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**INVESTIGATING RUSSIA TODAY'S COUNTER-HEGEMONIC  
POLITICAL DISCOURSE OVER THE SYRIAN CONFLICT:  
A QUALITATIVE- QUANTITATIVE STUDY**

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Degree of Magister in Media Studies and Discourse Analysis**

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**The general population doesn't know what's happening, and it doesn't even know that it doesn't know.**

**(Noam Chomsky)**

**DEDICATION**

In memory of the departed President Hugo Chavez

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation centers on Halliday's *Systemic Functional Grammar* (SFG) and the way it applies to the discursive analysis of the political discourse of the news network Russia Today (RTTV) when covering the Syrian conflict. The purpose of this work is to prove whether this channel is actually counter-hegemonic or not; in case it is, how and what for? This study tries also to prove whether it is influential on the international scene through the Syrian conflict. We attempted to extend previous work on counter-hegemonic media which focused solely on describing how these worked in the age of globalization. We can mention Painter (2008) and Thussu (2007), for instance. This work adopted a qualitative method in the form of Halliday's theory of Context of Situation (field, tenor, and mode) and the quantitative one, which is a common practice in media studies. The work concludes that RTTV's discourse is counter-hegemony-laden; it opposes that of Western media about the Syrian conflict. This news channel is a strategic tool to make Russia's perspectives heard worldwide.

## **Résumé**

Ce mémoire est centrée sur la *Grammaire systémique fonctionnelle* de Halliday (SFG) et la façon dont elle s'applique à l'analyse discursive du discours politique de la chaîne de télévision d'information internationale, Russia Today (RTTV) lors de la couverture du conflit syrien. Le but de ce travail est de prouver si cette chaîne est en fait contre-hégémonique ou non; dans le cas où elle est, comment et pour quoi faire? Cette étude tente également de prouver si elle est influente sur la scène internationale à travers le conflit syrien. Nous avons tenté d'étendre les travaux antérieurs sur les médias contre-hégémoniques qui ont porté uniquement sur le fonctionnement de ces chaînes à l'ère de la mondialisation. Nous pouvons, par exemple, mentionner Painter (2008) et Thussu (2007). Ce travail a adopté une méthode qualitative sous la forme de la théorie du *Contexte de la situation* de Halliday (*le domaine, la teneur, et le mode*) et la méthode quantitative, ce qui est une pratique courante dans les études des médias. Le travail conclut que le discours de RTTV est chargé de contre-hégémonie; il oppose celui des médias occidentaux à propos du conflit syrien. Cette chaîne d'information est un outil stratégique pour faire entendre le point de vue de la Russie dans le monde entier.

## ملخص

تركز هذه المذكرة على النحو الوظيفي لهاليداي والطريقة التي يطبق بها في تحليل الخطاب السياسي لشبكة أخبار روسيا اليوم (RTTV) عند تغطية الصراع السوري. والغرض من هذا العمل هو إثبات ما إذا كانت هذه القناة هي في الواقع مضادة للهيمنة الإعلامية الغربية أم لا. في حال ما كانت كذلك، كيف ولأبي غرض؟ تحاول هذه الدراسة أيضا اثبات ما إذا كانت القناة مؤثرة على الساحة الدولية من خلال الصراع السوري. حاولنا توسيع مجال الدراسة للعمل السابق على وسائل الإعلام المضادة للهيمنة الإعلامية التي ركز حصريا على وصف كيفية عمل هذه القنوات الاخبارية في عصر العولمة. ويمكن أن نذكر على سبيل المثال اعمال كل من بينتر، Painter (2008) و ثوسو، Thussu (2007). اعتمد هذا العمل على طريقة نوعية متمثلة في نظرية هاليداي سياق المقام (المجال، نوع المشاركة/العلاقة، و الصيغة) وكذا الطريقة الكمية الشائعة في الدراسات الإعلامية. ويخلص هذا العمل الى ان خطاب شبكة أخبار روسيا اليوم RTTV مشحون بمعاداة الهيمنة الإعلامية الغربية. كما انها تعارض وسائل الإعلام الغربية فيما يخص الصراع السوري. هذه القناة الإخبارية هي أداة استراتيجية لجعل وجهات نظر روسيا مسموعة في جميع أنحاء العالم.

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## **General introduction**

In the recent decades, there has been a growing interest in carrying out critical analysis over the political discourse of different media. Most of the time Western media have been the target of such critical studies. This can be attributed to the worldwide hegemony these media have enjoyed. In parallel, the contemporary mass communications order has also seen an unprecedented rise in media flows from outside the borders of the West. In effect, regional media institutions have been striving amid the globalization of sound and image of Western behemoths to make their voice heard on the international scene. This new information and communication order has acted as an impetus to the emergence of a form of discourse that is ideologically resistant to the traditionally established Western one. It is the discourse developed by the emergent counter-hegemonic media.

The research topic of this work centers on the very notion of media “counter-hegemony”. This seems to be archetypical of mounting, transnational news networks. What is media counter-hegemony? This term has been frequently used by media scholars well versed in this trend like: David Morley (2006), Daya Kishan Thussu (2007), and James Painter (2008) to refer to the recently launched broadcasting channels. These are primarily news-based networks. The aim of these media institutions is, indeed, to counteract the long hegemonic flows of Western media giants, such as those of CNN and the BBC, trying to position themselves globally. During the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, US-led media was in direct confrontation with communism and its ideology. So, audiences in the West and elsewhere were bound to consume the flows of those media corporations with their advanced technologies as well as capitalist ideologies. This is well illustrated in the globalization of the CNN International and the BBC World Service. Remarkably, the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century saw the emergence of a number of regional networks with another vision to the world.

Nowadays, the world media and communication order can be said to be very complex. As mentioned above, opposed discourses have been brought in with the rise of non-western news channels in regard to major world issues. One of these is the Russian news network Russia Today (RTTV), which is the object of a critical study in this work. Other examples of this recent media trend can be mentioned: Al Jazeera (both Arabic and English), Telesur (founded and bankrolled by President Chavez), Telenovelas (the Brazilian global network), and Press TV (the Iranian news channel). All of them have endorsed a counter-hegemonic discourse in

their coverage of sensitive world affairs. Concerning the corpus (RTTV), the focus falls on this news channel's coverage of the Syrian conflict. This practical study attempts to investigate whether the political discourse of RTTV is counter-hegemonic. If it is so, it tries to show the how and why of such an ideological stance. This analytical study consists in applying the qualitative Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFG) alongside the quantitative method. In effect, the former has been one of the most influential approaches in critical discourse analysis (CDA). The latter, on the other hand, is a tradition in the domain of media studies as it strengthens findings by quantifying data.

What arrested my attention in the coverage of the armed conflict in Syria were the discourses adopted by the various news networks and the ideologies underlying them. RTTV is, indeed, the quintessence of ideology. From the outbreak of the armed conflict in Syria, RTTV has seemingly developed an increasingly counter-hegemonic political discourse in dealing with the rapidly worsening situation in Syria. Globalization in terms of information sounds best illustrated in such a conflict. Moreover, the availability and accessibility of the corpus (RTTV news bulletins) constituted another impetus for determining this choice. Ultimately, there has not been any really critical -oriented work on the political discourse of this channel, except some comments about its operation and organization.

In this new world mass communications order, the focus on RTTV, as a supposedly counter-hegemonic news network among others, prompts one to formulate a set of questions to be investigated:

- Is the emergent RTTV really counter-hegemonic or it is not all it seems?
- If it is so, how and why is its discourse over political matters resistant to Western media's hegemonic flows?
- Can RTTV have power and influence over audiences worldwide?
- Is it possible to assume that the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the era of globalization for non-Western mass communications?

Many experts assume that RTTV, being part of the counter-hegemonic flows, has been adopting a form of political discourse away off from the one constructed by Western media, namely CNN International and the BBC. Right from the outset of the armed conflict in Syria, RTTV has seemingly developed a pro-Syrian government position. So, labels, such as "Syrian



government troops”; “Syrian government”; “terrorists”; “perpetrators of atrocities” are used by this channel to refer to the actors in the conflict. In doing so, it has set forth to counteract the information hegemony of CNN, the BBC, and even Al Jazeera. These blame the Syrian regime, attributing all the killings to President Assad. Besides, it sounds that this news network is strategic tool, among many others, like diplomacy, in the hands of the Kremlin. President Putin, by launching this channel, resolves to tackle international events and current affairs from a typically Russian perspective. Hence, the objective underlying the channel is not only to counter the Western media flows, but also to make Russia’s voice heard worldwide as an inevitably recognized superpower.

This research topic aims to show in clear terms how media studies and CDA overlap. It is a common practice nowadays to apply different approaches of CDA to analytically deal with various forms of mass media in attempts to unveil the possible ideologies underpinning their operation and roles. This is, indeed, the case with applying Halliday’s SFG in discursively analyzing the political discourse of RTTV. We intend to show the extent to which counter-hegemonic media can resist ideologically to the massive flows of the Western culture amid the globalization of picture and sound. As mentioned above, this study necessitates the fusion of both the qualitative method as well as the quantitative one. This may help us coming up with more accurate findings and solid conclusions about RTTV’s ideological background.

Much was said about the counter-hegemonic media trend in the age of information globalization. One of the prominent figures in this respect is James painter (2008). He claims that the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> was marked by the birth of 24/7 news channels with the very aim of countering Western-media flows. He also illustrates with some of the most emergent news networks like Al Jazeera, RTTV, Telesur, and France 24. Furthermore, Painter presents the primary reasons underlying the boom in those 24/7 counter-hegemonic media. Ultimately, he explicates the way they operate and how they are financially backed up, along with a focus on their offensive ideologies amid the new information world order (Painter, 2008, pp.10-12).

An equally influential expert in the media domain is David Morley (2006). He criticizes the traditional Western “one-way flow” elaborated by Schiller, which does not recognize the growing counter-hegemonic flows from other continents. Although Morley acknowledges the one-way flow from America to the rest of the world in terms of the dominance over the media output market, he stresses the inevitable complexity of the global media scene with the

emergence of regional TV stations with an unprecedented cross-cultural potential (Morley, 2006, pp.32-35).

Daya Kishan Thussu (2007), a well versed scholar in media flow and counter-flow, draws attention to the mobility of media. He sees this as a major feature of the continually digitized mass communications world. Digital technologies, he assumes, have allowed media to move across borders with such a great speed and high quality regardless of the spatial-temporal barriers. Thus, Thussu sheds light on how the digital revolution has contributed to the boom in counter-hegemonic media worldwide. Moreover, he evokes diasporic communities living in foreign cultures as these constitute a significant target for media providing them with instant news about their home countries (Thussu, 2008, p.18).

Being interested in analyzing the political discourse of a selected group of channels (some are international and others local), Anita Fetzer and Gerda Eva Lauerbach (2007) set forth to examine the phenomenon of media communication. This task is essentially based on a cross-cultural perspective. These scholars deal with the political discourse used by media in Western democracies as well as some emergent countries. In their point of view, this is where audiences feel authentically involved in politics. They adopt two approaches: first, they comparatively analyze the political discourse constructed by both journalists and politicians in culture-specific contexts. The assumption they depart from is that the recipients of the message constitute a homogeneous audience. Second, they focus primarily on international media since these differ from local ones in that transnational media seek to address heterogeneous consumers from culturally different regions around the globe (Anita Fetzer and Gerda Eva Lauerbach, 2007, pp. 3-11).

Going through some of the available literature relevant to this research scope will enable us to decide from where to start. As a matter of fact, most of the material examined so far seems to concentrate exclusively on the theoretical dimension relevant to counter-hegemonic media. It defines what these media are, covers their major aspects, and tries to unveil their intended ideological aims. By means of illustration, some satellite channels are mentioned alongside their respective backgrounds. The most notable exception can be traced to Lauerbach & Fetzer's work, which disengages from the theoretical frame work, taking the initiative of analyzing the political discourse in a range of news channels. But the latter work has turned out to be based on a cross-cultural perspective; i.e., it embarks on a comparative study of various cultures' schemes of constructing and interpreting discourse. In addition, the political

discourse making up the object of analysis does not concern particular issues or events nor does it investigate for any signs of ideological counter-hegemony.

What this practical work offers is a qualitative and quantitative approach to the analysis of the political discourse adopted by the Russian news network Russia Today in its coverage of the Syrian conflict. This consists in applying Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) in order to critically analyze all the layers of RTTV's language and the ideology underlying its use. For Halliday (1985/1989), any text is naturally functional in context. Henceforth, a text should not solely be considered from a strictly linguistic dimension, but also from the contextual one. The two levels are complementary: a text cannot be interpreted unless related to its linguistic system. Likewise, it is impossible to use a piece of language except if one is aware of its relevant function and why it means so. The latter point testifies to Halliday's emphasis on the description of the relationship between (a) *context of culture* and *context of situation*; (b) language and text; and (c) between all these theoretical elements contributing to the realization of discourse (Hasan, 2004, p.20). In other words, the description of the link between language and culture is very crucial in SFG. To make this process practicable, Halliday introduces the notion of features of context of situation: *field, tenor, and mode*. Secondly, the media studies-relevant quantitative approach is adopted in support of SFG's findings about ideology and the relations of power.

Given that this work is supposed to carry out the task of inquiring into the political discourse of RTTV as a corpus, the combination of both the quantitative and the qualitative methods seems to be the most judicious choice. A sample of five news bulletins covering the conflict in Syria is selected from the year 2012. This year was marked by an escalation period from November 2011 to March 2012, a ceasefire attempt from April to May 2012, and a renewal of fighting from June to October 2012. The sample texts represent these three periods in terms of coverage. Firstly, the units of analyses are considered from the functional angle. This relates the texts to their appropriate contexts and deals with the resulting effects they are intended to have on audiences. Thus, not only the linguistic layers (lexico-grammar, phonetics, phonology, and semantics) are tackled, but also the socio-cultural structures determining language use are taken into account as sources of ideology and relations of power. Halliday's SFG, with its analytical components, identify the ideologies making up social groups in terms of ways of thinking and relationships among their members. Fairclough (1995) comments on SFG saying:

Michael Halliday's claim that the linguistic system functions as a 'metaphor' for social processes as well as an expression of them, which he formulated in the context of a discussion of the symbolization of social relationships in dialectal and registerial variants. (Fairclough, 1995, p.32)

Secondly, the texts are quantitatively studied. This entails performing systematic, objective counts of expressions, labels, and words' repetitions over particular lengths of time. Further, the location and the time of the news output ("when?" and "where?") are provided in detail. Also, news reports are described in terms of their position in whole news bulletins ("prominence"); whether they occupy top positions in headlines or not. "Speakers" and "sources" are, besides, focused on to show direct as well as indirect addressers of audiences. Moreover, "themes" indicate the major themes within each text. "Linguistic modifiers" for their part quantifies the most recurrent labels, words, and expressions attributed to particular situations, groups, and events. Finally, "imagery" deals with images (both still and moving) all through the news bulletins. The quantitative method's exact findings can be complementary with those of the qualitative method in that they add in more accuracy in terms of statistics.

The plan of this project follows an order that fits the whole organization of the work in terms of the research questions, the hypotheses, the objective targeted, and the methods adopted. The first chapter theoretically tackles Halliday's approach of *Systemic Functional Grammar* and the way it considers language as a system that is functional in context under the influence of social institutions. Chapter two, still sticking to theory, covers the field of media and cultural studies. It treats the relationship between media, language, and ideology. It also goes over the evolution of mass media theory as well as its overlapping with other domains, such as psychology (Freudianism and Behaviorism) and politics. Ultimately, it focuses on the new era's communication and information globalization and the complexity this has brought to the mass media world order: the mounting influence of counter-hegemonic media outside Western borders. Finally, the last chapter is the practical phase. It sets out to discursively analyze RTTV's political discourse over the Syrian conflict, applying Halliday's approach (SFG) and the quantitative approach common in media studies. Discussions of the data are also part of the analytical process, followed by primary conclusions.

## **Chapter One: Halliday's systemic functional grammar**

### **1 Language as a system of meanings: social semiotics**

According to Halliday (2003), language is to be conceived of as “system of meanings” or, as frequently referred to in his works, a “semiotic system”. The latter term pertains to meaning in general. This assumption is central in Halliday's approach to language. It lends itself to ascertain how meaning is elaborated and transmitted from one another out of the semiotic system (Halliday, 2003, P. 2). Not only this systemic theory is semiotic-based, but also any theory can be considered a “semiotic construct” being the by-product of meaning (Mathiessen, Teruya, and Lam, 2010, pp.1-2). From what has been said so far, one can deduce that all the forms of human semiotic signs, including language, are organized in systems of meaning. In addition, among the other semiotic systems used in our daily life, language is the most complex one. This is clearly manifested in the seemingly indeterminate ranges of meanings continuously expressed through infinite structures (Halliday, 2003, P.2).

