

## **A Comparative Analysis of News Structure for Two War Commentaries**

**Tamkeen Zehra**

Research Scholar, Foundation University  
Islamabad

**Zafar Ullah Shaheen**

Lecturer, Govt. Gordon College  
Rawalpindi

**Huma Batool**

Lecturer, Fast National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences  
Islamabad

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### **Keywords**

- Macrostructure
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### **Abstract**

CDA recognizes war reports to be lacking in objectivity and reflective of the ideologies reporting agencies to subscribe. This paper demonstrates how Van Dijk's framework for macrostructural analysis can be used to unpack the ideological content of news items by examining their content and structure for a partiality of focus. Data consists of two news commentaries on the war in Yemen, taken from the online news portals. Juxtaposing the macrostructures of the two articles, a comparison yields that the two commentaries take widely divergent positions on the war. Furthermore, a relevance structure analysis reveals implicit assumptions constructed into the discourse which leads the reader to make the intended interpretations

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### **1. Introduction**

This research project is an undertaking in Critical Discourse Analysis. It analyzes two news items addressing the war in Yemen by comparing their content and structure to determine whether the articles differ in their ideological leaning or not. The study assumes the form of textual analysis, as the discourse in focus consists of news texts that have been published online.

Both the texts are news commentaries rather than news reports. Commentaries differ from reports as a genre. While news reports are event-centric and follow common schemas which generally include settings, actors, events, and reactions; news commentaries take a less immediate view of an event or issue. They are not situated in time neither are they concerned with conveying precise details of one specific event. Their purpose is to provide, in the light of given facts, a comprehensive understanding of an issue with reference to social contexts and historical antecedents. Although giving a semblance of objectivity, they are in fact, “opinion articles with the important communicative function of contributing to the formulation of certain ‘preferred’ viewpoints about the world” and their goal is “analytical, evaluative and persuasive.” (Lavid et al., 2012).

In the present study, the news commentaries have been sourced from two different news portals. The first is a BBC account of the war in Yemen; it represents mainstream media viewpoints on the situation in the Middle East. The second news item has been taken from an online news site, ConsortiumNews.com. This website positions itself against the mainstream media and claims to indulge in independent investigative journalism. If one is to nominally accept the stated objective of Consortium News, it would be expected that the perspective it offers would depart in some degree from that of popular international news outlets or channels.

Since any given news agency operates according to a specific ideological slant determined by its owners, sponsors, political affiliations and the views of its journalists and renowned critics (Herman & Chomsky, 1988), it is expected that the two news items will differ with respect to their ideological content. However, the ideology underlying any discourse is rarely explicit. It is constructed in subtle ways through deliberate lexical choices, selective reporting, and choosing to employ structural features which draw attention to certain elements and efface others. Therefore, the present study seeks to identify and unpack that ideological content by investigating how the structural features within each text interact to determine intended meanings. This will be achieved by firstly analyzing the topics or themes contained in each article and ascertaining whether the two articles differ on thematic (and therefore ideological) dimensions, and then examining how structural features support or promote the ideological position taken by each article.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Study**

Previous research points out that news about the war in the past has been fraught with deliberate manipulation of reality. News agencies are seen to toe the line of major stakeholders in the war, such as Western governments, making it possible for the state machinery to justify war to its people (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). The news that

reaches the masses ends up being a favourable portrayal in order to enlist public support for the war venture.

Against this backdrop of the ideological control of news, it is pertinent to investigate how the current war scenario in Yemen is being portrayed by a mainstream news organization such as the BBC, and a more heterodox online news outlet such as Consortium News. Moreover, the two selected news items are commentaries which were taken as critical evaluations of the issue. Being so, they assume an air of expertise and an inherent right to persuade. The aim of these items is to create and transmit ‘preferred models’ of perceiving the issue. Such models need to be deconstructed in order to unveil the presupposed and possibly hegemonic beliefs which underlie them. The present study aspires to precisely achieve such an objective.

