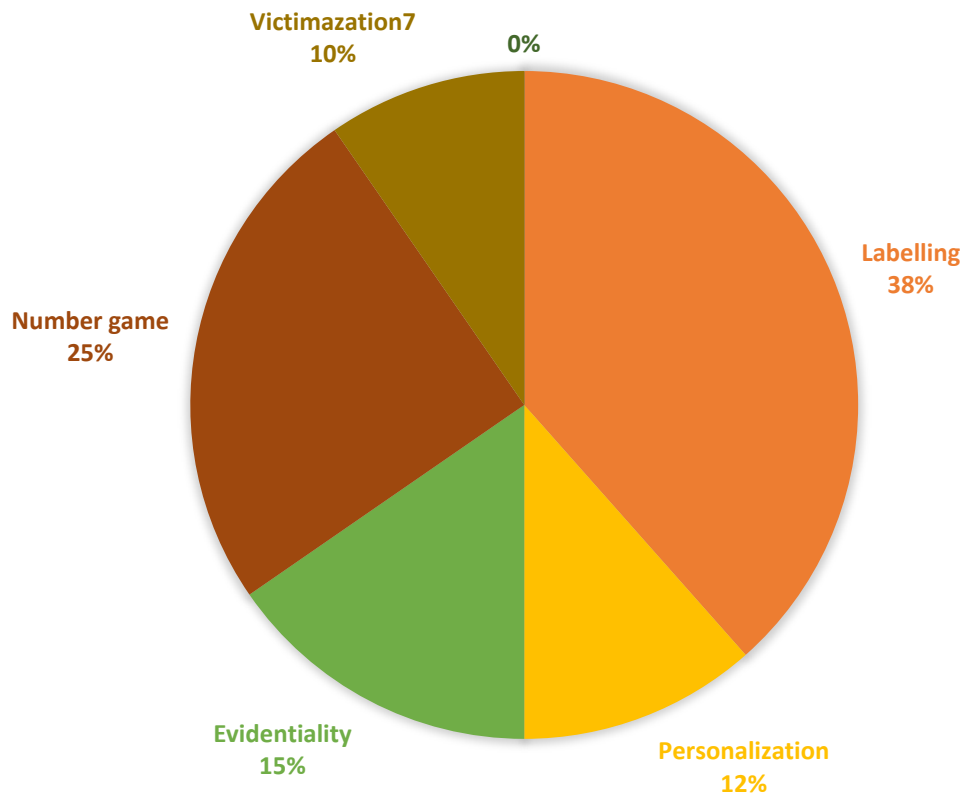
APPENDIX 10

Quantitative ratio of the use of discursive strategies in political media



APPENDIX 11

Quantitative ratio of the use of discursive strategies in ecological media discourse