To shed more light on the notion of semiotic system, Halliday goes further in his assumption about language. Indeed, he refers to the three systems that make up the whole semiotic system: the “physical”, the “biological”, and the “social system”. The physical system itself is made up of sets of biological ones. Hence, both of them represent the material part of the semiotic system. These, as they appear to be physical systems, take on a life quality (Halliday, 2003, p.2). The social system, on the other hand, is the larger system where the physical forms come to be used for social interaction. This demonstrates the typical feature of the social system: that of the social value. In other words, the semiotic system's complexity resides in the fact that it is physical, biological, and social. Therefore, one has to be aware of the perspective of “social-semiotic” that characterizes the approach of Halliday and his fellow scholars in the study of language (Halliday, 2003, P.2).

The two terms composing Halliday's approach need more insightful consideration. Let's start with the notion of semiotic. It has derived from the term “semiotics”, which itself had derived from the concept of the sign. It has developed from the Greek words “semainon”, “semainomenon”, which mean respectively “signifier” and “signified” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, p.3). These terms were used by Greek philosophers in classic linguistics. In fact, the Stoics were the pioneers of a sign theory that was to be the precursor to modern sign theories, most notably that of Ferdinand de Saussure. It can be said that semiotics is primarily

concerned with the study of signs in all their forms and types (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, p.3). Fairclough (1995) stresses the latter point, focusing attention on the diversity of signs. He asserts that signs cannot be forcibly linguistic. They may take the form of pictures, music, audio effects, etc. Hence, it is crucial to qualify signs as “multi-semiotic” (Fairclough, 1995, p.4). However, this conception seems bound to isolate the sign from others in that it comes to occur on its own, before combining with others. Despite the theoretical developments brought in by Saussure’s work in terms of considering language as a system of relationships, the feature of isolation is still relevant to the sign. For Halliday (1985), semiotics is to be redefined as the study of meaning in its broad sense (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, p.4). Furthermore, to get back to physical and semiotic systems, it is evident that their taxonomic classifications are dependent on each other. In other words, the material systems receive their organizational feature from semiotic meanings; social values require the biological systems for realization. Halliday points out this, somehow, symbiotic relation when he says: “Meaning needs matter to realize it; at the same time, matter needs meaning to organize it” (Halliday, 2003, p.3). This argument is perfectly convergent with fairclough’s vision of functional language. He insists about the fact that both text and content are strongly indicative of socio-cultural order and any possible transformations within it (Fairclough, 1995, p.4).

It is from the “social-semiotic” angle that Halliday sets forth to develop his language theory. As a matter of fact, he distinguishes the two notions composing his perspective: social and semiotic. By the first, he refers clearly to the social structures that operate any society. While the second represents the meaning related networks that underlie language. Both may be considered as integral parts of the larger social system. All this shows explicitly Halliday’s interest in knowledge outside the bounds of language: a careful consideration of the social phenomena surrounding communicative events. Language should, according to Halliday, be seen from the social dimension in order to uncover the secrets behind its operation and organization (Halliday, 2003, p.3). Context comes, then, to be the initial object of study of *systemic functional grammar* (SFG). About this very point Fairclough writes:

We can continue regarding a text as a primarily linguistic cultural artifact, but develop ways of analyzing other semiotic forms which are co-present with language, and especially how different semiotic forms interact in the multi-semiotic text. This poses a challenge to critical discourse analysis which is already being taken up in the development of a ‘social semiotics’. (Fairclough, 1995, p.4)

## **2 Types of language complexity**

Language, as a complex system, is expanded along various dimensions which constitute it. This is indicative of the fact that language, like what has been said so far, does not only consist of single, isolated signs, but sets of signs. These combine with one another within the social context to be meaningful. In other words, the combination of the linguistic signs builds up the whole semiotic system (Halliday, 2003, p.4). By this explanation, Halliday puts to the fore the different levels of complexity within the semiotic system. These are as follows:

### **2.1 Syntagmatic complexity**

As has been the tradition in linguistic study, meanings are realized through “syntagmatic structures”. The lexical items are arranged along the syntagmatic line or the syntagm in delicacy: words are located in given positions in the syntagm on the basis of their usual classes. This implies choices that are dependent on other ones. In other words, the horizontal axis constructs a grammatical system. This is made up of options that are intertwined with one another in a limited lexico-grammatical structure. Halliday describes clearly this process saying, “Interpreted procedurally...the output feature of one system becomes the input feature to another” (Halliday, 2003, p.9). By this, he shows how the choices made at another level come to be built into the syntagmatic organizational axis. The latter is the lexico-grammatical stratum. This seems an important feature of the semiotic system, henceforth (Halliday, 2003, p.9). Furthermore, it is worth noticing that the syntactic linearity is by no means shown in an abstract way, but as a material expression of the already made choices across the system networks. “Realization”, besides, is the term assigned for this process. However, in linguistics, other names have been used in parallel: “exponence”, “implementation”, and “manifestation”. All choices are then realized by sequences of structures. This realization process can be demonstrated through “bracketing” and “labeling” within the bounds of “constituency” (Halliday, 2003, p.9).

### **2.2 Paradigmatic complexity**

To what extent is language large? This is a question of considerable importance to any systemic functional approach. Halliday (2003) is one concerned with this question. It was during the time he was teaching Chinese to the British Armed Forces that he came to deal with this issue: whether to consider language as large or small (Halliday, 2003, pp.7-8). This

task consisted in finding out more about the learning process any language learner had to undertake. Simultaneously, Halliday was also actively involved in computational linguistics. In this he and his fellow scholars were working on a language for computers: a sort of “meaning potential” for these machines to enable them to perform translations. All they could do were computer program dictionaries premised on those used by learners themselves (Halliday, 2003, pp.7-8). However, their efforts proved fruitless in that the amount of vocabulary in the program did not seem to reveal much about meaning construction (Halliday, 2003, P.8). At this point, Halliday refers to the other line through which meanings can be built up: the “paradigmatic axis”. Indeed, he assumes that signs are arranged in related systems. These allow signs to be selected in relation to one another in such a way that each depends for its creation on the preceding one. That is to say, the choice of a meaning should stimulate the existence of a relevant one. This indicates that the meaning systems form networks. These correlate closely with one another to create meanings, “Systems are organized together in the form of networks, in such a way that some are dependent on others for their condition of entry” (Halliday, 2003, P.6).

From what has been stated above, it is evident that signs are networked all throughout the paradigmatic scale. While interacting with others, we are supposed to make continuous choices all through the paradigmatic axis. Again, it should be reminded that options are dependency-based: each option gives rise to the other. Furthermore, this choice process is termed “system networks”. In this way, a semiotic system’s meaning potential comes to be stretched or indefinitely enriched out of these vertical constant choices. For example, when referring to “polarity”, one must choose either positive or negative. Similarly, with “mood” we have declarative or interrogative, or imperative; for the interrogative, the question type may be Wh-type or else yes/no type. For “transitivity”, there are different choices: material or semiotic, etc. Concerning “tense”, we have the major tenses: *present*, past, and future. The term “selection expression” stands for the options made across the networks. It is at this level, besides, that options get organized along the syntagm, whereby lexical items are combined with each other grammatically. In other words, the syntactic arrangements of signs are identifiable in the lexico-grammatical dimension as they are positioned in specific places in a syntagmatic order (Halliday, 2003, P.9). Nonetheless, the paradigmatic organization differs from that of the lexico-grammatical order. First, lexical items have no delicate arrangement like that of the lexico-grammatical one. Second, when these are selected through the network, they tend to be organized not in terms of signs, but of, “lexical features” (Halliday, 2003, P.9).



In other words, the system networks from which choices are made constitute particular fields or domains. Some can be lexicalized, but others cannot. Halliday draws attention to the study carried out by Hasan (1985) about the world of lending and borrowing using English language as an illustration.

The paradigmatic organization lies behind much of language's meaning power. By making constant moves through the system networks, a language meaning potential gains more and more space. A semiotic system yields its power from the paradigmatic complexity. It is the semantic resource for language with the creation of a rather vast number of meanings. Hence, language should be looked at as a system of networks, not a set of lexico-grammatical structures (Halliday, 2003, PP.9-10). System networks may be defined as a set of opposite options. They are created by means of "terms" or options and "entry conditions" of systems. Terms might have common entry conditions; these ensure the delicate order of systems in the system network (Mathiessen et al., 2010, p.212). This is in accordance with Firth's contrasting notions of "system" and "structure". In addition, the system of networks acts as a theoretical framework, providing insights into the meaning potential of a language in great details. This is not possible, syntactically speaking: there is a dearth of information about the extent to which delicacy is considered. This is shown mainly in the clausal case: two clauses differing from each other in terms of distinct intonation patterns, but are seen as being similar. The system of networks, on the other hand, is beyond these problematic bounds. It focuses more on the choices carried out across the lexical features (Halliday, 2003, PP.9-10). As a brief summary, the ever-creative powers of the human brain are corroborated by the large number of clause types materialized from the network features: *polarity, transitivity, active/passive forms, tense, modality*, and so on.

### **2.3 Stratificational complexity**

It is worth a mention that language in general is endowed with a stable semiotic layering process. The form of a given content is simultaneously the content of another form or, in more technical terms, "expression". To clarify the matter better, Halliday provides an insightful example of a response polarity negative content; it is realized by the form "no". The form, in turn, is the content of the phonological expression alveolar nasal consonant / n/ + half close back round vowel sound, depending on the accent (Halliday, 2003, P.12). Besides, there is no exact number of cyclic movements from content to form since this would lend itself to theory (Halliday, 2003, P.12).

The cyclical layering of meaning deserves more attention as this process reveals a great deal about the externalization of the content. What is quite noticeable is the form of language that young children develop at an early age. This type is named “protolanguage” (Halliday, 2003, P.12). It is composed of a set of simple signs. Nevertheless, these signs are functional to a certain extent as young children can relatively perform the networking process across the system networks. This is quite observable in the meaning potential of children when they communicate with their peers in a restricted environment (Halliday, 2003, P.12). Parents, on the other hand, mostly interact with their children in adult language, but it could be altered to take on the form of “baby talk”. Despite this simplified mode of communication, there is still a certain lexico-grammatical organization: adult’s form is more sophisticated even if it is modified (Halliday, 2003, P.12). Furthermore, the simple sets of signs used by children are nothing more than sounds or gestures. In other words, there is no wording: sounds are not grammatically organized along the syntagmatic line. So children interact with each other in relatively functional sounds that are devoid of grammatical organization. To sum it up, protolanguage has merely some semantic expression in the form of phonological sounds with no wording in between (Halliday, 2003, P.12).

The second year of children’s existence is the starting point towards the stratification cycle. In fact, during the course of this year, protolanguage takes on the status of language: the layering process starts to materialize. Protolanguage evolves from a diminished, young-child interaction type to a fully stratified adult-like language (Halliday, 2003, P.13). This metamorphosis denotes the entire evolution any language is subject to. In addition, by moving from protolanguage to adult language, children set forth towards a high-order-based way of conceiving of a semiotic system. Halliday reports Gerald Edelman’s statement: “A release from the ‘tyranny of the extended present’” (Halliday, 2003, P.14). In this phase, simple sounds come to be delicately arranged syntactically (Halliday, 2003, P.14).

The stratificational process will likely have apparent effects on the semiotic system in the sense that its meaning potential might be extensively enriched (Halliday, 2003, P.14). First, the wording process contributes to enlarging the gap between meaning and its expression; their relationship is based on convention. Second, a sign could be built in a variety of structures alongside other signs: while its pronunciation indicates one thing, the structural frame is another. Third, as the direct result of the two points above, a text is supposed to endorse certain functional meanings by selecting from the major linguistic features: the reflecting, doing, and the textual functions. Fourth, meaning is the artifact of both dialogues

as well as monologues. Ultimately, all these developmental effects on language would converge at one point: the semiotic system has evolved from a set of isolated sounds (protolanguage) to a semantically creative stratified form (language) (Halliday, 2003, P.14).

## **2.4 Realizational complexity**

Although the syntagmatic dimension is not much referred to in SFG, it is primordial to focus attention on the flexibility in the connection between form and content at this level. A form may convey a quite different meaning; a content may be realized by a new form, too (Halliday, 2003, P.6). This is what accounts for the semantic potentiality of language. Moreover, it would be helpful to recall the options from which a speaker makes his choices. In fact, at this level the linear sequence comes into action to give those choices a material form: it realizes the chosen options into structures. In these structures, each choice follows the other in a meaningful way, but with unbounded content-expression creativity (Halliday, 2003, P.6). For instance, the negative-positive polarity content can either be realized with didn't, did, or else the clause as a whole (Halliday, 2003, P.6).

### **2.4.1 Constituency**

“Constituency” is another feature of both writing and speaking systems. The writing system of English is made up of larger units (sentences); these are made up of smaller units (words), which consist, in turn, of smallest units (letters). Each unit follows the other in a sequential order: a sentence follows a sentence, a word comes after a word, and a letter after a letter. Moreover, the units of writing are separated from each other according to their types: a smaller space between letters (mainly in print texts), larger spaces between words, even larger spaces between sentences with full stops. The spaces as well as the full stop marks show the end of each unit. The marks are not part of the writing system; they rather indicate the arrangement of structures. This relationship of construction in written texts is termed constituency. Besides, a larger unit might be composed of one or more smaller units: the number of units is indefinite (a sentence, words, letters; or a sentence, a word, and a letter) (Halliday, 2000, pp.1-2). Halliday (2000) illustrates the latter form: “I”. Though this form seems not much in use nowadays in English, it could be an instance of single constituency. It contains a sentence, a word, and a letter as an answer to the question “who killed Cock Robin?” (Halliday, 2000, P. 3). In addition, the full stop and the spaces are not the only marks; there may be other ones like: ? ! () “” ; : , -. The first four ones indicate the status and

meaning of sentences; for example, it could be a question, an exclamation, or a quotation. The three last ones, on the other hand, show that another element can be inserted or created between the sentence and the word: the sub-sentence. So, by using commas, the layered structure might be enlarged to be made up of a sentence, a sub-sentence, a word, and a letter. Finally, it would be likely that a further level is added up the constituent hierarchy: sentences might merge together to make paragraphs (Halliday, 2000, P. 3).

The analysis of such constituent units is very revealing about a language. In fact, this analytical process depends on the type of text in terms of complexity. It could be a text encompassing simple constituent structures (sentence, word, and letter); or else complex units including: sentence, sub-sentence, word, and letter. On the other hand, the purpose of the analysis is also decisive for analytical choice. Bracketing could be a way of analyzing a text. It is named so because it makes use of brackets in describing the hierarchy of constituent units: “ [ {( to) ( market)} {( to) ( market)} {( to) ( buy) ( a) ( fat) ( pig)} ]” (Halliday, 2000, p.5). Bracketing, indeed, demonstrates what unit goes with the other, starting from the smallest constituent to the largest one. Whatever the type of analysis carried out, it tends to ascertain a great deal about the constituency of a language. On the other hand, constituency is also grammatical. This implies that it tackles language analysis from the structural angle (Halliday, 2000, p.17), unlike constituency in speech. This considers linguistic items as “expression”. Halliday (2000) illustrates this distinction with a single word: “kindness”. It is composed of eight letters in terms of writing; in speech, on the other hand, it is analyzed syllabically: kindness is disyllabic (kind- and -ness) (Halliday, 2000, p.17). By contrast to expression analysis, grammatical constituency deals with words as well as sentences as mere forms. In other words, neither spelling nor sounds are taken into consideration. The word kindness is divided into two constituents: kind and ness. So, grammar is equated with wording (the syntactic level) (Halliday, 2000, p.17). This leads us to recognize the different strata of language: phonology (the sound system); orthography (letters and symbols of punctuation); lexico-grammar (wording); and semantics (meaning) (Halliday, 2000, p.18). To conclude, it would be logical to remark that in the previous paragraphs about the construction of words out of smaller bits, we did not mean expression-based analysis; we referred to the lexico-grammatical dimension. Besides, smaller bits making up words are called “morphemes”. A word might be composed of a single morpheme or many ones. Moreover, in spoken or written material, we are unable to notice any explicit structural organization; only punctuation and pauses do so. Grammar-oriented analysis, can display the structural constituency in terms of

“group” then word then morpheme (Halliday, 2000, pp.18-19). The clause is, of course, the major concern for grammatical analysis since it is the concrete realization of semantic choices and, at the same time, the expression of sound systems (Halliday, 2000, pp. 18-19).