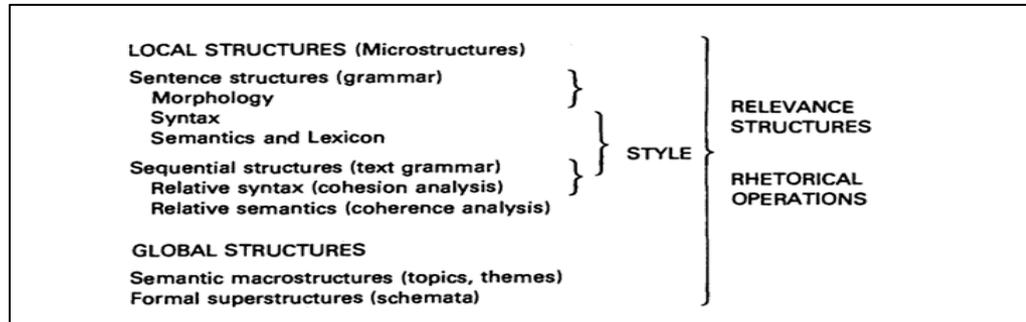
## **1.2. Research Questions**

- How do the macrostructures of the two articles compare against each other?
- What features of relevance structuring reflect the underlying ideological conditions of news production for each report?
- How does the rhetorical structure link with the ideology of the article?

## **2. Literature Review**

Van Dijk presents a comprehensive framework for the critical analysis of the news stories in his book, *Macrostructures* (1980). The author proposes that the structure that organizes news discourse has a theoretical significance: it reflects and reproduces social structure. Global structures in discourse project overall themes and meanings, which are built up by the interaction of local structures—the individual linguistic elements. Yet these discourse structures and their organization are not arbitrary, but reflect “our knowledge of social interaction and social structure.” They serve to “script” situations and realities for us according to our social conventions. In the context of news stories, discourse structures point to how the creator of the discourse perceives the world and frames it for his or her audience in language. In other words, they reflect his ideological position. Therefore, attaining an understanding of such discourse structures possibly contribute to our understanding of social orders and ideologies underlying discourse.

Van Dijk (1988) charts out the elements of text structure in the following diagram:



*Figure 1: Local and Global Structures (Dijk, 1988)*

The present study will use the concepts of macrostructure, relevance structure, and rhetorical structure as the elements of analysis.

Macrostructures represent the major semantic units or themes of the text. Van Dijk (1980) maintains that for all the “cognitive operations”, we require a “reduction of complex information” by substituting it with more abstract statements or macrostructures. These are statements which give the gist or summary of the textual units, and they begin on the level of the sentence. For each subsequently larger unit of text that first includes a paragraph and then an entire section, the corresponding macrostructures will also be increasingly generalized and concise.

Macrostructures are usually stated in the form of macro propositions which are derived from the smaller linguistic units (microstructures) through operations (‘macro rules’) of deletion/selection, generalization, and construction. According to Van Dijk (1977), a proposition can be deleted if “it is not a condition for understanding the rest of the discourse”. The generalization rule is used whenever it is possible to replace specific concepts with a general term or hypernym. Similarly, the construction rule takes sequences of propositions which may be related through a cause, effect, inclusion, etc., and states them as one general proposition in accordance with the social conventions. Once major themes/macrostructures have been identified, an analysis of relevance structure sheds light on how macrostructures are prioritized within a discourse to foreground a central theme, and which local microstructures are given more salience to bear maximum relevance to the claimed theme. An analysis of this kind includes elements such as topicalization and the use of passive forms. Relevance structure analysis helps in identifying the ideological stance of the discourse because it reveals the discourse creator’s preference for emphasizing selective information and backgrounding the rest.

Rhetorical structure analysis is generated from microstructures which have been strategically employed to make the text more convincing to the audience. This analysis covers the use of rhetorical devices such as parallelism, metaphors, repetitions, etc.

which not only enhance the aesthetics of the discourse but also make it more persuasive and cognitively significant.

### **3. Methodology**

As its methodological grounds, this research adopts Van Dijk's framework of news analysis as outlined in his works (1980; 1988). Van Dijk demonstrates that a critical discourse analysis of a news text can be accomplished by breaking it down into its macrostructures and microstructures, identifying its overall superstructure, and then explores how the relevance structuring of these elements, as well as conscious use of rhetorical structure, operates to give a news piece its ideological leanings.