APPENDIX 12

Use of literary devices in discursive strategies

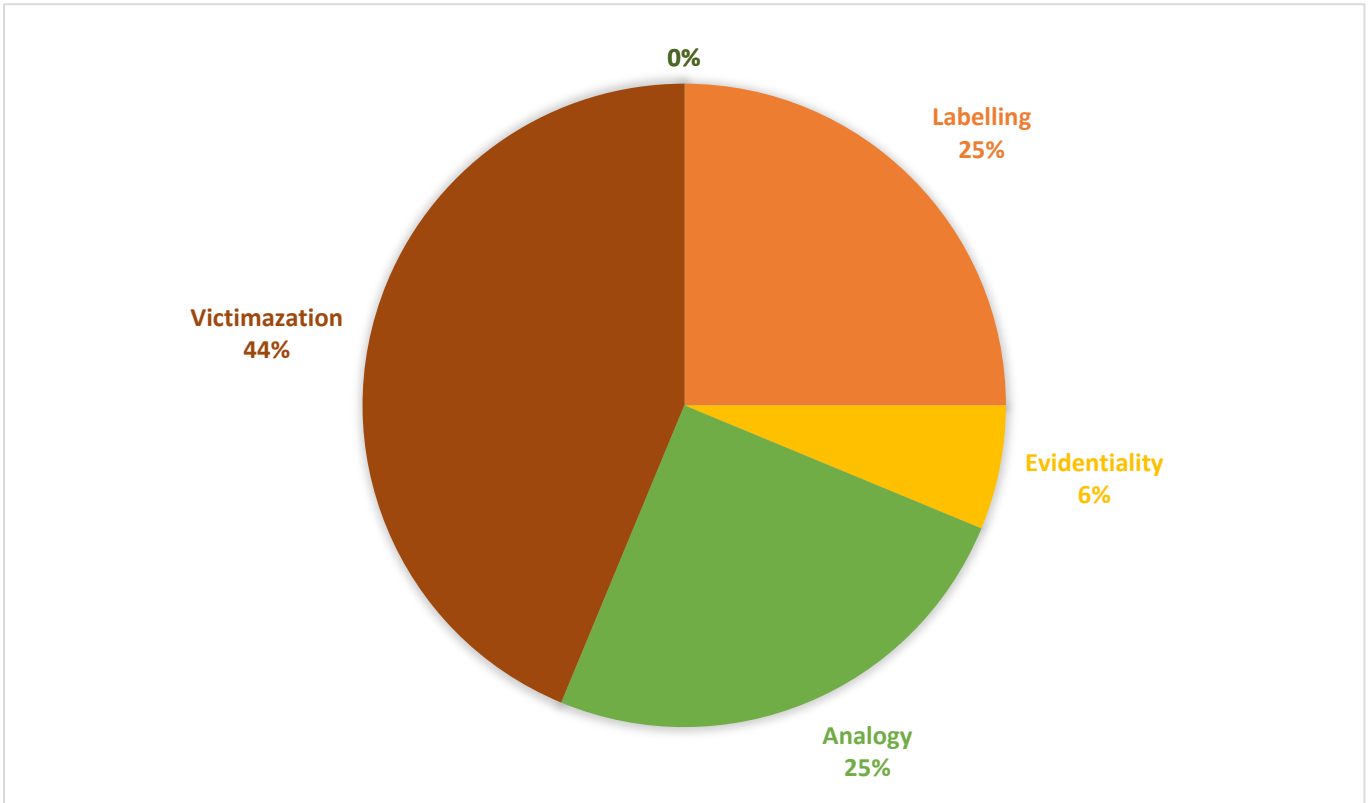
Discursive strategy	Example	Stylistic device
Labelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24 was a <u>seismic event</u>.</i> • <i>But their <u>example</u> in 2022 was <u>second to none</u>.</i> • <i>As the United States has done by warning of "<u>catastrophic consequences...</u>"</i> • <i>...the destruction of the Kakhovka dam in Ukraine would mark a "<u>new low</u>" in the conflict...</i> • <i>Evacuations of civilians were already underway after the "<u>ecocide</u>" attack...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual metaphor • Idiom • Hyperbole • Litotes • Metaphor
Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>...<u>giving Kyiv a viable path to victory...</u></i> • <i>On the front lines in the battlefields, <u>Ukraine is winning</u>.</i> • <i><u>The victories have put Kyiv on the front foot...</u></i> • <i><u>The day also marked six months since Russia invaded its next-door neighbor, throwing the entire world into turmoil...</u></i> • <i>...so <u>Moscow is trying to freeze Ukrainians into submission</u>.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synecdoche • Personification • Synecdoche + idiom • Hyperbole • Idiom
Victimization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i><u>These actions, intended to freeze a civilian population to death until they surrender.</u></i> • <i><u>Today, much of the area is changed beyond all recognition. Destroyed villages, recaptured by the Ukrainians during a counter-offensive four months ago, charred trees and the husks of Russian tanks line the reservoir's eastern banks.</u></i> • <i><u>Forests ravaged by fires caused by relentless shelling, or...</u></i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idiom • Metaphor+ synecdoche • Hyperbole

• *Such contamination can harm local ecosystems and crops decades after the guns have gone quiet*

• Metaphor

APPENDIX 13

Quantitative ratio of the use of discursive strategies



in multimodal discourse

APPENDIX 14

General quantitative ratio of the use of discursive strategies