Constituency in speech can be rather revealing about the systemic nature of language in terms of all its properties, likewise. To describe the grammatical system of any language, it is inevitable to start first with its phonology as it is vital in semantic interpretation (Halliday, 2004, p.11). Phonology can be divided into two branches: articulation, dealing with individual sounds; and prosody, relevant to aspects of connected speech (rhythms and intonation). The focus here is on prosody for its significance to meaning construction. Besides, the syllable is very crucial with regard to rhythm, and intonation (Halliday, 2004, p.11). It is worth a notice to assume that human language as a whole initially developed to its present form from oral speech. That is to say, communication was only based on speaking and listening for centuries before the current written form (Halliday, 2000, p.6). As a direct outcome, the organizational principles underlying written language are also applicable to speech. It has been demonstrated how the writing system displays its units in a hierarchy: letters, words, spaces, punctuation, sentences, etc. Indeed, it is the sound system that displays constituency in speech. This is in terms of constituents like rhythm and foot. In effect, children’s verse is the ideal site for constituency in spoken language; this type of verse is named “Nursery Rhymes”. What can be remarkable in children’s recitations are rhythm patterns at the level of the metric line and the feet composing it. These two speech constituents are operated by beats occurring at regular intervals on syllables. There are strong and weak syllables. These operate within the foot: the foot is made up of one strong or “beat syllable” and one or more “weak syllables”. In addition, the structural layout of the foot is typical of the sound system of everyday language. So, the foot forming lines of poetry is traced to natural speech (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8).

The foot, as the tradition in poetry, provides rhythmic melody to children’s Nursery Rhymes; this can be justified by two reasons: (1) Strong beats on regular syllables are common practice (2) There is a particular syllabic pattern within the foot. However, this does not necessarily imply a standard number of syllables in the foot (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8). For example, there could be a silent pause as in music. Each verse has its typical pattern of syllables within the foot: there may be one strong syllable and two, three, or four weak ones. Besides, each foot, in this case, should observe the syllabic pattern followed in the same verse. What is of interest is how rhythm in poetry is relative to natural speech (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8).

Historically, poetry has evolved from speech; through time, it has managed to construct its proper pattern of rhythm. In the world in which we live, each semantic system possesses its own speech rhythm. This is in the form of regular patterns of modulating the air stream emanating from the diaphragm. English has its typical rhythm patterns (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8). They derive from the contrast between beat syllables and off-syllables at the level of the foot. In every day speech, we very often notice the dominance of beat syllables over off-syllables, i.e. strong syllables are more remarkable than weak ones. Strong syllables occur at regular intervals in a rhythmic harmony. Though speech is not poetry, they both tend to share the rhythmic dimension (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8). Nursery Rhymes make use of a range of rhythms in terms of foot syllabic patterns to engage the listener's appreciative ear (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8). To sum it up, the foot patterns, which form part of the sound system in phonology, can be said to be the equivalents of units of constituents in writing. It is from these speech rhythmic patterns that the poetic rhythm originates.

When comparing foot patterns in speech and in writing, we need to go over four points: (1) each foot in speaking differs constantly from others in terms of the number of syllables. This was the rhythm pattern followed in old English or early Middle English. A line had an exact number of feet (typically four), but syllables varied in number across the feet. The "metric foot" (a foot with an exact number of syllables), became the norm in Chaucer's era. It remained so in mainstream verse in English until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a new form of foot in poetry. The latter was derived from the speech of people speaking varieties of English which were different in rhythm from native English, (2) the analytical tradition of the metric foot was based on metrics: it consisted in analyzing a line in terms of the number of feet as well as the number and distribution of syllables within the feet. The number of feet in a line could be: 2, 3, 4, or 5, or more. "Penta-meter" was on vogue in the verses of Chaucer, Milton, Shakespeare, etc. A foot, furthermore, might contain syllables that are said to be "ascending", i.e. weak syllables followed by strong ones, or descending syllables, i.e. strong syllables followed by weak ones. The former type is referred to as "iambic foot"; the latter "trochaic foot". The distinction between the types of rhythm in poetry is done by way of "metric verse": how a line is arranged in terms of foot. This is not significant in the phonological sound system of English, (3) the metric analysis of verse lines (foot, syllables) failed at recognizing the silent beat; silence is part of speech: in some dialogic interactions, speakers could keep on being silent through a number of feet. Silent beats indicate a difference in meaning. In a verse line, likewise, there might be a beat or even a whole foot in

which silence is to be observed. Rhythm is encapsulated in silence, too (Halliday, 2000, PP.7-8).

In natural speech, constituency is seen in terms of what is known as the “tone group”. As mentioned above, the foot constitutes the “rhythm group”; it activates the rhythmic pattern of spontaneous speech. It is a part of the phonological system (Halliday, 2004, p.14). Nevertheless, there is another constituent ranking above it in the same system: it can be defined as the melodic variation pattern in speech. This is termed intonation. Besides, a cluster of sounds in which intonation operates takes the name tone group. In terms of constituency, one can assume that a tone group is made up of a number of feet. It might have one or more feet in it, moreover. In turn, these are composed of syllables arranged in a given order of strong and weak beats. This is the way the sound system works in English (Halliday, 2004, p.14). In effect, a written text may be read in different types of intonation to convey a variety of meanings, but the patterns are restricted in number. In addition, the constituents in written language are quite clearly identifiable; whereas in speech, it is very hard to determine their respective boundaries. i.e., one cannot tell where a constituent starts and ends, due to the continuity of speech. So, some generalization can be worked out: a tone group encompasses a given set of feet, and each foot has a set of syllables in it. This way, it can be obvious how these phonological constituents function in constructing meaning (Halliday, 2004, pp.14-15).

To conclude, one would say that the rhythm group performs phonological functions. The tone group, on the other hand, is significant in producing and conveying meaning. In effect, it makes the progression of discourse smooth, in terms of organized sequences of semantic units (Halliday, 2004, p.15).

### **2.4.1. a Bracketing**

The most complex tool for analyzing structures beyond single words and sounds is “bracketing”. Indeed, bracketing, as it seems, applies to the structural dimension both to realize the choices, and also to demonstrate the constituency underlying the same structure. A clause or phrase encompasses further structures for more profound analysis (Halliday, 2000, p.20). In other words, structural analysis can be either carried out with no limits, or just restricted in position (Halliday,2000, p20). Bracketing is, thus, subdivided into two further types: “maximum bracketing” and “minimum bracketing”. The first is also named “immediate constituent analysis”. It offers more structure for bracketing linguistic items (more than two

items in brackets) (Halliday, 2000, p21). The opposite is true with minimum bracketing: this type of analysis is semantically functional within the structure. Known, also, under the label of “ranked constituent analysis”, minimal bracketing tackles linguistic items in terms of their specific ranks. In other words, constituents can provide enough structural insights as they are meaningful (Halliday, 2000, pp.22-23). As far as the description of the structure is concerned, minimum bracketing is the most recommended. This is due to the small number of structural components to be analyzed, in comparison with maximum bracketing. The latter recommendation can be justified by three reasons: (1) minimal bracketing shows the relationships between sentences and between constituents in sentences. This implies a close reference to the choices made earlier through the systems. Therefore, a further specification should be superfluous, (2) the choices a speaker makes are the entry conditions for the next ones. So again choice is a *sine qua non* for minimum bracketing, (3) bracketing, away from the minimum one, might lead to more than one analysis (Halliday, 2003, P.182). For example, the sentence suggested by Halliday (2003): “John threw the ball”, which is described as realizing choices through the option of transitivity. In this case, it consists of three components: Actor, Process, and Goal. However, a functional interpretation would probably imply successive analyses of the same structure. Halliday’s same illustration: “John threw the ball” may be divided into two “the ball” and “John threw”. Intonation might exercise some influence on “ball” turning it into a piece of “new” information, while the rest of the sentence remains “known” (technically speaking, “given”). Hence, a structure is made up of given and new items. In addition, this structure could be described in terms of “Theme” and “Rheme”: “John” being the Theme and “threw the ball” the Rheme. In other words, the person in question and what we are told about him (Halliday, 2003, P.182).

To conclude, we would assume that minimum bracketing is more appropriate in describing the realization process because of its neutrality (Halliday, 2003, P.182). By allowing a number of constituents to be side by side within the bracket, another brand of complementary analysis makes its entry into the whole structure: “labeling” (Halliday, 2000, p.24).

#### **2. 4. 1. b. Labeling**

As its name indicates, labeling is an analytical tool whereby the various constituents of the structure are labeled. This process aims primarily at identifying their respective roles in the structure (Halliday, 2000, pp.24-25). Like bracketing, labeling consists of two forms: “functional labeling” and “class labeling”. Whereas bracketing focuses solely on elements



forming the structure, labeling designates a function to each one (Halliday, 2000, pp.24-25). A functional structure necessitates functional labeling analysis. It could be shown as a structure made up of “actor”, “process”, “goal”; or “Theme” and “Rheme”. Further, functional labeling reflects choices already performed at the system networks stage. For instance, the presence of a subject implies a choice of the indicative, while the use of a goal refers to transitive choice. On the other hand, class labeling deals with classes of constituents within structures: verbs, nouns, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, verb phrases, noun phrases, etc (Halliday, 2003, P.183). Moreover, any class acts as a locus for choices to be made. For example, a class, such as a noun phrase necessitates further options: singular or plural nouns, countable or uncountable, etc. In short, the two types of labeling tackle the notion of choice from different angles (Halliday, 2003, P.183).

Functional labeling is the most recommended in structure analysis since it is representative of the choices made earlier. A structurally functional constituent may be composite: it might function as actor, given, subject, and theme at once. That is to say, each component of the structure could be an element of componential. Besides, each function is supposed to realize a given performed choice (Halliday, 2003, p.183). It is, in fact, crucial to specify how choices from the paradigmatic level are realized as structures. This process is achieved by means of “the realization statement”. It indicates the way the structure of a linguistic element connects to the system networks. In the choice of the indicative form, the realization statement mentions the presence of a subject, in the restricted one it shows an actor, and in the operative function, a fusion of the two functional elements (subject as well as actor). However, the conflation of these functions could be risky. This is visible in the use of the active and passive forms. In the former, the function takes the shape of the both subject and actor; in the latter, it only assumes that of the subject. Halliday’s example seems to be a prominent illustration: “John threw the ball” and “the ball was thrown by John”. It is important, hence, to say that a full structure is made up of elements; in turn, each element is composed of a function. This might take various forms: actor, subject, both, or goal, depending on the options available (Halliday, 2003, P.183).

In this respect, there are two possibilities of carrying out labeling: (1) class labeling which categorizes linguistic elements into classes (verbs, adverbs, nouns, adjectives, noun phrases, and noun clauses, and ordinal numbers); (2) functional labeling which ascribes functions to linguistic items (subject, object, actor, Theme, Rheme, complement, auxiliary, and numerative). Again, it would be useful to remark that the main concern here is grammatical

functions (Halliday, 2000, p.25). Besides, any class item might perform various functions at once: a noun may function as subject, actor, object, or Theme. The same is possible for classes; functions could be termed by more than one class. We refer, again, to Halliday's (2000) illustration: "Mary got the first prize". This example is not clear whether the "first prize" means the earlier in terms of time or else in terms of ranking (Halliday, 2000, p.26). If it functions as a "numerative", "first" can be preceded by the item "very" or another time expression, such as "today". But if the "first prize" functions as a "classifier", such ordinal numbers are used: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, etc (Halliday, 2000, pp.26-27).

Bracketing and labeling are solidly connected with one another. Maximum bracketing consists in marking the end of each element. Thus, offering a maximum of structural components. What follows, then, is their classification within the structure (immediate constituent analysis). This is achieved by means of class labeling. On the other hand, minimal bracketing focuses solely on elements performing a functional role. In other words, the minimal interpretation of texts in terms of structural function is to operate in parallel with functional labeling (Halliday, 2000, p.28). This leads us to discuss in clear terms the notions of class and function.

Classes are terms that are similar in one way or another within the structure. These could be word classes, clause classes, phrase classes, or even morpheme ones (Halliday, 2000, p.28). In effect, class labeling originates in the Greek-Latin tradition of sentence analysis. It can be traced to Plato and even his predecessors. However, it can be said that classes within sentences being functional were also developed later. Such were cases to do with inflexions in different constituents of the sentence, not only specific words. So, other parameters must be used to do so: grammatical or semantic ones, or a combination of the two. By applying the grammatically functional criteria, a noun can be singular or plural; usually inflected with an "s"; it can be rendered into a possessive form with the "'s"; also it might be definite or indefinite. Concerning the semantic criteria, the same noun can refer to an animate being (person, animal, or a plant); inanimate things like objects; as it can be either a proper or a common noun (Halliday, 2000, p.29). These are the criteria for this item to be viewed as a part of a class. The term noun specifies the class of that linguistic element. It shares it with other similar ones. At the same time, the structural potential of the same item is quite evident. Yet its function in the whole structure is not made explicit (Halliday, 2000, p.29). This is displayed by the label function. If a noun is tackled from the functional angle within the structure, other terms come to play a major role in the analytical process. The label actor

specifies the function of a linguistic element in the structure. This differs from other elements' functions, such as goal. Therefore, we can notice the same item (noun), but with varied functions (actor or object) (Halliday, 2000, pp.29-30).

The subject is one of the oldest concepts of grammatical analysis. It is traced to Greek and Latin grammar. Its function may not be clear: whether it is the concern of the message (what the message is about), what is said about the subject (the message itself), or the doer of the action. In some cases, this concept can encompass these three functions at once. For example, Halliday's own example: "the duke gave my aunt this tea pot" in which the duke assumes the three functions (Halliday, 2000, p.31). These functions were referred to initially as "psychological subject", "grammatical subject", and "logical subject". The first is the concern of the message; it comes first in a speaker's mind when starting to talk. The second reflects the syntactic link between the noun and the predicate, specifying the nature of the noun (person, animate, or inanimate) as well as the agreement in number. The third acts as the doer of the action (Halliday, 2000, p.31). Moreover, in the daily use of natural language, there are endless structural transformations. All semantic analysis at this level must take into consideration the various forms, the way they differ from each other as well as the reasons behind the variation. It should be noticed, however, that all the forms bear a resemblance to one another in that they are all part of the language system (Halliday, 2000, p.33).

Each function can combine with other ones to contribute to the whole clause. These functions are termed nowadays: Theme, subject, and actor (Halliday, 2000, p.34). The Theme is the element on which the message is based; i.e., the Theme is the part the information is about. The subject is the item representing interaction or exchange between participants. Grammatically speaking, an interactant's subject is in accordance with the predicate to prove the truth of what he says. This is vital for interaction. The actor is the element carrying out the action expressed in a given situation. A clause embodies a human experience; it needs an actor to perform it (Halliday, 2000, p.34). The three functions are respectively synonymous with: (a) "clause as message", (b) "clause as exchange", and (c) "clause as representation". Furthermore, these functions may be subject to various combinations. Further combinations with other functions within the same clause are also possible; for example, the combination actor +process +goal (Halliday, 2000, pp.34-35). The three functions are important in SFG. As "meta functions", they perform their functions independently though they all depart from minimal bracketing (Halliday, 2000, p.35). So language has various types of meaning making up its structures; these are expressed through meta-functions: "experiential" (language as

representation), interpersonal (language as exchange), and textual (language as message) (Halliday, 2000, p.36). Furthermore, it is the experiential meaning that has been focused on the most. This accounts for the fact of it being discrete from the other functions. Indeed, the segmentation of structures into different parts has been characteristic of grammatical description, so it is partly due to bracketing and labeling that the situation-oriented meaning is more stressed than others (Halliday, 2000, p.36).

#### **2. 4. 1. b. 1 Theme and Rheme**

In all languages, a clause embodies a message. With other clauses they contribute to the whole discursive process. This is achieved in English by means of a component fixed to the initial position of a clause; when combined with another element, a clear message is conveyed (Halliday, 2004, p.64). This item is termed the Theme. The recognition of the Theme can be its position either in spoken or written form. It is seen as the component that guides the message in a clause (Halliday, 2004, p.64). The following part says something about the Theme: it is named the Rheme. The two notions originate in the “Prague School”. A functional clause is made up of a Theme and Rheme pattern. Moreover, the Theme, being the context of a clause, implies a speaker or writer selecting the topic (Theme) to be discussed. There might be a variety of Themes each time an interaction is started. In other words, a variation in the Thematic element is possible: it could be in the form of a nominal group or an adverbial, or a prepositional one, for instance (Halliday, 2004, p.66). In this case, the Theme is composed of more than one item (“complex Theme”) (Halliday, 2004, p.68). For example, in Halliday’s illustration: “the one who gave my aunt that tea pot was the duke” the “the one who gave my aunt that tea pot” is the Theme while “was the duke” is the Rheme. The Theme is a nominal complex (Halliday, 2004, pp.69-70). The Theme-Rheme representation of meaning is primordial in a clause.