### **6. Results & Discussion**

Two articles on the same topic, but produced by two different sources, were chosen for the structural analysis:

- 1) Yemen crisis: Who is fighting whom? (bbc.com)
- 2) Challenging the Saudi Air War on Yemen (consortiumnews.com)

#### **6.1. Macrostructure Analysis**

To obtain the semantic gist, macrostructures were derived for each article respectively by stating the content of each paragraph as a macro proposition. The condensation of a paragraph into a more abstract proposition employed the use of deletion, generalization, and construction rules. At times, some fragments had to be rephrased in declarative form and separated from the remaining text to form a simple proposition. These procedures are illustrated in the transformation of the following paragraph from Article 1:

“Yemen, one of the Arab world's poorest countries, has been devastated by a war between forces loyal to the internationally recognized government of President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi and those allied to the Houthi rebel movement.”

**Operation 1: Deletion:** “one of the Arab world's poorest countries”, “Abdrabbah Mansour.”

**Operation 2: Generalization:** “forces loyal to the internationally recognized government” was generalized as “pro-government forces”

**Operation 3: Separation:** the descriptor “internationally recognized government” was separated to form the second proposition, since each proposition should have a simplified structure.

The aforementioned macro rules generated the following two propositions to represent the content of the paragraph:

- 1) Yemen has been devastated by a war between pro-government forces and forces allied to the Houthi rebel movement.
- 2) The government of President Hadi is internationally recognized.

A similar procedure was followed for Article 2, and is presented as under for the first paragraph:

“Placating Saudi Arabia over the Iran nuclear deal, President Obama authorized U.S. military support for the Saudi air assault on Yemen, a policy now facing a congressional challenge, as Gareth Porter explained at The American Conservative.”

**Operation 1: Deletion:** “as Gareth Porter explained at The American Conservative”

**Operation 2: Construction:** the causal relation between “placating Saudi Arabia over the Iran nuclear deal” and “President Obama authorized military support for the Saudi air assault on Yemen” was constructed using the conjunctive adverb “therefore” to explicitly state the causality.

**Operation 3: Separation:** the clause “a policy now facing congressional challenge” was treated as a second proposition to keep each proposition simple.

**Operation 4: Rephrasing:** “facing congressional challenge” was restated as “being challenged by the US Congress.”

The resulting macro propositions were:

- 1) President Obama sought to placate Saudi Arabia over the Iran nuclear deal and therefore, authorized US support to the Saudi air assault on Yemen.
- 2) The policy is being challenged by the US Congress.

In this manner, the complete sets of macrostructures for both of the articles were obtained and are presented in the following two tables:

**Table 1**

**Macro propositions of Article 1**

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<b>Macro propositions of Article 1</b>	
1.	Yemen has been devastated by a war between pro-government forces and forces allied to the Houthi rebel movement.
2.	The government of President Hadi is internationally recognized.
3.	There have been severe casualties mostly resulting from air-strikes by the Saudi-led multinational coalition supporting Mr. Hadi.
4.	The outcome is a humanitarian disaster.
5.	About 70% of the population is in need of aid.
6.	Conflict has arisen out of the political failure of Mr. Hadi’s government to bring stability.

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7. The Houthi rebel movement represents Yemen's Shia Muslim minority.
  8. The Houthis also ousted former President Mr. Saleh
  9. Ordinary Sunni Yemenis joined the Houthi rebellion because they are disillusioned with the government.
  10. Houthis took control of the capital, causing Mr. Hadi to flee the country.
  11. Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab states feared Iran's support to the Houthis.
  12. Saudi Arabia and Arab states launched air-strikes to restore Mr. Hadi to power.
  13. The Arab coalition received logistical and intelligence support from the US, UK and France.
  14. Al-Qaeda (AQAP) and Islamic State (IS) have used the chaos to step up attacks.
  15. Activists say there have been serious violations of international law by all parties.
  16. Children constitute a third of all civilian deaths.
  17. Yemen is on the brink of famine.
  18. More than half of all health facilities are non-functional.
  19. UN-negotiated peace talks have collapsed.
  20. Mr. Hadi demands complete withdrawal of Houthis as per the UN Resolution as a condition for peace talks.
  21. The West perceives threat of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State attacks originating from Yemen.
  22. Yemen is a strategically important state situated on the route of the world's oil shipments.
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## ***Table 2***