It should be mentioned that the choice of the thematic element is relevant to the type of “mood” within a clause. In most of independent clauses, it is the subject itself (Halliday, 2004, pp.71-72). The mood may be indicative or imperative. If it is indicative, it could either declarative or interrogative; the latter might be further subdivided into yes/no or Wh-question type (Halliday, 2004, p.72). With declarative forms, the Theme is usually fused with the subject. The thematic element is referred to as “unmarked Theme” because the subject is selected to function as a Theme (Halliday, 2004, p.73). The common Theme is the first personal pronoun “I”. It is part of our daily conversations as we always refer to our

experiences and feelings. The other personal pronouns come in the second place along with impersonal pronouns (it and there), nominal groups (proper or common nouns), and nominalizations (Halliday, 2004, p.73). On the other hand, the Theme not functioning as a subject in a declarative clause is named “marked theme”. It could take the form of a prepositional phrase (adjunct), or an adverbial group (adjunct), or nominal complement not being a subject (common, proper noun, and a pronoun) (Halliday, 2004, p.73).

In interrogative clauses, people usually ask questions to be provided with the information they request (Halliday, 2004, p.75). Questions are subdivided into two forms: a question by means of which a speaker wants to obtain a yes/no polarity answer, and another one for which a particular piece of information is necessary for the identification of an element. This requires the use of Wh-words like who, what, where, etc. The Theme in a yes/no question is the item expressing the negative-positive polarity; it is called the “finite verbal operator”. Thus, finite verbs, such as is, isn’t; have, haven’t; etc are put in the first place before the subject (Halliday, 2004, p.75). The Theme in a Wh-item is the part expressing the type of the lacking information; therefore, it is placed first, either on its own or with a group. The latter functions as a Theme when being a prepositional phrase functioning as a nominal complement (Halliday, 2004, p.75). The Theme in a yes/no question’s pattern is a little different; since the finite operator is independent from the experiential part of the clause, it often extends to the subject to form Theme 1 and Theme 2 (Halliday, 2004, p.76). The speaker mostly chooses the unmarked theme as it embodies the main message of the clause (Halliday, 2004, p.76).

The imperative clause is indicative of something to be done either by “you” or “you and me”. In the second case, the unmarked theme is indicated by the form “let’s” in the initial position. On the other hand, in the first case, the verb functions as the unmarked Theme; the subject is implicit. It is termed the “predicator” (Halliday, 2004, p.76). A negative imperative has its Theme made up of don’t followed by either the predicator as unmarked Theme or the subject. It is only in the imperative clause that the verb (predicator) can be placed in the first place (Halliday, 2004, p.76).

#### **2. 4. 1. b. 2Transitivity**

Fowler (1991) claims that linguistic structures should be considered from a functional point of view; describing them as such on the grounds of the social functions they are supposed to perform (Fowler, 1991, p.70). On this he says:

The positive consequence of a functional classification, from our point of view, is that all the subheadings, the details of syntax, vocabulary, etc, are conceived of functionally: not merely as formally different kinds of structure, but as kinds of structure which are as they are because they do particular jobs. (Fowler, 1991, p.70)

In effect, Fowler suggests an emphasis on the ideational and the interpersonal functions as these constitute the center of attention in critical studies, especially of media texts. He explicitly considers transitivity as the core of representation; it allows the use of a clause in a given way to express or represent various events (Fowler, 1991, p.71). Henceforth, transitivity makes it possible to represent an occurrence from a divergent angle. Basing his assumption on that of Halliday, Fowler assumes that despite the frequency of events in terms of similarity, the very act of reporting them makes them differently perceived. An event must be conceived of as a “semantic configuration” (Fowler, 1991, p.71). Furthermore, transitivity, in allowing choices to be made in terms of representation, leaves room for ideology to manifest itself in the coverage process (Fowler, 1991, p.71). Mass communications, like news papers, are typical examples of ideological power through transitivity (Fowler, 1991, p.71).

In transitivity, the predicate reflects developments and transformations in everyday life. In representing such processes according to a given experiential attitude, verbs can convey a variety of meanings. Indeed, a verb can express an action which is under the control of the doer. Sometimes the doer has no power to direct his action; in this case, the term process is attributed to the action (Fowler, 1991, p.73). Moreover, verbs may be indicative of states of being. This form is built with a verb followed by an adjective (Fowler, 1991, p.73). Ultimately, the three types of verbs can be physical, mental, or verbal (Fowler, 1991, p.74).

#### **2. 4. 1. b. 3Modality**

For Fowler, modality is a particular attitude adopted by a speaker or writer. This attitude may be explicit or implicit in accordance to the linguistic stance (options) the latter adopts (Fowler, 1991, p.85). Fowler classifies modality into four types:

**-Truth:** participants in a written or spoken interaction should make it clear that their utterances or writings are true, or likely to be so. Truth, besides, fluctuates from highest certainty to complete uncertainty about past or future events. This is expressed through modal verbs, such as will, would, could, might, etc It is possible to make use of adverbs or modal adjectives (verb + adjectives): likely, certainly, certain, possibly, possible, etc. In some cases,

the truth of a statement can be unquestionable; so there is no need to use any modal verb. In other words, truth is conveyed implicitly (Fowler, 1991, pp. 86-85).

**-Obligation:** Here, a participant orders his/her interlocutor to act in accordance to his/her wishes. Modal verbs like must, ought to, should, could indicate obligation (Fowler, 1991, p. 86).

**-Permission:** People taking part in a discursive event are allowed to perform some acts (Fowler, 1991, p. 87); this implies verbal or non-verbal acts. May, can, could, and might are relevant modals.

**-Desirability:** a writer or speaker may show approval or disapproval of some actual situation. In this case, evaluative adjectives and adverbs become useful tools to express an attitude. For example, in the field of media, especially the press, such a practice is very common in evaluating situations and events (Fowler, 1991, p. 87).

#### **2. 4. 1. b. 4 Speech act**

In addition to modality, the speech act is also a major player in conveying the intended meaning and bringing in some action. Fowler sees language not only as a mode of representing the surrounding world, but also a practice in real life. He says: “As we are saying something, we are also doing something through speaking” (Fowler, 1991, p. 87). Thus, if a structure is uttered or written with appropriateness in regard to social conditions, it will have practical results or effects. Austin (1961) calls these conditions within which speech events occur “performatives” (Fowler, 1991, p. 88). Moreover, the effectiveness of a speech act is proportional to its appropriateness to social conventions (conventional schemata) which automatically activate its effects (performance). Hence, a speech act should be compatible with those social conventions (Fowler, 1991, p. 88). Speech act analysis, in addition, deals with a society’s ideological structures or systems. In this sense, speech acts are not relevant to specific conventions; they may be representative of many: verbs of speech acts are the tangible proof. For instance, a verb could be part of many speech acts with a variety of appropriateness with different social conventions. This is typical of human communication in which language is a social practice (Fowler, 1991, p. 88). In the field of media, on the other hand, the massive uses of verbs establish the fact of speech acts being social events reflecting given social systems (Fowler, 1991, pp. 88-89).

For Searle (1968), there must be a distinction between “statements as sayings and statements as doings” (Searle, 1968, p.405). What is significant is when sayings perform well. That is to say, the actions they bring in a given situation, causing change to it. Later work by Austin comes up with the crucial fact that all language, no matter if it is a statement or question, is naturally performative; it performs some social act while being used (Searle, 1968, p.406). Besides, Austin elaborates this distinction further. He introduces the differentiation between the “locutionary” and “illocutionary acts”. The first is the production of a sentence with literal meaning which Austin terms “sense and reference”; the second is the force conveyed by the same sentence: it could be a threat, a promise, a warning, etc (Searle, 1968, p.406). Nevertheless, Searle argues that this kind of distinction cannot be fully generalized. He evokes the many cases when locutionary acts activate illocutionary forces of sentences explaining: “The meaning of the sentence determines an illocutionary force of its utterances in such a way that serious utterances of it with that literal meaning will have that particular force” (Searle, 1968, p.407). Further, the description of the locution must be equated with that of the illocution. Therefore, the two are facets of the same coin as the one leads directly to the second (Searle, 1968, p.407). Although the two notions are distinct from each other, they tend to display tremendous overlapping, in that a locution encompasses a lot of illocutionary features and vice versa (Searle, 1968, p.408). Searle comments on this correlation:

They are one and the same act. Uttering the sentence with a certain meaning is, Austin tells us, performing a certain locutionary act; uttering a sentence with a certain force is performing a certain illocutionary act; but where a certain force is part of the meaning, where the meaning uniquely determines a particular force, there are not two different acts but different labels for the same act. (Searle, 1968, p.407)

To summarize what has been elaborated so far, some points have to be mentioned: (1) the main notion upholding the general grammar is choices, which are achieved by passes across system networks without forgetting their condition of entry; (2) any specification of a linguistic item requires a mention of all the options from which choices are obtained in a given structure; (3) We can assume that the system networks underlying the structural realization constitute the deeper dimension; (4) the foremost analysis of the structure is in terms of minimal bracketing as it is simpler than the maximum one; (5) the lexico-grammatical string is labeled from a functional viewpoint; (6) the realizational process is achieved by way of the realization statement (Halliday, 2003, PP.183-184).



### **3 Language and social context**

#### **3.1 Theory of context of situation**

Focusing on the context, Halliday provides some useful insights into the matter. As one of the pioneers of the “theory of context”, he talks of all sorts of information that accompany the text once uttered or written. For him, any attempt to understand the discourse carried by a text necessitates a familiarity with the total environment in which the text is being released (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, p.4). To illustrate things better, Halliday makes reference to Bronislaw Malinowski, the famous anthropologist, whose studies on the social context have been very inspiring. Malinowski (1923/1935) carried out fieldwork on the culture of an ethnic group inhabiting the Trobriand Islands, an archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. Besides, all of his texts about the Trobrianders were in Kiriwinian, the natives’ local language (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, pp.4-5). Nevertheless, Malinowski faced the great difficulty of introducing and explaining his texts to the completely different English readership even in English. So, he resorted to a new technique. This was mainly based on commentaries about the various situations in which he was directly involved. One of them was a fishing expedition situation. While carrying out his observations on that expedition, he came to notice some obviously pragmatic forms of interaction between the fishermen on canoes and those on the shore. It was, indeed, a pragmatically-driven communication among them to facilitate the navigation of the fishermen through the strong current and the dangerous reefs. Malinowski could come up with the conclusion that without being aware of all that was going on in the spot (verbal and non verbal acts), it was impossible to grasp the exchanged discourses. To that whole scene he gave the term “context of situation”, which is the conditions or the surroundings accompanying uttered texts (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, p.5). Moreover, Malinowski created another term: “context of culture”. It is the larger cultural background that lies beyond social activities, such as storytelling, rituals, and religious ceremonies. These could be functional in certain cases, especially when it comes to social solidarity (Halliday & Hasan, 1985\1989, pp.5-6).

Again, it is important to mention that language is the most powerful among the other human semiotic systems. The fact that all language should be understood in the context in which it functions demonstrates its infinite power and high complexity as a system. Language does not only reflect material processes, but also acts as an active factor of changes in society (Halliday, 2003, P.4). Indeed, language has often been considered by nearly all the most

influential critical discourse approaches as “social practice” and context as vitally relevant for its operation as well as interpretation. Besides, CDA approaches, no matter how different they are, tend to put a considerable focus on the close relationship language has with ideology and power relations prevailing in a social setting. Henceforth, various discourses, ranging from political, to media discourses come under critical study since they represent the ideal site of ideological opposition (Wodak, 2001, P.1). Furthermore, Wodak (2001) asserts that the Hallidayan SFG has, over the years, proved itself to be the leading approach of textual study because Halliday draws attention to the constant link between “the grammatical system and the social and personal needs that language is required to serve” (Wodak, 2001, P.8).

When taking part in daily communicative situations, speakers construct meanings, as has been explained so far, from the combinations of simple words. Indeed, each semantic instance is the by-product of both the semiotic and social systems. In other words, physical and social structures and processes realize meaning or “social realities”. This implies that the dominant ideological structures within a given society firmly set up the relations of power. These are, in turn, legitimized by the production and interpretation of discourse (Wodak, 2001, pp.2-3). Fairclough, referring to power, states: “The power to control discourse is seen as the power to sustain particular discursive practices with particular ideological investments in dominance over other alternative (including oppositional) practices” (Fairclough, 1995, p.2). He, furthermore, addresses power as unlikeness between speakers in relation to the way texts are conceived of, transmitted, and received in the socio-cultural context (Fairclough, 1995, p.p-1-2). This is to testify that a semiotic system may, in addition, be resistant to the conventions of power relations. It acts as an instigator for social change (Wodak, 2001, pp.2-3). To sum it up, language and other semiotic systems do not only reflect social realities, but also aim to shake the existing relations of power and control regulating a given society. Hence, texts should be studied within social contexts where they are built up, analyzed and interpreted (Wodak, 2001, pp.2-3).

Although Malinowski was not a linguist in the first place, his theory of context paved the way for subsequent work by a panel of notorious linguists. J.R. Firth, a university colleague of his, was the first English linguist to adopt Malinowski’s concept of context of culture and made of it his starting point to elaborate his proper theory of context. From a functional viewpoint, Firth (1935) remarked that linguistic study is mainly concerned with meaning and meaning is constructed in context. However, Firth developed his own theoretical framework of context of situation. He argued that Malinowski’s notion could not be given the status of a general

linguistic theory as it was part of studies beyond the realm of linguistics. In addition, the analyzed texts, being special in their kind, didn't testify to a standard framework of language analysis (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.8).

Firth developed his own conception of the context of situation. This was premised on describing features of context that were primordial to decipher texts. These were as follows:

**-The participants in the situation:** it relates to the actors in a given speech event. Firth also coined the terms "persons" and "personalities", meaning the social status of the participants in question,

**-The action of the participants:** this has to do with the particular actions participants are involved in: both verbal and non verbal,

**-Other relevant features of the situation:** in the form of any events or objects as these might exercise some effects on the communicative event,

**-Effects of the verbal action:** Firth refers here to the change resulting from the interactional action (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.8).

Firth's schema of the context of situation was noticeably put into practice by F.T. Mitchell, a colleague and a linguist, too. In 1957, Mitchell set out to analyze the language of trade in North Africa: his aim was to describe the immediate environment of those texts in popular markets (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.8-9). Approaches to contextual description have been burgeoning ever since. One of these is the notorious work of Dell Hymes (1974). In his "S P E A K I N G model of speech analysis", Hymes insists on the knowledge of certain features of context for proper interaction, alongside the grammatical structure of language, of course (Lin, 2004, p.1). These are:

**-Setting and scene:** the time as well as the place in which interaction occurs. The scene covers the surroundings of the text,

**-Participants:** like Firth's framework, this feature refers to the people taking part in the verbal action,

**-Ends:** it means the aims and effects the communicative event might have on the situation,

**-Act sequence:** the way events are ordered all through the interaction,

- Key:** here the concern is with the tones of the participants,
- Instrumentalities:** this relates to the structure or the form of the interaction,
- Norms:** this feature determines what is to be allowed socially,
- Genre:** deals with the type of communication being carried out (Lin, 2004, P.1).

### **3.2 The adequate paradigm of context of situation**

To build up the most adequate model for the description of the context of situation, it would be advisable to adopt the principle of people being able to understand one another. It is a common fact that there are cases of failed interaction between people (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.9). This constitutes a whole domain of research in linguistics as well other areas, such as media studies. However, Halliday himself observes that scholars' attention must be more attracted by human capacities of understanding each other in daily communicative situations, not the reverse (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.9). This is reflected in the unconscious process of predictions we make about discourses with our interlocutors. We are mostly aware of what is to be said next. Consequently, we can easily grasp the discourse behind a given text. Here resides the power of the human brain. But, more importantly, the context of situation is of considerable usefulness in every day interaction. As a matter of fact, it constantly provides interactants with the necessary information relative to their verbal interaction. Therefore, linguists should primarily develop an appropriate model for the description of the context of situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 /1989, pp. 9-10). The main purpose behind this is to ascertain how in reality humans interact with such a considerable success (Halliday & Hasan, 1985 /1989, pp. 9-10). It is primordial before going into deep details about the afore-mentioned points to go over the notion of text, nevertheless.

### **3.3 The concept of text**

From a functional point of view, a text is seen as a string of words which performs a particular role in context. This could be a clause of any type, a phrase, or even a word, of course, serving as an element of exemplification (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.10). Widdowson (2004) seems to run counter to the long maintained structural tradition in discourse analysis. This firmly and inflexibly claimed that a text is identified as so in terms of its length: it must be conceived of as a unit longer than a sentence. To put the matter more

briskly, a text is a chain of sentences. This assumption was represented by such figures like Stubbs (1983, 1996); Harris (1952); Chafe (1992). Widdowson demonstrates, by contrast, functionality as the criterion for textuality. So, even the smallest bits of language can be functional. This is achieved by the process of interpretation of a text: locating it in its physical context, and invoking the indicative social knowledge (Widdowson, 2004, pp.5-8). It would also be significant to direct attention to the remarkable absence of any distinction between text and discourse in earlier work (Widdowson, 2004, pp.5-8). Besides, a text can be written, spoken, or in the form of pictures (both still or moving) like in mass media, or else musical notes, etc. So a text encompasses meanings; these are conveyed in words and sentences which are themselves produced in sounds, written signs, or both of them. Logically speaking, meaning should take on a material shape in order to be transmitted from one to another. Hence, a text is "...essentially a semantic unit" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p. 10). Further, it sounds hard to switch from the principles of the "classic" prescriptions of the purely formal or structural theories of texts to their interpretations in real-life contexts. The latter case is the first and foremost focus of modern disciplines, like socio-linguistics and, especially, discourse analysis. Out of this, a text should be considered simultaneously as a product and as a process (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p. 10). Text as a product when taking into account of the fact that it is built into some systematically structured form. Here a text is readily available for analysis. It is represented by the lexico-grammatical axis along which words can be infinitely combined (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.10). The syntagmatic axis is clearly manifest when dealing with the syntactic organization of language. On the other hand, it is a process in terms of the choices of meaning made all through the related system networks constituting the extremely rich meaning potential (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.10-11). It is evident that each semantic choice establishes the context for the following one. Text as a process is, from the functional perspective, the most appropriate since it is in this way that the text is part of the language system. Hence, any description must start from the conception of text as both a product and a process. This is to uncover the whole system that underlies language (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.11). Text as a process is a communicative event by excellence. In interacting with others, we come to interchange meanings in such a creative way that it may seem inconceivable for a human being to do so. Yet it is what actually happens in daily-life situations (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.11). In addition, the forms texts usually take are dialogues because these are the most common cases where texts can be meaningful. By engaging in everyday conversations, people stretch their meaning potential to the limits. This is how languages have evolved to their present

functional status (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.11). Therefore, a text can be conceived of as a construction of lexico-grammatical elements on its own and also a semantic instance within a particular context of situation. The last perspective is at the heart of all comprehensive analyses of texts. In fact, as an instance of continuous choices of meanings throughout the system networks, the text unfolds within its context of situation, in terms of the social value it conveys (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.11). Again, by referring to the notion of meaning as social semiotic, one can extrapolate that the context of situation is, in a way or another, incorporated within the textual structure itself (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.11). This, in turn, is indicative of the fact that both text and context are bearers of meaning in that in any conversational situation speakers can slide from the first to the second and vice versa with manifest ease. Meaning predictions among interlocutors seem to strengthen what has been said so far. Ultimately, the question that needs to be explored is how this motion is made? I.e., how people can make these predictions is a matter to be explored (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.11-12).

### **3.4 The constituents of context of situation**

There are three concepts that are said to be major components or features of the context of situation. Any critical description of a text, whether written or else spoken, should be premised on them as they facilitate the interpretation of the immediate space of the text. These are respectively “field”, “tenor”, and “mode” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.12):

- **The field:** is what is going on in terms of the type of interaction where the interlocutors play a major role. In other words, what the topic debated or exchanged by the participants is like. Language is a vital element: without a semiotic system, no meaning can be conveyed.

- **The tenor:** pertains to participants themselves. It focuses especially on the interpersonal relationships speakers have with each other. These are exactly based on their social positions and their corresponding roles which determine the kind of relationship between the interlocutors involved in a social activity. Besides, tenor covers the various types of role relationships: the roles adopted in a dialogic interaction and in the range of social situations that people take part in daily.

- **The mode:** indicates the role language is supposed to take in the social event: the arrangement within the text in terms of coherence between the compartments of the text as

well as cohesion in clauses. In addition, the mode deals with the contextual function of the text, taking the channel into consideration: the fact of being written, spoken or in both forms. The status of the text is also within the mode's scope, alongside the rhetorical goals of the text. The latter may be expository, persuasive, or didactic (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.12).

### **3.5 The functional aspect of language**

The term "function" is closely linked to language in general and text in particular, without ignoring the context of situation. Indeed, the notion of function can be seen as the use of language by people in everyday situations to convey a variety of social meanings (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.15). However, this notion encompasses more than this simple definition: by using language, speakers are supposed to attain numerous objectives and goals. These can be categorized in different classes. Actually, there have been constant attempts by experts in and outside linguistics to do so. One of them is Malinowski (1923). He devised two general linguistic functions: the "pragmatic" and the "magical functions" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.15). Being concerned mostly with the practical aspect of Kiriwinian in the Trobrianders' daily life, he subdivided the pragmatic function into two other functions: the "active function" and the "narrative function". The "magical function", on the other hand, is relative to rituals and religious activities, like ceremonies, where language takes on a cultural dimension (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.15).

Karl Buhler (1934), the Austrian psychologist, suggested another classification framework for the linguistic functions. It is distinct from that of Malinowski in that it nearly does not focus on the cultural dimension but on individuals (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.15). Buhler talked about the "expressive function", the "conative function", and the "representational function". The first relates to the addresser; the second to the addressee; the third to the space around them (i.e. the physical world) (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.15). Indeed, Buhler was inspired by Plato's model of "first person", "second person", and "third person", which was itself developed by Plato from the rhetorical grammar (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.15-16). The latter construes any form of language as being premised on three categories: first person (speaker), second person (addressee), and third person (everything other than persons) (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.15-16). Later on, Buhler's framework was developed by Roman Jakobson (1960). He built in three additional functions: the "poetic

function”, referring precisely to the message; the “transactional function”, associated with the channel of speech; as well as the “meta-linguistic function”, dealing with the code or the linguistic sign (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.16).

The model of Bühler influenced many others, such as James Britton (1970). As an English scholar in the domain of education, he applied Bühler’s classification framework; but from a different perspective (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.16). He introduced the “poetic”, “transactional”, and “expressive functions”. It is worth remarking again that Britton’s interest was purely educational, in particular the development of writing skills by children. According to him, children can develop their writing capacities when initially put in expressive situations. After that, the capacities evolve towards the transactional phase: that of being able to write properly. Finally, children come to convey meanings through their poetic capacities. Moreover, he associates the transactional function with the speaker’s role, while the poetic function with the spectator’s one (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.16).

Another language functional scheme was put forward by the behaviorist Desmond Morris (1967). In fact, his conceptual framework consists of “information talking”, the joint interchange of meaning between the participants; “mood talking”, resembling the expressive function; “exploratory talking”, relating more to the meta-linguistic function (aesthetic function), and “grooming talking”, the use of language for polite purposes, mainly in social contexts to bring in some friendly tone among speakers (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.16).

To conclude, one would say that in spite of the diversity of their schemes, most of scholars are virtually of like minds regarding language functions: they assume that language allows its users to talk about what is going on around them; it facilitates also the process of expression and effect on the other, without forgetting the two functional elements of the message (aesthetic) as well as the cultural one (magical) (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.16).

### **3.6 How function is fundamental in language**

As what has been mentioned so far, all the efforts by those scholars concerning the various functions of language are aimed at putting in place a general theoretical mode. It would indicate and explain the several uses of language. This is, of course, undertaken not from a structural view point, but from a context-based one (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.16-17). All in all, function and use are facets of the same coin. It should be noted, besides, that



diversity at the functional level is an intrinsic quality of language: the basis of the organization and development of its semantics (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.17).

In his critical analyses performed over several texts of different genres, Halliday illustrates how language and function are inseparable. He introduces his three “meta-functions”:

**-Experiential (ideational) meaning:** this notion centers on the meaning expressed by a text in terms of a given action, process, an occurrence, a state of being (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.18). This meta-function is valid even in scientific and technical contexts, as in Mathiessen’s (2010) own words:

In the discussion so far represented diagrammatically in figure 5, we have not taken account of the different **modes of meaning** that are characteristic of language and a number of other semiotic systems- of ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning. If we consider what we have said so far from the point of view of the theory of **meta-functions**, it is clear that our focus has been on **ideational meaning**. We have been concerned with how our experience of language and other semiotic systems are construed scientifically as meaning within the SFL model. This is after all the realm of technical terminology. (Mathiessen et al., 2010, P.9)

It is again through language that the speakers make their attitudes, evaluations, and perspectives known to each other in a conversation (Fowler, 1991, p.67). Foucault (1972) assumes that this meaning unveils the structures of beliefs as well as knowledge vis-a-vis the world. He, in his own terminology, uses the term “objects” to refer to them (Fairclough, 1995, p. 6).

**-Interpersonal meaning:** it is another function of language in which a text is seen from another semantic angle: that of a speaker and a listener involved in a communicative event. In this case, their social statuses and roles come to play a key role in determining relations between the participants, therefore conveying interpersonal meanings. Halliday refers to the interpersonal meaning saying: “we are considering it [a sentence he critically analyses] from the point of view of its function in the process of social interaction” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.19). He goes further assuming:

The sentence is not only a representation of reality; it is also a piece of interaction between speaker and listener. Whereas in its experiential meaning language is a way

of reflecting, in its interpersonal meaning language is a way of acting; we could in fact use that terminology, and talk about LANGUAGE AS REFLECTION and LANGUAGE AS ACTION as another way of referring to experiential and interpersonal meaning. (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.19)

According to Fairclough, the interpersonal function pertains to the various social identities and the relationships between them. Foucault uses the term “subjects” in reference to this whole system of social relationships (Fairclough, 1995, p.6).

**-Logical meaning:** this is a function that accounts for the relationships between clauses and phrases; not from a paratactic point of view, but from a hypotactic one. In this case, the function of language may stimulate a reinterpretation of a given text if a speaker builds it without coordinating conjunctions or subordinating ones. In other words, an interpersonal speech event can entail a reinterpretation of a construction metaphorically. In Halliday’s own words: “There is in every natural language a relatively small network of fundamental logical relations, which are not the relationships of formal logic, but are those from which the relationships of formal logic are ultimately derived” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.19-20). These logical relations are represented by the grammatical concepts of “parataxis” and “hypotaxis” used alternatively.

**-Textual meaning:** it is, indeed, complementary with the three previous functions because it is pertinent to the construction of the text as a whole. A semiotic system ensures connection within itself (coherence/ cohesion relations among structures) and with the external social structures. This makes a text accessible to its receivers in terms of discourse. That is to say, a detailed consideration of the components of a semiotic system helps unveiling the ideological schemata underlying it (Fowler, 1991, P.67). Henceforth, all the stratificational features including meaning, lexico-grammar, phonetics and phonology form the textual function of language (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.22). Moreover, Fairclough states that the textual function implies a multi-layered analytical process. This analysis does not stop at the structural level as it is claimed by some discourse analysts like Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). These assume that textual analysis should deal with structures beyond sentences. In contrast, Fairclough perceives language as discourse used socially: “social practice” (Fairclough, 1995, p.7). Discourse analysis should turn around the way language unfolds in the socio-cultural environment. Therefore, lexico-grammar, phonology, turn-taking conventions, activity types must be taken into consideration for ideological implications (Fairclough, 1995, p7).

As a brief summary, one would say that language is supposed to perform four vital functions when used for interaction: the experiential function, the interpersonal function, the logical function, as well as the textual function. Each text is multifunctional; it is analyzed from different viewpoints so as a complete interpretation can be worked out (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.22). Halliday's (1978) "multi-functionality of texts" implies a representation of experiences of the world, facilitates social interaction, and ensures connection between the parts of texts (coherence and cohesion). This testifies to Foucault's assumption of the social basis for constructing both texts and discourse for interaction (Fairclough, 1995, p.6). These "modes of meaning" make up Halliday's "meta-function theory" on one hand, and are intrinsic qualities of language, on the other (Mathiessen et al., 2010, p.9).

## **4 Register variations**

### **4.1 Text and context predictions**

As a starting point, it is very crucial to recall what has been said so far. We have, in the first place, referred to the main features of the context of situation (field, tenor, and mode). These are considered by Halliday himself as "...the abstract components of the context of situation, if we look at it semiotically, as a construction of meanings." The context of situation is dependent on them for interpretation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.28). In the second place, we shed some light on the functional aspects of language (the ideational, interpersonal, logical, and the textual functions). Ultimately, more emphasis has been laid on "the systematic relationship between the two" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.28). Here, we have undertaken to show how Halliday and Hasan (1985) establish a correlation between elements of the context of situation and those of the semantics of a semiotic system. In other words, how the field, the tenor, and the mode features are respectively expressed through the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual meanings. After all, function is derived from the context of situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.28).

To illustrate this point, Halliday (1985, 1989) sets out to analyze a text in which the "systematic relationship" is quite striking. It involves a young child named Nigel and his father. They are engaged in an interactive event (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.28). Halliday begins, as it is the custom in SFG, by features of the context of situation:

**-Field of discourse:** the content is about a child playing with his toys. He is attended by his father. Furthermore, the child relates present events with similar past ones, and refers to equivalent objects which do not exist in the present context. This is done by means of comparison and evaluation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.29-30). The field is expressed in the meanings relevant to people's experience of the surrounding world and the inner one (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30). This expression can be shown in the following way:

-In the first place, the processes are those relative to existence and possession as well as movement and place. These are expressed when the child means "giving and having" and "finding and being" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.29-30). Movement and place are reflected in meanings like "going and putting" and "carrying or sending" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30).

-In the second place, there are grammatical constructions into which the processes are encoded. In addition, the same constructions identify the participants taking part in the processes. A given process might need a person and an object; for example, the form "Nigel moves the train" or just one object "It [the train the child plays with] moves all round and round" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30).

-In the third place, the two participants make use of a set of names to refer to different objects manipulated by them. For instance, "trains, lorry, the chair, the floor, the railway line" as well as some descriptive terms like, "blue and black" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p30).

-In the fourth place, Nigel remembers certain past occurrences while he plays with his trains. So he invokes some time references to make both the present and the past relevant to the interaction.

-In the fifth place, as the young child needs to grade all his objects (toys) from good, appropriate and effective to bad or ineffective, he devises such forms as "it will go and go well" (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30).

To sum it up, the expressions and the vocabulary that make up the ideational meaning, in which all our experiences of the outer and inner world are encapsulated portray or reflect the field. The latter is about a particular event taking place in a situation: in this case, Nigel is at play with his toys assisted by his father.

**-Tenor of discourse:** Nigel is a young child aged one year and eleven months. He is involved in some communicative act with his father. In the light of this, the child makes clear what he intends; he has some influence on the parent (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30). The same analytical procedure is applicable to the tenor of discourse of this text. There is a close link between the features of the context and the linguistic ones:

Firstly, the child-father relationship is shown through the use of specific personal pronouns pertaining to both the child and the father: “you” meaning the child and “daddy” father. The child’s pronoun seems the only one in his grammar at this age (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30).

Secondly, the child has control on the situation and this is justified by the mood choice. He builds in positive sentences and questions and demands. Concerning the last option (demands), Nigel uses the imperative of the first person “you want to” which is synonymous with, “I want to” so that he can express his intentions (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.30). Moreover, the child’s attempt to direct the actions of his parent to his aims is visible in the second-person imperative: “want daddy to” referring to “I want you to”. When it comes to positive sentences and questions, the child shows his perception of the play. He expects the father to either agree or disagree with him (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.30-32). The statements, the questions, and the imperatives are demonstrative of the interpersonal function, which reflects the tenor, on the other hand (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.30-31).

**-Mode of discourse:** It is instantly noticeable that the text is spontaneously spoken. It, besides, takes on the forms of dialogues and monologues in alternation. Also, it is highly pragmatic in that the child expects some helpful advice from his parent (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.33). So, the last step consists in elaborating on the relationship mode/textual meanings. This is, of course, done practically (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p33). Going over the text analytically, Halliday observes the following points:

-1 When the text takes on the dialogue form, it is highly elliptical. The types of questions and their relative answers are so. For example: “which engine?” “The little black one?” “Yes”.