### ***Macro propositions of Article 2***

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#### **Macro propositions of Article 2**

1. President Obama sought to placate Saudi Arabia over the Iran nuclear deal and therefore authorized US support to the Saudi air assault on Yemen
  2. The policy is being challenged by US Congress
  3. The bill wants to end direct US military role in the Saudi coalition war in Yemen
  4. The US refuels Saudi coalition planes systematically bombing civilian targets
  5. The bill invokes the War Powers Act 1973 through which Congress can restrain presidential power to enter into wars.
  6. Congress and US media note that US military has been supplying bombs used by Saudi coalition planes.
  7. The war will stop if the US withdraws support to Saudi Arabia.
  8. Legal experts have raised the issue of US responsibility for apparent war crimes in Yemen.
  9. The bill calls for the removal of US military personnel from their role in the Saudi air war unless Congress authorizes these activities.
  10. The US is directly involved in the worst man-made humanitarian crisis in years.
  11. Civilians have been weakened by starvation and are dying of a cholera epidemic.
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12. Saudi strategy includes starvation, targeting of hospitals and agriculture, destruction of humanitarian aid infrastructure, blockade of food shipments, and destruction of roads and bridges to bar humanitarian aid.
  13. The bill does not demand the withdrawal of US resistance in Yemen against Al-Qaeda since that was authorized by the Congress.
  14. The US military's role in the Yemen war makes the American people less secure because the war has strengthened Al-Qaeda's position.
  15. Al-Qaeda has been fighting alongside Saudi-backed forces in Yemen.
  16. Al-Qaeda has gained legitimacy, territorial control, and access to arms and money in this war
  17. The Saudi's starvation strategy is creating long-term hatred for the US in Yemen.
  18. The Obama administration has created a false narrative that Iran has been arming the Houthis.
  19. The UN panel of experts on Yemen could not confirm any direct massive supply to Houthis from Iran.
  20. Iran gave minor military assistance to Houthis in response to Saudi coalition's air strikes.
  21. The Houthis are fighting for their own interests, not Iran's interests.
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## **6.2. A Comparison of Macrostructures**

Although both the articles examine the war in Yemen and elaborate upon its antecedents and aftermath, they differ significantly in terms of their thematic focus. The major point of concurrence that can be derived out of the two sets of macro propositions is a comparable emphasis in both articles on the humanitarian crisis following the war. In addition, both the articles hold the Saudi-led air strikes responsible for the human toll and suffering. In all the other respects, however, the two narratives are widely divergent. The differences become evident when we juxtapose macro propositions of the respective articles which address the same topic but in conflicting ways.

Article 1, Macro 1: Yemen has been devastated by a war between pro-government forces and forces allied to the Houthi rebel movement.

Article 2, Macro 1: President Obama sought to placate Saudi Arabia over the Iran nuclear deal and therefore authorized US support to the Saudi air assault on Yemen

The BBC article opens by introducing the war as an enterprise being fought "between" two equivalent forces in Yemen—one favouring the government and the other siding with the Houthi rebel movement. On the other hand, the consortuimnews.com article directly names the US and Saudi Arabia as aggressors responsible for the assault "on" Yemen. It points out an uneven and inequitable use of force by two countries who are outsiders to Yemen and furthermore explains the political motive behind their alliance.

Article 1, Macro 12: Saudi Arabia and Arab states launched air-strikes to restore Mr. Hadi to power.

Article 1, Macro 13: The Arab coalition received logistical and intelligence support from the US, UK and France.

Article 2, Macro 3: The bill wants to end direct US military role in the Saudi coalition war in Yemen

Article 2, Macro 4: The US refuels Saudi coalition planes systematically bombing civilian targets.

Article 2, Macro 6: Congress and US media note that US military has been supplying bombs used by Saudi coalition planes.

In this set of statements, the macro propositions of the BBC article contrast strongly with the consortiumnews.com article. BBC portrays Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies as the primary agents of the air strikes and justifies their move as a balancing act intended to restore power to a rightful government. According to the BBC, the US, UK and France have a distant role in the war—that of merely supporting Saudi Arabia in its logistical and intelligence needs. In contrast, the consortiumnews.com commentary holds the US directly responsible for the war, since it not only refuels Saudi planes but also supplies the bombs used by them. Furthermore, the article reveals that the bombings are strategically targeting the civilian population and infrastructure. Thus, this article directly incriminates the US for the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

Article 1, Macro 20: Mr. Hadi demands complete withdrawal of Houthis as per the UN Resolution as a condition for peace talks.

Article 2, Macro 7: The war will stop if the US withdraws support to Saudi Arabia

The BBC article problematizes the likelihood of peace by portraying it as impossible unless the Houthis lay down arms. However, the second article lays the responsibility for ending the war squarely on the US, since the war on its current scale cannot last without the number of resources and commitment that the US is channelling into the venture.

Article 1, Macro: There have been severe casualties mostly resulting from air-strikes by a Saudi-led multinational coalition supporting Mr. Hadi.

Article 1, Macro 17: Yemen is on the brink of famine.

Article 1, Macro 18: More than half of all health facilities are non-functional.

Article 2, Macro 12: Saudi strategy includes starvation, targeting of hospitals and agriculture, destruction of humanitarian aid infrastructure, blockade of food shipments, and destruction of roads and bridges to bar humanitarian aid.

The BBC commentary represents the civilian deaths, starvation and destruction of infrastructure as the inevitable fallout of war, much in line with what is usually considered as the ‘collateral damage’. Also, it does not identify any one specific agent responsible for the destruction, as the damage inflicted is made out to be the result of a joint operation by a ‘multinational coalition’. Resultantly, the war and the destruction achieve a legitimacy and reader-acceptance in this article. In contrast, the consortiumnews.com article explicitly states that the Saudis are actively pursuing a deliberate strategy of starvation and the bombing of civilians and infrastructure to

suppress the local population and its support for the Houthis. This article therefore directly implicates Saudi Arabia in criminal aggression against the local population.

Article 1, Macro 14: Al-Qaeda (AQAP) and Islamic State (IS) have used the chaos to step up attacks.

Article 1, Macro 21: The West perceives the threat of Al-Qaeda and Islamic State attacks originating from Yemen.

Article 2, Macro 15: Al-Qaeda has been fighting alongside Saudi-backed forces in Yemen.

Article 2, Macro 16: Al-Qaeda has gained legitimacy, territorial control, and access to arms and money in this war.

The BBC news story seems to hold the political vacuum responsible for the increased militant activities by Al-Qaeda and Islamic State. This article assumes Al-Qaeda and IS to have a separate agenda which they are pursuing in the opportunity provided by a destabilized Yemen. These two organizations are viewed by the West as a threat to its citizens, which forms the justification for the involvement of the US, UK and France, as mentioned earlier in the article. The consortiumnews.com story, however, presents the reverse picture. It asserts that the two terrorist organizations have joined forces with the Saudi-backed fighters to resist the rebel movement, and have been granted funding as well as territorial control for their participation. It is, therefore, Saudi Arabia and its allies that have paved the way for the resurgence, control and power of these terrorist organizations in Yemen.

Article 1, Macro 11: Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Arab states feared Iran's support to the Houthis.

Article 2, Macro 18: The Obama administration has created a false narrative that Iran has been arming the Houthis.

Article 2, Macro 19: The UN panel of experts on Yemen could not confirm any direct massive supply to Houthis from Iran.

Article 2, Macro 20: Iran gave minor military assistance to Houthis in response to Saudi coalition's air strikes.

Article2, Macro 21: The Houthis are fighting for their own interests, not Iran's interests.

The BBC article cites the reason for the Saudi-led coalition's disproportionate air assault as their 'fear' that Iran is supporting the Houthis materially and that this could result in a tipping of the regional balance of power in Iran's favour. The second article is quick to counter the impression created by the regional powers that the uprising is instigated by Iran. Far from just charging Saudi Arabia for misrepresenting the facts, the article calls the Obama government complicit in creating a "false narrative" against Iran. It provides evidence to contraindicate the involvement of Iran by referring to findings of the UN panel which could not confirm any significant Iranian supplies to

Yemen. Furthermore, this article explains that a minor assistance from Iran came only after Saudi-Arabia's air strikes so that in itself could not be a reason for the air-strikes. The news piece also dissociates the Houthis from Iran by stating that the Houthis have their own political motives for rebellion and are not towing an Iranian agenda.