-2 Being pragmatic, the text encompasses “exophoric pronouns” to refer to the play items: the use of the personal pronoun “it” and the demonstrative “that” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.33).

- 3 the monologue is further developed and cohesion within it is ensured by some linking words, such as “but”. Further, “anaphoric pronouns”, which refer to previously mentioned words, are present in the text (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.33).

- 4 the notion of the theme in the text draws attention to the one who is carrying out the actions in the situation. This is illustrated by the imperative form used by the child himself. Therefore, the Theme here could be Nigel “I want to” or the father in “I want you to” .This is proportional to the degree of emphasis either on child or the parent. In this case, the child is the Theme in sentences where he assumes the structural role of the person performing actions with some effect on an object. On the other hand, the presence of only one participant in a sentence makes of the object the theme, Like “the train”, “the lorry”, “the railway line” and so on (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.33).

From this illustrative matter, it becomes evident how the relationship between features of the context of situation and meaning categories is well-grounded in. This analytical model does not only strengthen that tight link, but it also reveals the significant process of sliding from context to text (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.33). As a matter of fact, in all communicative events taking place in our daily life, people continuously take into account certain features of their immediate speech environment: they make inferences from the field, tenor, and mode of the situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.34-35). These would help them predict the probable linguistic functions. In other words, they are able to make predictions of what is said next. The same process is possible the other way round. Linguistic features can be very indicative of the constituents of the situation: participants in a speech act may come across the grammatical and especially the semantic components of a text to be able to be aware of the content of the situation. So in interaction, speakers make inferences from context (field, tenor, and mode) of a text’s functional elements (ideational, interpersonal, logical, and textual) and vice-versa. This is the way in to successful communication (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.35).

There might be instances where one of them is missing. This can be noticed in literary texts, for example. Indeed, as readers, we are exposed to a dearth of context of situation; henceforth, it is our task to establish the inner context of the text. The process is achieved by means of a deep reading of the literary text in terms of its functional dimension (i.e., we make inferences from the semantic categories about the kinds of situational features) (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.35). Halliday refers to the whole process, saying:

Any piece of text, long or short, spoken or written, will carry with it indications of the context. We only have to hear or read a section of it to know where it comes from. This means that we reconstruct from the text certain aspects of the situation, certain features of the field, the tenor, and the mode. Given the text, we construct the situation from it. (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.37)

## **4.2 The Term “register”**

The term “register” is introduced at this level with a specific purpose. In fact, Halliday sets out to account for a very frequent linguistic phenomenon: that of language variation. It means any variation in terms of situation that can affect a language’s semantic system. In other words, changes in linguistic functions resulting from changes in the constituents of the context of situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.37). For this particular reason, the concept of register is built into the whole theoretical framework. What is a register then? It is to do with meaning, so linguists see it as a particular set of semantic constructions depending on given constructions of contextual features associated with field, tenor, and mode (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, pp.37-38). Besides the semantics, a register needs to take a given form, a grammatical organization, alongside a phonological expression. There might also be certain clues determining the register to participants: words, sounds, or structures (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.38).

Registers can be classified into two distinct types; this variation still concerns the meaning potential: registers with a restricted range of meaning, and registers with an unlimited meaning scope. Let’s focus initially on limited ones: “closed registers” in Halliday’s own terms. These could be well expressed and exemplified by some striking instances like messages mailed from the armed forces, mainly during armed conflicts (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.38). Halliday, actually, refers particularly to the Second World War. In those severe times, conscripts saw their messages under scrutiny and tightly limited in number. As a result, messages were cancelled; and, instead, coded numbers were transmitted by telegraph to their families. This brand of register lacks in semantic potential (creativity): no soldier was allowed to act out of that restricted register (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.38). In addition, registers may be limited in terms of cultural belonging: in the Occident, for example, the register of music is traced to Italy of the Renaissance (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.39). Virtually all of everyday registers are away off the closed ones (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.38).

More open registers, on the other hand, are to a certain extent flexible in meanings. By contrast to closed ones, “open registers” comparatively allow more freedom of semantic variation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.39). In the press, for instance, headlines could relatively testify to this openness: a journalist or a reporter might switch from topic to topic with greater ease. However, Halliday draws attention to the relativity of openness of register. He remarks that in spite of being more open-ended, a register whatever its nature could be prescribed for participants in a given speech occasion. Halliday justifies his assumption by referring to the context of teaching and learning. This domain is one of the most extensively researched areas in terms of teacher-learner interaction. Indeed, young learners frequently encounter a lot of problems understanding their teachers’ registers as they move up the learning grade from primary to secondary school. Obviously speaking, the variation in register is very constant from one level to another. Children should learn them, correspondingly (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, p.39). Furthermore, he evokes the extreme case in terms of free register: everyday spontaneous conversations. That is to say that even these most open-ended instances are not completely free semantically. He concludes: “There is no situation in which the meanings are not to a certain extent prescribed for us. There is always some feature of which we can say, ‘this is typically associated with this or that use of language’” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.39). If there were absolute open-ended registers, people would never be able to make any predictions of meanings in social occasions (Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989, P.39).

Another stimulating question is what can register variations produce? Ruaiya Hasan (2004) takes the initiative to answer this question. But before embarking on such a deed, she sets up the conditions to do so: identifying the kinds of variations in register. According to Hasan, the much that was said about discourse or social meaning has not yet brought an end to the unsaid about the discursive nature (Hasan, 2004, p.16). Daily life is infinitely submerged with different genres of talk. One of these is the casual type which seems to be the most predominant one. This is due to its social nature, of course. In Hasan’s point of view, any variation at this level must automatically involve both the semantic as well as the lexical components. The structural lay out remains relevant to the genre itself (Hasan, 2004, p.16). Nevertheless, nearly no explanation seems to shed light on causes of either variations or consistencies in a particular genre: casual conversation is one example (Hasan, 2004, p.16).

Discourse is then the starting point towards ascertaining the variations underlying register. This concept has been defined in a variety of ways: according to different frameworks.



Grounding her perspectives on discourse in Widdowson's ones, Hasan assumes that a clarification of discourse must take priority over its functional dimension. Besides, discourse has to be considered in relation to other relative theoretical notions, such as variation and consistency (Hasan, 2004, p.16). That is to say, the terms discourse, consistency, and variation are concomitants if associated with the social context as the fourth concomitant. Discourse is then construed from a systemic functional angle: "...and it is in this light that I offer the definition of discourse as it is used in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL): discourse is the process of language in some recognizable social context(s)" (Hasan, 2004, p.16).

### **4.3 Discursive Variation and Consistency**

To tackle the two notions of "consistency" and "variation" in discourse, Hasan directs attention to the statement made by Lemke (1995) about artifacts made by humans. He observes that their production has been consistent over a long period of time, which gives them this attribute of consistency. Inspired by this assumption, Hasan makes an analogy between discursive consistency and that of artifacts. In her viewpoint, discursive consistency is gained over time. Simultaneously, she stresses the point that discursive variation should be considered and studied in connection with consistency: variation is defined as a deviation from stability, normality, or consistency. She remarks about this saying: "The meaning of *variation* is arrived at by focusing on the meaning of *consistency* or *normality*" (Hasan, 2004, p.17). Hasan assumes that if an instance is to be considered as consistent, it must be practiced frequently. This is what we can term "instantiation". Any instance may have a number of instantiations over some time span; these are distinct from each other in terms of semantics. However, all of the instances bear some resemblance with one another in that they possess properties or features that are typical of the original instance. Hence, variation is believed to be a kind of consistency (Hasan, 2004, P.17).

To support her claim, Hasan makes reference to "Shakespearean sonnets" as solid evidence. Shakespeare, indeed, when he wrote his sonnets, there was no literary genre called Shakespearean sonnets. It is out of a number of instantiations throughout time that this genre became well established and widely recognized. In other words, the properties inherent in this literary genre are encapsulated in all other instances. These contribute, through a number of instantiations, to the preservation and maintenance of the general genre. Of course, the time factor is quite primordial in this process. This process is applicable to all speech types in any

conceivable domain: literary genres (poetry, prose, and drama); technical and scientific compositions; every day casual dialogues; transactional activities, etc. Nevertheless, the time span is not enough for a given genre or instance to get recognized as so. An instance needs also to be valued and, thus, validated as such by the community or else the sub-community by virtue of adopting it as part of their daily social life (Hasan, 2004, p.18). Fairclough (1995) introduces the notion of “taken-for-granted knowledge” or “BGK” to which all of speech participants in a given community must adhere. No matter the difference in setting or conditions, speakers are expected to infer this shared knowledge. This is what Coward and Ellis (1977) name “the doctrine of unified and consistent subject” (Fairclough, 1995, p.30). In addition, Fairclough refers to consistency in terms of “orderliness” as they are concomitants of the “naturalization” of back ground knowledge. This seems symmetrical with Hasan’s own notion of consistency in register. He assumes, likewise, that orderliness is based on the taken-for-granted background knowledge; in other words, knowledge taken as common sense. Consequently, Fairclough assumes that the common sense regulating discursive consistency in any social group is by no means ideological since it is socially shared (Fairclough, 1995, p.31).

Hall (1982) assumes that there are distinct degrees of consistency or naturalization of ideologically-based structures. Fairclough builds in a whole “naturalization scale”. This ranges from the top of common sense knowledge observed by all subjects in a society to the lowest levels of adherence (Fairclough, 1995, p.31).

To sum up, discursive consistency is regarded in relation to variation. Also, a particular speech type or genre earns the status of consistency through a series of instantiations over time. Practice within the generic domain is necessary, too. Ultimately, validation by a community allows it to be described as appropriate within its relevant genre or domain. This demonstrates how things occur in a culture.

Variation does not make the exception in terms of its definition. In Hasan’s words the two concepts (consistency and variation) are “shifters”: the typical properties of consistency characterize variation, too. It is inconceivable to apply variation to an instance that is not frequent enough: one not instantiated for a number of times. Further, the variations in any instance do not act as a break with the norms of a general type of talk as long as they are by-products of several instantiations. These, in turn, by being socially approved and validated acquire an “objective reality”: become themselves instances of a well-known genre or text

type. Therefore, what has been already said about consistency is likewise valid for variation. Both terms are said to have a complementary relationship in the particular sense that none of them can exist without the presence of the other: variation occurs within the scope of consistency; consistency is in constant need of variation as a semantic-enlargement potential (Hasan, 2004, p.18).

#### **4.4 Types of Discursive Variations**

The nature of variation introduced at this level is one that is closer in meaning to those of both speech varieties (Hymes, 1986) as well as Halliday's (1964) register variation framework. All social acts are subject to variations and consistency; discourse is one of them. What is exceptional for discourse is the fact that in a given speech type (instance) there might be other variations turning up in parallel. These are part of the overall text form, and it is very hard to distinguish them from each other unless the speaker's intent is made obvious. There is a tradition in sociolinguistics, in addition, which adds in more complication to the matter. In this case, registers give no room for variation. Various social groups consider their talk types rather stable and normal, and they hold on to a belief that totally excludes variation. Nonetheless, this way of perceiving variation seems, to Hasan, devoid of logic. In fact, by going over various social groups' speaking norms, it turns evident how these are rather distinct from one group to another. She, on the other hand, refers to the SFL theoretical framework elaborated by Halliday (1964). It is a scheme whereby Halliday explains how a distinction is made between different kinds of discursive variations. This practical task is based on Halliday's assumption that "language as process varies by reference both to 'the users and the uses of language'" (Hasan, 2004, p.19). Correspondingly, both users and uses of language contribute to the identification of a speech genre. In addition, users belong to various social groups or "user types", in Halliday's own terms. Each group has its usual norms that are quite distinct from other groups' ones. Hasan labels this type of variation as "dialectal variation". This concept developed from the word dialect in sociolinguistics (Hasan, 2004, p.19).

Alongside dialectal variation, emerges the situational variation which, in turn, stimulates language uses. This process acquired the name "diatypic variation" after Gregory (1967). Both types of variation have a common feature: the two activate a number of further instantiations over time to make a speech type recognizable as consistent. Ultimately, it can

be assumed that the two types of variation, especially the second one, are equally valid for Halliday's notion of register (Hasan, 2004, p.19).

#### **4. 4. 1 Diatypic Varieties**

Context is significant for diatypic variation as it bridges the gap between the linguistic features and contextual ones. Hasan (1980) demonstrates the importance of the context of situation by stressing the close link between text and context. She brings to mind the definition of discourse as language use in a particular identifiable context. In fact, there is more to this definition than it seems. Discourse firmly establishes the relationship between context and text in such a way that it can be said that they are inextricably intertwined. Hasan shows this clearly through Halliday's own explanation: "...I borrowed from Halliday (1999: 8) displays the postulated relationships between: '(a) context of culture and context of situation; (b) between language and text; and (c) among these four terms of the theory, which are closely implicated in the production of discourse'" (Hasan, 2004, p.19). In other words, context being a system and a process is inseparably attached to language being a system and a process. That is to say, the relationship between context of situation and text is that of realization in the sense that the context of situation is materialized and stabilized by the text type (through discourse process); the text is stimulated (activated and stabilized) by the context of situation likewise. The process of instantiation, at the same time, contributes to the validation of a particular talk type or genre (Hasan, 2004, p.20).

What has been said about the system networks at the linguistic level is applicable to the contextual dimension, too. The paradigmatic choices made through the system networks provide a specification of the potential available for the various types of clauses. This can, of course, be represented by such features as "mood" and "transitivity", etc. The delicacy in terms of choices and organization necessitates validation by means of a number of instantiations. Once described from the external dimension, the network systems testify to the potential of all the types of the field contextual constituent (talk types). The latter is, indeed, the source of this potential.

#### **4. 4. 1. a Variation and Consistency in Diatypic Varieties**

Any text performing an instantiation process of a particular diatypic variety should consist of two features: "texture" and "structure" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Hasan, 1985). It has often

been a tradition in the area of text analysis that a text instantiating a diatypic variety must stick to the structure of the variety in question. In short, this shows a structural consistency. For example, one could refer to the advertising structure. Texture, on the other hand, allows difference from an instance to another. Both features, however, can act as variation stimulants. Starting with the concept of structure, we would assume that Hasan (1978, 1985) was behind its coinage: she used the term “structure potential” to describe the noticeable consistency throughout the instances of a given variety. The same term, in addition, provides a whole range of structural possibilities for a particular variety. By the same token, all instances belonging to a variety must adopt any one of these structures (Hasan, 2004, p.23).

The last case implicates the notion of “obligatory and optional elements of the text structure”. As a matter of fact, the two contradictory constituents of this notion are explained by way of “flexibility” or “fixity” within the syntactic level. Consistency is demonstrated by the frequent position of an item at the syntactic level. Hence, Halliday (1988) evokes the “recognition criteria”. These help determine the variety type. On the other hand, variation might occur at the structural level within the same diatypic variety. This is typical in the availability of optional locations for a text’s structural elements in the syntactic sequence. The outcome of this variation is inevitably one or several further sub-varieties. In short, this discursive theoretical framework provides the criteria relative to the identification of diatypic varieties and even other possible sub-varieties at work within them (Hasan,2004, P.23).

When it comes to texture, consistency and variation are inherent attributes. In the same direction as structure, texture, likewise, demonstrates both consistency and variability as well. Texture is made up of a range of semantic sets. These are realized by structures along the syntactic axis by means of coherence and cohesion (Hasan, 1984, 1985; Butt, 1987; Cloran, 1999; Lukin, 2002). At the same time, the realization of structural elements is attributed to meaning within the scope of a particular variety. Meaning-driven consistency is a matter of certain choices in the semantic dimension. (Hasan, 1985) illustrates the case by referring to the domain of selling and buying: the use of a “sale request” is indicative of the goods to be bought. Henceforth, the criteria relevant to the identification of a variety are attributed to some specific meanings: the obligatory structural elements necessary to recognize a diatypic variety are, in turn, realized by certain selected meanings (Hasan, 2004, p.23).