Article 1, Macro 15: Activists say there have been serious violations of international law by all the parties.

Article 2, Macro 8: Legal experts have raised the issue of US responsibility for apparent war crimes in Yemen.

Whereas the BBC commentary blames all stakeholders in the war for violating the International Law and committing unjustifiable acts of violence, the consortiumnews.com write-up represents the US as instrumental in the war crimes perpetrated in Yemen and points out America's liability in the human rights violations reported.

To summarize, a comparison of the macrostructures of the two articles yields that each article frames the war in Yemen from a viewpoint that is in direct contrast to the stance of the other article. This analysis reveals that the articles project two opposing ideologies about the war in Yemen. The BBC news piece evaluates the war from the ideological position of the dominant powers and stakeholders in the war, i.e. Saudi Arabia and the US. In opposition to this, the consortiumnews.com article assumes the position of counter-discourse and presents the war from an alternative perspective which goes against the dominant ideology.

### **6.3. Relevance Structure Analysis**

Semantic macrostructures such as the ones obtained in the previous section and the microstructures they contain (the individual linguistic elements) are purposefully arranged within the news items to foreground key ideas. This forms the relevance structure of the text. An analysis of such an arrangement also serves to shed light on information that has been deliberately obscured from the observation of the reader. This section will examine the relevance structure of the two articles:

#### *Article 1: Yemen crisis: Who is fighting whom?*

- a. The headline is a key foregrounding instrument and sets the topic for the rest of the article. Bell (1991) explains that "The lead focusses the story in a particular direction... forms the lens through which the remainder of the story is viewed. This function is even more obvious for the headline." The headline of this BBC news article presupposes that the reader is unaware of the actual adversaries in the war. Therefore, the article goes on to explain in its opening line that the war is being fought "between forces loyal to the internationally-recognised government of President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi and those allied to the Houthi rebel movement." By calling attention to these two groups of opponents within Yemen, the news item glosses over the active role of outsiders—Saudi Arabia, the US and other Western governments—in causing widespread destruction and deaths. This foregrounding also contributes to the

backgrounding of Al-Qaeda's and an Islamic state's operations in support of Saudi Arabia.

- b. The opening paragraph quoted above mentions the "internationally recognized government of President Abdrabbah Mansour." Here, the modifier "internationally recognized" is used in an attributive adjective, as it occurs before the noun. Studies in critical linguistics are of the view that the use of attributive adjectives makes the adjective seem like a natural quality of the noun it modifies. The placement of "internationally recognized" before "government" achieves such an effect in this text. It awards a sense of legitimacy to the government and prevents the reader from questioning why a government should be legitimate if it has failed to deliver and has lost the support of its 45% Shiite Muslim population as well as the majority among the 55% Sunni Muslim population. By portraying President Hadi as the recognized and rightful ruler, the article is then able to justify the involvement of Saudi Arabia and the Western powers.
- c. To draw attention away from the agent of an action and direct it towards the act itself, *passivization* is often used as a technique. In this BBC news piece, actions performed by the Saudi-led coalition are stated in passive sentences, while the actions of the Houthi rebels are presented via the active construction. For example, in the statement...

More than 7,600 people have been killed and 42,000 injured since March 2015, the majority in air strikes by a Saudi-led multinational coalition that backs the president.

... the death toll and numbers injured have been foregrounded through the passive construction, while the agent responsible, i.e. the Saudi air strikes, has been given less salience. By removing the agent from the subject position in the sentence, the text is able to divert attention from it. Let us take another example:

"The conflict and a blockade imposed by the coalition have also triggered a humanitarian disaster, leaving 70% of the population in need of aid."

Again, the passive usage grants lesser prominence to the perpetrator of the act.

As another device, *nominalization* instead of passivization is employed to conceal the agent altogether. The next example shows how using the nominalized form of "destroy" enables the sentence to turn the abstract noun "destruction" into the subject of the sentence and omit the actual agent:

"The destruction of civilian infrastructure and restrictions on food have also pushed Yemen to the brink of famine."

Meanwhile, statements about the Houthi rebels in this text assume the active sentence form clearly identifying the Houthis as the notable subject as well as an agent of the action:

"In January 2015, the Houthis reinforced their takeover of Sanaa...."

“The Houthis and security forces loyal to Mr Saleh then attempted to take control of the entire country...”

“The Houthis have also been able to maintain a siege of the southern city of Taiz and continue firing missiles and mortars across the border with Saudi Arabia.”

- d. This article does not quote any sources to support the information stated. One function of quotations in news articles is to shift the responsibility for the authenticity of the information provided to the source that is quoted. By excluding quotes, the BBC commentary an overall semblance of authenticity, giving the impression that everything stated in the text is a fact, which need not be backed by an individual’s statement or opinion.

*Article 2: Challenging the Saudi Air War on Yemen*

- a. The headline of this article emphasizes the key role of Saudi Arabia in intensifying the war. By using “Saudi” as an attributive adjective before “War”, the headline imparts a Saudi identity to the war. This sets the tone for the rest of the article, which denounces the US government for joining Saudi Arabia to perpetrate war crimes and human rights violations in Yemen. Moreover, the headline makes it clear that this “Saudi War” stands “challenged” in the article, as it is unjustified. The headline, therefore, is able to foreground the liability of Saudi Arabia and the US government in engineering a full-scale war and a humanitarian crisis.
- b. The article uses a bulleted list of 6 points enumerating the extent of destruction caused by the “Saudi strategy.” This list, by being visually salient in the text, foregrounds the gravity of Saudi aggression against Yemen.
- c. Much of the article revolves around the specific details of the H. Con. Res. 81 bill, which calls upon the Congress to either approve the war in Yemen or debar the President from American participation in the war. These details include the names of the Representatives who introduced the Bill and its legal rationale in connection with a previous War Powers Act of 1973. By mentioning such details, the article is able to strip the US from any legal or justifiable grounds to take part in the war.
- d. The article repeatedly names the “Obama administration” as responsible for decisions about the war in Yemen. By associating injustice with an individual head of state, the article is able to preserve the image of the US as the champion of peace and democracy around the world. Some examples of this are quoted below:

“Placating Saudi Arabia over the Iran nuclear deal, President Obama authorized U.S. military support to the Saudi air assault on Yemen...”

“Since the Obama administration gave the green light to the Saudi war of destruction in Yemen in March 2015, it has been widely recognized by...”

“The Obama administration...became nervous about public statements...”

- e. This article uses five quotations from key sources in the government and international organizations such as the UN and Human Rights Watch. It also quotes an excerpt from the War Powers Act 1973. These sources lend credibility to the argument put forth by the article, and serve to strengthen its central theme that the US should not be involved in the “Saudi war”.

#### **6.4. Rhetorical Structure Analysis**

The BBC article makes use of a highly stereotypical statement simply to enhance the effect of the narrative. This statement is imprecise and also incongruent to logic, as “the threat of attacks” is posed to the Western world not by Houthi rebels but by Al-Qaeda and Islamic State, both of which are coincidentally on the side of Saudi Arabia and the US as of now. However, “regional tensions” will increase in the event that the Houthis win because the Arab countries perceive the Shiite Houthis as an antagonistic force in the region. There seems to be no logical connection between the two adjacent claims, so the adjoining sentences can be considered as having only rhetorical effect in the discourse:

What happens in Yemen can greatly exacerbate regional tensions. It also worries the West because of the threat of attacks emanating from the country as it becomes more unstable.

The second article on consortiumnews.com uses a rhetorical device to enhance the effect of the message. It repeatedly employs a catch-phrase, terming the war in Yemen as “*the Saudi war of destruction*” to draw emphasis to the gross brutality inflicted by the regional power upon the people of Yemen.

#### **7. Conclusion**

Critical Discourse Analysis always brings about the ideological underpinnings and intended meanings layered intricately into the texts and the subtexts of a discourse. On the same patterns, this research brought about a comparative analysis of two news items extracted from different news agencies i.e. BBC and the Consortium News about the war going on in Yemen. This study attained the purpose of revealing the different ideologies holding up two different narratives regarding the war in Yemen after doing the macrostructure, relevance structure and rhetorical structure analysis.

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