Variations may be distinctly present all through the instances of a variety. In fact, there is a close link between the already mentioned optional elements of the structure of a text and

meanings. This takes the form of a realizational process: optional elements come to be realized by those meanings. The whole process is described by the term “associated and elaborative” (Hasan, 1984). Henceforth, instances are stretched along a vast range of meanings. Of course, all this is still taking place within the same variety: the term “genre specific semantic potential” (Hasan, 1985) stands for the semantic range. It is, also, very crucial to remark that instantiations at this level bring in some degree of limitation in terms of optional realization. Hasan recalls a statement confirming this by Bakhtin: “The same position is voiced by Bakhtin (1986), who suggested that ‘the selection of the textual, phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language’ as well as other aspects of the linguistic organization of the text are ‘determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication’” (Hasan, 2004, P.24). In sum, both consistency and variation tend to overlap in texture: there is more room for variation across unique instances of a particular variety which earns its particularity from instantiation. Ultimately, all these choices, realizing obligatory or optional elements, invoke the meaning potential at the paradigmatic level.

A more logical consideration of the two levels at once would necessarily imply a realizational Link between the paradigmatic options and the overall structural construction. At this level, a specific description of choices through the system networks reveals the structural contribution by means of these options. In other words, the choices’ role resides in the building of the text’s structure. Meanwhile, the more delicate sequential elements provide the texture of the same text. Thus, the generic identity of the text is to be equated with structure, and its unique features across individual instances are encapsulated in texture. This interrelation can be reflected in the field of buying and selling. Again, Hasan explains this in clear terms: the act of buying indispensable goods over the counter represents the general structure of the text, while the delicacy at the syntagm would determine its texture (the items bought in each instance) (Hasan, 2004, P.25). Of course, frequent instantiations of these instances contribute to the recognition of the general diatypic variety. By the same token, this same realizationally-based relationship between both dimensions may, also, take form at the clausal level. Indeed, the structure along the lexico-grammatical line is indebted for its realization to the outcome of choices from the system networks. A specification of the clause’s structural delicacy, on the other hand, helps determine the lexis to make up that clause. This is the logic upholding the relationship lexis/structure in the clause (Halliday, 1961, 1966; Hasan, 1985, 1987; Tucker, 1996, 1998; Halliday and Mathiessen, 1999) (Hasan, 2004, P.25). To conclude, we would assume that the process of mutual realization of text’s structure and texture is after all the by-

product of the context of situation: discourse of any type is dependent on appropriate contextual features as these give a text its discursive value. When it comes to a written text without any explicit context, it becomes the reader's task to infer it from the text itself (Hasan, 1985) (Hasan, 2004, P.25).

A diatypic variety could, in certain cases, be further sub-divided. As the contextual system networks shape up the lexico-grammatical structure making a diatypic variety identifiable, the structural delicacy stimulates the possibility for variation. The latter case facilitates the entry of eventual sub-varieties into an overall variety. Furthermore, instances, which are the locus for variation, differ considerably from each other. Nevertheless, this power of variation should by no means be construed as a deviation from the initial variety. Hence, the register identity being worked out with a relative ease means that consistency is the criterion for a variety recognition, regardless of the inside sub-varieties (Hasan, 2004, P.26). It is, in addition, assumed that the concept of register does not exist. This is supported by the absence of the realization of obligatory and elaborative elements of texts. In other words, there is neither consistency nor variation. However, such a claim implies an illogical dearth of distinction between concepts of categories and instances; it is within instances that categories are instantiated. Moreover, it is evident that complexity is inherent in the instance: instances earn their variation potential out of the independence in acting displayed at the level of category. So, unless an instance is a copy, it differs from others. Simultaneously, it bears resemblance to other instances as they all come to operate under the same diatypic variety (Hasan, 2004, P.26). The constant move from one register to another in daily interactions strengthens the claim made beforehand: casual conversations are the locus for registerial consistency and variation. This is the palpable proof of human knowledge of both consistency (structure) and variation (texture) underlying registers. It follows that by conversing in social situations, speakers switch from one diatypic variety to another; this accounts for casual conversations being under frequent analysis (Hasan, 2004, p.26).

#### **4. 4. 1. b The complexification of textual structure**

It has been quite obvious how a diatypic variety can encompass the potential for variation and consistency at once. Worthy of attention at this level is the power of contextual features to determine a given variety. This is symmetrical with the assumption suggested by Halliday and Hasan (1976). It points out the cohesion a text has with its relevant context of situation; a conversation is limited to a specific context. This is reflected in a given diatypic variety.

Therefore, language use has to adhere to contextual spatial-temporal restrictions. Bernstein (1990) argues in favor of such a point of view by advocating a classification of different contexts of situation. Nonetheless, casual everyday interactions can prove Bernstein's assumption to be inflexible, not to say unreasonable. In fact, people participating in conversations more often tend to make endless switches from one thing to another through registers. In Hasan's own words: "Distinct varieties interpenetrate" (Hasan, 2004, p.27). She goes on further:

In fact, such interpenetration is sometimes cited as the defining characteristic of casual conversation; talk for the sake of talking is often talk apropos different goings-on, all happening between the same interactants in the same spatial-temporal location, and employing the same means of contact.(Hasan, 2004, P.27)

This interpenetration of contexts of situation, hence of diatypic varieties, acts as another stimulant for discursive variation (Hasan, 2004, P.27).

The "complexification principle" gives room for more variation at the level of diatypic instances. It has been discussed so far that instances display a potential for variety within a general variety expressed in a simple text. The process of rendering texts more complex (complexification of texts), on the contrary, implies instances of divergent varieties all occurring in a complex text: a kind of "different things together" (Hasan, 2004, P.30). Besides, variations within a diatypic variety or beyond it are identical in terms of non-randomness. Hence, a distinction has to be made between complex texts being the product of complexification, and texts realized either through "parallelism" or "enclosure". Parallel texts can be seen in public places as well as public transport, such as buses: the "co-location" of different social events. Enclosure can be illustrated by reference to a conversation in which one participant might suddenly diverge from the course of a talk spontaneously. These forms of variation are mere reflexes to the physical context, but not intended (Hasan, 1973). On the contrary, the realization of distinct varieties into complex texts by interpenetrating instances is away off spontaneity, i.e. the emergence of odd diatypic varieties activate the interpenetration of instances with each other. The ideal illustration for complexification is novels. Indeed, they offer a range of complex main texts in which sub-texts overlap. Ultimately, there is an urgent need to shed more light on the phenomenon of complexification; where, when, and how a text can be complex (Hasan, 2004, P. 32). However, it should be noticeable that the same space for producing complex texts does not say enough about the process of complexification. That



is to say, language should not only be seen from the point of view of its use, but also from that of its user-type (Hasan, 2004, PP. 33-34).

The identity of participants is very important in the realization of complex texts. Indeed, the inclusion of some selections relative to the field and the mode simultaneously contribute to the parallel use of a set of diatypic varieties. The interactants' similarity, also, enables them to share the same interactional location. There is more to complexification than that, nonetheless. It is common knowledge that the contextual feature of tenor provides some useful information relevant to the participants in a given interaction. Hasan (1978) introduced three practical concepts to specify the relationship they share: (1) the "agentive role", which is a description of the role each participant assumes in the course of the interaction (mother acting as a care giver and her son as care receiver), (2) "social role", which indicates respectively their status or position within the social hierarchical order (hierarchical attributes, such as age, family ties, and expertise), and (3) "the social distance", which relates to the historical dimension of their mutual relationship across their frequent interactions (Hasan, 2004, PP. 33-34). In addition to this relational framework, Cloran (1982) put forwards other criteria for building in inter-participants relations: "hierarchical dimension", "degree of intimacy", and "historical attributes". In the same direction, Martin (1992) brought into the tenor systems his own distinctive criteria of "affect" and "degree of involvement". It is, henceforth, vital to go over the system network of tenor's choices in the same way as field and mode's ones. These choices play a helpful part in shaping up the belonging of speakers and the origin of texts, too. However, the information mentioned above does not provide any complete knowledge about the participants' belonging to specific social entities. In short, the interaction in the same spatial-temporal space, involving two identical speakers seems to be devoid of "semantic styles" that can easily determine speakers as particular types of users (user-type), using specific dialectal varieties (Hasan, 2004, pp. 33-34).

#### **4. 4.2 Dialectal Varieties**

It is suggested that people using language to fulfill social purposes are referred to as users. In the use of language, the speaker's identity gets quite variable. In other words, language is thoroughly dependent on the contextual dimension to operate functionally; so is the user's identity. The opposite is true for language by user: the principles underlying the user's belonging are not subject to variation. The place, the time, and the larger community remain unchanged. So, recognition of a user's identity relies perfectly well on such concepts as

“when”, “where”, “who with” (Hasan, 2004, P.35). An interactant can be said to belong to a given sub-group or even a whole community that might have existed in some place and time. In more technical terms, sociolinguistics employs terms to determine each user-type’s attribute: “geolect” for where; “chronolect” for when; and “sociolect” is synonymous with who with. Henceforth, the three “Ws” link a linguistic variety with a given social group; any attempt to interpret a text must invoke a reference to its user’s type. Hasan, stressing the socio-cultural dimension writes:

Being an Elizabethan, for example, would imply living within a particular kind of sociopolitical organization; within a certain mode of the distribution of the community’s capital, both material and symbolic; within a certain tradition of the distribution of access to and participation in discourses of various kinds whether specialized or quotidian; possessing a certain level of control on material phenomena; having a certain standard of medical care; entertaining some concept of the possibilities of mobility both physical and social; subscribing to a range of views on right and wrong; and so on. In all these respects, the Elizabethan people differ from today’s inhabitants of England. (Hasan, 2004, P.35)

It follows that the notions of time and place are interwoven to form the whole scene in which the social organization is set up. It is specified by the social structures dominating in a given community. Milroy (1980) coined the term “social networks” to refer to them. It deals with community in terms of its uniqueness and speakers’ belonging. It has been a tradition in sociolinguistics to group users according to certain criteria like: religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, color, profession, caste, etc. That is to say that the position someone occupies in a social hierarchy is highly responsive to these social structures. Bernstein (1990) encapsulates them in his term “social positioning” (Hasan, 2004, P.36). Therefore, it is evident that a community’s structural layout underlying the different positions in it is behind much of dialectal variation. The user’s type is indicative of the relations of power in a society.

It is crucial to note that the semantic potential of language is of inevitable relevance to dialectal variation. In dealing with a dialectal variety, one needs to consider not only the social reality, but also the semantic dimension. This conceptual framework implies variation throughout the different strata of a dialectal variety. Henceforth, meaning, wording, and sound are said to be sub-varieties of the same dialectal variety. These are termed respectively:

“semantic style” (social position), social dialect (social networks), and accent (speech fellowship). In fact, Halliday (1972) takes into consideration the semantic style, stressing that it is an unavoidable parameter in tackling dialectal variation. To him, there is no room for similarity across cultural sub-groups: there exist various semantic ways of performing social events from one culture to another. The three Ws can exercise decisive influence on discourse. Furthermore, sub-cultural communities are the basis of speakers’ positions within larger social structures in terms of belonging. This has the logical implication of ideologies shaping speakers’ perceptions of their immediate reality: how the group is organized at all levels, what the norms defining wrong and right are, how various discourses are enacted socially, etc. The “coding orientation” devised by Bernstein (1990) testifies to the role meaning plays in recognizing a speaker’s community belonging (Hasan, 2004, pp37-.38).

## **Chapter Two: Media and cultural studies**

### **1 Language ideologies and media discourse**

The practical deed of carrying out critical discourse analysis on media texts is behind choosing Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) as an approach. In fact, language, ideology, and power have so often been of considerable interest to critical discourse analysts; they have set out to uncover how different social groups and communities are hierarchically ordered and operated. Social structures, as assumed, are ideologically-based. These exert direct influence on discursive practices which, in turn, portray and legitimize them. What has been said above applies to a great extent to media discourse:

...Media Studies broke with the models of ‘direct influence’- using a sort of stimulus-response model with heavily behaviorist overtones, media content serving as a trigger-into a framework which drew much more on what can broadly be defined as the ‘ideological’ role of the media. (Hall, 1980, p.104)

Hall’s approach to media studies treats mass communications as cultural and ideological forces and deals with how they enforce social structures or even alter them (Hall, 1980, p.104). All this entails the convergence of both cultural and media studies. The former field of study was initiated in Britain during the 1950s and 60s by a group of intellectuals who were trying to proffer their vision about the socio-cultural structures of that time (Hall, 1980, p. 3). They dealt with issues like whether Britain’s socio-cultural structures established by capitalism were still intact, or they were in a course of deep transformations (Hall, 1980, p. 4). It is not easy to locate cultural studies within the broad range of knowledge as it appeals to different disciplines in its approach to society and culture (Hall, 1980, p. 5). Hall (1980) writes: “From its inception, then, Cultural Studies was an “engaged” set of disciplines, addressing awkward but relevant issues about contemporary society and culture...” (Hall, 1980, pp.4-5).

During the last three decades, the concept of “language ideology” has been closely intertwined with media. As a social phenomenon, language offers the obvious paradigm of the way interaction under social forces comes to convey a variety of meanings (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p.4). According to Milani and Johnson (2010), anthropological considerations underlie critical studies of language use and ideological implications. This theoretical framework was pioneered and advocated in the United States. Thus, it set the foundations for

what would later be the model for critically analyzing language by extending it to the social dimension. Indeed, Woolard (1998) shows the way “social forms” and “linguistic forms” are interwoven in any form of interaction (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p. 4). Further, by scrutinizing the social context, within which language operates, it becomes evident how languages are unequal: in the sense that various meanings are embodied in languages. By the same token, languages differ considerably in the semantic potential. This would not have been possible if there had been no extra-linguistic parameters (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p. 4). Indeed, socio-cultural, political, economic, religious, etc vectors shape up values encoded in our languages. All this is the broader scope of research and expertise for scholars in language ideology and critical discourse analysis. The purpose of such research is to find out more about the possible overlap between language and the larger socio-cultural environment: how discourse is made possible, spread and perhaps resisted or substituted by another one (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p. 4). Here, such contextual features like: gender, ethnic belonging, nationality, race, etc ensure the mediation of discursive meanings (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p. 4).

The symbiotic relationship between language and the socio-cultural environment has often meant a typically physical approach to the matter. In this case, there is an imminent departure from the mentally-based attitude to ideology. For example, we may refer to Van Dijk’s (1991, 1995) cognitive scheme of social structures (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p. 4). Therefore, critical discourse analysts are actively versed in the exact manner various ideologies find their way to individuals’ minds. This would imply instant accreditation of them. Bloomaert (2005) strongly advocates this approach. Milani and Johnson express the fact clearly by stating: “We want to tease out the *social mechanisms* through which particular ideas or beliefs about linguistic practices are produced, circulated and/or challenged through meaning-making activities under particular conditions” (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p.4). In this context, texts broadcast by media form the basis to do so. In fact, mainstream as well as new media are obviously interactive with audiences in our modern world. Culturally-laden media discourse is ideologically informative to consuming audiences (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p.5). This is what tends to be highly stressed by experts in CDA, such as Wodak, Fairclough, and Van Dijk. They assume the media discourse’s capacity to portray the social structures and the ideology that underlies them. A piece of news is, actually, broadcast under ideological constraints (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p.5). However, Bloomaert (2005) gives a word of caution about the power of ideology over the language of media. He refers to the “fallacy of

internalism”, which, according to him, paves the way for more emphasis on the embodiment of ideologies in discursive values. This would be exclusive of a crucial point: the understanding of the reception and different decipherments of discourse by audiences (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p.5). In addition, ideology and power cannot be ascribed to the technology deployed by different media, but to their news texts. If we assume that media themselves are “institutions of power”, we will have to question seriously the source of such power. The answer lies inevitably in the discursive outcome of ethnographic considerations (Milani and Johnson, 2010, p.5).

Critical analysis of media texts have come under severe criticism for being away from considering audiences’ interpretations and reactions. Scholars have concentrated most of their attention on texts’ ideological impacts. According to Morley (1980) the focus has been redirected towards receivers of texts (Fairclough, 1995, p. 9). This does by no means imply an exclusive emphasis on text reception; on the contrary, CDA must encompass both processes (textual production and reception analysis) (Fairclough, 1995, p. 9). Davis (2004) shows how Hall (1980) draws attention to the shift towards audience studies as a break with traditional perspectives in mass communications’ texts. He advocates a discourse theory that encompasses both semiotic approaches to texts, but with an invocation of an ethnography of audiences (cultural structures people are part of) (Davis, 2004, p.60). In other words, Hall sheds light on the reaction to TV flows by audiences; the ways they interpret messages and react to them. He embarks on reshaping the communicative relationship between the source of media texts (producers) and their receivers through a more complex explanatory scheme (Davis, 2004, p.60).

Hall is critical of the orthodox mass communications’ discursive approach because it sees audiences as passive receivers of messages. This testifies to the clarity of messages (Davis, 2004, p.60). Being inspired by Gramsci and Althusser, he introduces a more sophisticated system of relationship involving both producer (sender) and receiver. Davis writes:

Hall is searching for a ‘complex structure of dominance’; one which, in parallel with his thinking on Marxism, will offer an insight into the use of specific forms enabling the flow of communication. We can see Hall’s thinking around issues of hegemonic relationships pushes the notion of the audience to a more active role than previously characterized by American mass communications studies. (Davis, 2004, p.61)

Hall's theoretical framework focuses on the fact that TV audiences often receive texts in discursive forms; their mediation (creation and interpretation) differs from producers to consumers) due to the various socio-cultural structures underpinning the communicative process (Davis, 2004, p.61). It is vital, hence, to thoroughly grasp the circumstances (contextual elements) affecting texts' production (Davis, 2004, p.62).

Hall assumes that consumption of media texts does not mean passively watching TV receiving messages; he talks arguably in favor of an active involvement in meaning-making on the part of receivers (audiences). To him, there is no possibility of consumption unless meaning is established (Davis, 2004, p.62). This is another stage in the production-reception process. What is phenomenal, besides, is the manner the message is decoded: audiences might have their proper interpretations of media texts (Davis, 2004, p.62).

The ideological power of media also resides in the fact that various media seemingly give more room for participants. Under certain economic and political constraints, elites whose ideologies are dominant within a society are allowed to express their perceptions of different issues to the detriment of the grassroots (Milani and Johnson, 2010, pp.5-6). Besides, this audience selection can be very beneficial for media. It offers an opportunity for "news worthiness". Relations of power and control (regimentation) are palpably reflected in media news discourse shaped by socio-cultural regimentation ideologies (Milani and Johnson, 2010, pp.5-6). Hence, media come to discriminate the two categories of audiences: "expert" and "lay" (Johnson, 2001; Milani, 2007) or "private" vs. "public" (Fairclough, 1995). To throw light on how media under ideological forces adhere to some groups to the exclusion of others, political discursive analysis must be carried out (Milani and Johnson, 2010, pp.5-6). McLuhan (1964) developed a view in which new patterns of relations of power are encapsulated. For him, actions and counter actions are virtually, if not totally, concurrent (McLuhan, 1964, p.6). The period long before the "electric age" saw people, journalists in our case, deprived of an active role in social actions. For example, they were not fully committed to solid, remarkable reactions to matters of great significance. Nowadays, the opposite is true: they are continuously involved in reactions to a variety of beliefs and even ideologies running counter to theirs. The unavoidable corollary is that the world, under electrical technologies, is reduced to a "village". In it, nearly each individual can make himself heard or seen (McLuhan, 1964, p.6). McLuhan clarifies this point when he says:

As electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village. Electric speed in bringing all social and political functions together in a sudden implosion has heightened human awareness of responsibility to an intense degree. It is this implosive factor that alters the position of the Negro, the teen-ager, and some other groups. They can no longer be contained, in the political sense of limited association. They are now involved in our lives, as we in theirs, thanks to the electric media. (McLuhan, 1964, p.7)

Regardless of the variety in opinions and attitudes, everyone is empowered to take part in the action-reaction process (McLuhan, 1964, p.8). In addition, each community has developed its proper way of conceptualizing world events, which it imposes on people for recognition and fellowship. This era, however, is characterized with a strong craving for expression: active participants in the discursive process. That is to say, the “extension of man” and the subsequent popular awareness of this. To make this exploit possible, it would be vital to grasp the channel through which the extension is launched as well as the effect of this on both people and society (McLuhan, 1964, p.8). Furthermore, the value of media rests on the message it embodies in the sense that this same message can be the bearer of social transformations at all levels, not on media themselves as technological means of information (McLuhan, 1964, p.10). At the same time, it cannot be denied that the “medium is the message”. In fact, there could be no message if the medium is absent: the message is regulated by the medium (McLuhan, 1964, p.10). However, the role of media is minimized by the overestimation of the message (McLuhan, 1964, p.11). Indeed, there has been a growing interest in placing the different media in their surrounding environment within which they perform their role of influence. In this sense, it is quite clear that ideologies behind the operation of communication technologies enable one to ascribe a given quality to media: qualifying them as either good or bad (McLuhan, 1964, pp.11-13). Television, for instance, is a quintessential case: a particular programme may be widely consumed if symmetrical with an audience’s schemata of perceiving reality, disseminating a set of beliefs across a society, henceforth (McLuhan, 1964, p.13). After years of ignorance of the causality between events and their relative factors, electric technologies for communication could ultimately reverse this equation. People are nowadays conscious of instigators of social, economic, and political metamorphoses, thanks to the speedy technological techniques of media (McLuhan, 1964, p.14). Moreover, the rapid growth in new brands of media has helped spell out various social phenomena to consumers all around the globe, regardless of spatial-temporal boundaries



(McLuhan, 1964, p.15). This has contributed to a spirit of uniformity in people's perception of the world. That is to say, media power consists in establishing such solid principles as: "uniformity", "continuity", and "lineality" in communities. McLuhan exemplifies this state of affairs with the evocation of the 18<sup>th</sup>- century French Revolution. In fact, it was the influential role of print media that was behind much of the cultural peak; therefore, making French people overlaid with an irretrievable desire for radical change (McLuhan, 1964, pp.15-16). In England, on the other hand, the power of print media turned out to be less noticeable or ineffectual due to the strongly conservative socio-political institutions. The United States, he goes on affirming, had no restrictive laws that could dissuade Americans from gaining independence from Great Britain. All this was under the influential power of print media (McLuhan, 1964, p.16). In contrast with the aristocracy in England, whose power was away off media, the French aristocracy could capture the principles underlying print media. These exert great discursive influence on readership. Indeed, media effects are increasingly stronger as they embody a content which is, in turn, according to McLuhan, another medium: the human speech (McLuhan, 1964, p.17). Ultimately, technological effects are so perceptible in society that they can barely be rejected or resisted; they sweep the already existing conceptions with an enormous speed, imposing new forms or sets of perceptions (McLuhan, 1964, p.19).

The sociological approach to media language has been a source of appeal for detailed research. Myles (2010), starting from Bourdieu's principles about media language, stresses how the latter sets out to deal critically with "symbolic violence" in mainstream as well as new media. In other words, how media make use of symbolic violence in their discursive process of influencing audiences. This is clearly indicative of the deep struggle for control over language, and, therefore, gaining power (Myles, 2010, p.9). In addition, Bourdieu tackles issues of considerable significance and relevancy to language and media: "structuralism", "ethno-methodology", and "socio-linguistics. These should be involved in any Bourdieusian socially-based approach to media language (Myles, 2010, p.10). As a matter of fact, Bourdieu (1991) finds fault with the Saussure's theoretical framework of the structurally abstract relations within language maintained intact by fixed rules. To him, such a point of view seemingly puts aside the larger social container. This is characterized with huge schemata of social relations among the members of a community (Myles, 2010, p.10). Again, Bourdieu, still stressing the Saussurian failure of reference to the social dimension, shows how the social impact on language in terms of meanings conveyed is interminable. Indeed, language is a

sharp indicator of social variety. “Distinctions” in a society, besides its indicative role of social relations, can massively exert semantic effects on language. Myles follows in the line traced by the sociological thinking of Bourdieu: “Essentially Bourdieu underlines the social relations that influence language and how it is subject to infinite variability as a result. Language is therefore as much a marker of social *distinction* as semantic sense” (Myles, 2010, p.10). Bourdieu and Thomson reinforce this statement, by showing how linguistic differences (phonological, grammatical, and vocabulary) express differences at the social level (Myles, 2010, p.10). Here, the contrast between the structural viewpoint of Saussure and the socially-based one of Bourdieu becomes palpably evident. The former is grounded in the assumption of the gap between linguistic structure and social structures; the latter bridges that gap between the two. Linguistic structure is, so to speak, the solid proof of the social fragmentation in terms of classes, gender, age, ethnicity, etc (Myles, 2010, p.10). In nearly any talk or debate in media programs, especially television channels or radio stations, language makes its entry to play a decisive role in determining community origins and ideological tendencies. This must be inclusive of such key concepts as accent, dialect, and voice intonation (Myles, 2010, p.11). Variety of classes in a community is suggestive of intense ideological oppositions to gain imposition and control. The media, as institutions of power and influence, facilitate this process, furthermore. Hence, even the language of media must be conceived of as social action being effective within context: it is demonstrative of the hierarchical organization underlying the functioning of language (Myles, 2010, p.12). Besides, struggles about the most appropriate or correct form of language to be used in media should not be disassociated from political ideologies. Each social group strives to enforce their own discourse as the fittest and, therefore, the dominant one. Media, being the outlet of various ideological stances, is also shaped up by social classification patterns as well as constant struggles for power and domination (Myles, 2010, p.12).

Another factor having effects to a certain extent on media language is the “demographic trend” relative to the job of journalism. Journalists are often biased towards the background that is behind the construction of the discourse adopted (Myles, 2010, pp.12-13). In the UK, for example, a study about employing journalists shows that only 3 percent of recruits come from unskilled milieus and 10 percent or less from the working class (Myles, 2010, pp. 13). This should account for the sometimes demeaning discourse representing particular classes. Henceforth, media discursive representations cannot be carried out without being ideologically loaded against or towards a given group within a society (Myles, 2010, p13). In

fact, this leads us to evoke the notion of “symbolic power”, which is representative of political and ideological and cultural opposition as well as representation (Myles, 2010, p23).

Pre-Bourdieuian research studies had been marked with a scarcity of interest in covering the overlap between language and media. It was Bourdieu’s conceptual framework that brought a new attitude to the matter. There has followed, then, an emphasis on his provocative ideas about media. Nonetheless, the niche in these studies could be traced to a relative neglect of the solid link between media and language. Indeed, Bourdieu, perceiving media as a “field” manages to capture the encapsulation of various social hierarchies and positions in media language. Moreover, in casting an over-focus on the general features of media institutions, the symbolic power in media discourse becomes so faint, if not out of existence (Myles, 2010, p23). So, when it comes to analyzing language in media, both must be considered at once: media features as well as language and contextual elements (Myles, 2010, p23). Benson and Neveu (2005), two experts in the field of media studies, are inspired by Bourdieu in that they have elaborated his key ideas on the media and language. They claim for more emphasis on language in the domain of media studies. For that, they postulate the positioning of language between media (field) and the consumer’s faculty of interpretation (Myles, 2010, pp.23-24). However, Benson and Neveu have failed at the afore-mentioned deed. Both of them assume that Bourdieu’s media theory is much more political than one can imagine (Myles, 2010, p.24). Moreover, Benson and Neveu note the notoriety of Bourdieu’s assumptions concerning the effects of television on social perceptions of reality; it moulds patterns of experiencing the real world (Myles, 2010, p.24). Bourdieu, in his later work, asserts the lack of television disengagement from political and economic influences. It follows that these press continuously for the reduction in the codes of ethics in media discourse (Myles, 2010, p.24). Although Bourdieu doesn’t tackle the issue of language and media explicitly in his *Television and Journalism* work, he suggestively invokes patterns of classification underlying the discursive practices of journalists: the concept of “taxonomies” is the tangible evidence (Myles, 2010, p.24). His work, besides, stimulates further efforts by experts in the field of media to shed more light on the overlap of media with linguistic practices (Myles, 2010, p.24). Bourdieu, as it seems, is selective in relation to his schemes of classification validated by the symbolic power. This could be the corollary of his exclusive focus on politico-economic factors behind analytically covering media discourse; what he places under the scope of “logic of the field”. This accounts for Benson and Neveu’s limitation in their studies on purely media features as a field to the detriment of the crucially indicative symbolic power

of texts emerging from media. They stick, in their work, primarily to certain topics to do with support or promotion of national issues. Likewise, they tend to joint Bourdieu's appeal for an innovative approach to media discourse as the basis of symbolic power (Myles, 2010, p.25). Quoting a relevant passage would make things clearer:

Because of an over-concern with the field side of journalism initiated by Bourdieu, Benson and Neveu themselves never really convey just what the particular 'capital', or stake is that characterizes the field, preferring to concentrate on depicting certain 'levels' of the field, its national and 'mezzo' ones in particular (Benson and Neveu: 2005: 11) or its key institutions (Benson and Neveu 2005: 17). This produces hypotheses which seem to suggest concrete research (which they see as one of the key benefits of the field approach- to stimulate alternative ways of looking at the media) but often feel very abstract indeed: ' influences emerging from the semi-autonomous journalistic field-a mezzo level organization, professional, and ideological space-represent an additional variable not previously considered. (Benson and Neveu 2005: 17).' (Myles, 2010, p.25)

Benson and Neveu sustain their attitudes upon the economic presence in media discourse in terms of influence. To them such an influence is "heteronymous"; that is to say economic forces, like other political and social ones, exert tremendous effects on media texts. The extent of such an economic power remains still indefinitely expressed in comparison with the political space, nonetheless (Myles, 2010, p.25).

Being disciples of Bourdieu means an adherence to the stance of restriction in relation to media autonomy. Media institutions can be shown to be constantly under as much social as politico-economic vectors. The latter is apparently a common quality in media in that both domains tend to make certain ideologies firmly dominant. So, it is in the space of media that such a deed can be practicable (Myles, 2010, p.25). However, the over-emphasis on organizational as well as regulatory standards of media renders discursive practices in media utterly under-represented; viewed as insignificant in other words (Myles, 2010, p.26). This seems to run counter to the tacitly mentioned link between the media field and the symbolic power in the work of Bourdieu (Myles, 2010, p.26). In addition, Loic Wacquant (2005) tends to go the other way round. He, actually, goes over such concepts as "political engagement" and "the public sphere". So to say, this has led to an evaluation of the ideas elaborated by Bourdieu in comparison with those embodied in Habermas's "theory of communication and

the public sphere” (Myles, 2010, p.26). Wacquant argues in favor of such a comparison since he discerns some symmetry between Habermas’s ethical studies of discursive media practices and the theory of symbolic power elaborated by Bourdieu (Myles, 2010, p.26). In spite of the promising prospects of including the symbolic power in media studies, Wacquant’s work turns out to be negligent to the discourse embodying this power (Myles, 2010, p.26). This is another lapse in capturing the decisive role of discourse in strengthening ideologically-oriented political issues in media studies (Myles, 2010, p.26). In other words, what Bourdieu puts forwards as basic principles for media discursive practices and their decrypting process like “social pragmatics” and “modalities of political expression” are bound for marginalization in later work (Myles, 2010, p.26). The dearth in discursive consideration in media studies can be offset by some experts in the domain, such as Benson and Neveu and Marlière (1998). These are persistent in their field-led approach to media in terms of “professional codes” and, accordingly, advocate a deeper focus on ideological gaps among journalists (Myles, 2010, p.27). Besides, Marlière directs attention particularly to media whose stances can be shown to be derived from political parties (Myles, 2010, p.27). On the other hand, Marlière questions the effectiveness of the political field in the shaping of media discourse (Myles, 2010, p.27). Concerning the autonomy of media, Marlière sticks to Benson and Neveu’s fidelity to Bourdieu’s viewpoint about media institutions under politico-economic control; the repercussions may be discerned in journalistic practices (Myles, 2010, p.27). Moreover, Marlière, by going over historical facts, locates certain assumptions opposing Bourdieu’s politicization of media’s organizational, professional, and discursive aspects (Myles, 2010, p.27). These assumptions are based on the principle that media, especially print media, tend to be more and more depoliticized. Besides to this stance, Marlière values the efforts of Bourdieu as encouraging to journalists so as to reject the rigidly professional norms. This may be a big step to the democratization and liberalization of media in terms of ideological flows (Myles, 2010, p.27).

Benson’s own work (2006) sets out actively in the elaboration and application of key concepts of Bourdieu (Myles, 2010, p.28). He covers the variously cultural features among national media (i.e. the effects from the different cultures making up a whole community). In doing so, Benson moves beyond the superficial level of institutions of media to the previously put aside production-consumption process in print media mainly (Myles, 2010, p.28). To him, the variety of cultures constructing content and structure (form) is the core of such a study (Myles, 2010, p.28). It might be said that Benson makes an important step forwards to shed

more light on the “external shocks”. These can most of the time be very crucial in infiltrating and rendering media discourse ideologically-biased in one way or another, therefore, establishing a firm link between cultural structures and media institutions (Myles, 2010, p.28). Simultaneously, Benson strengthens the significance of ethical codes in the regulation of journalistic practices in that they make resistance to political and cultural pressures possible (Myles, 2010, p.28). This attitude seems to set some balance at the media level in terms of dealing with institutional as well as ideological aspects. Without any, even tacit, orientation to the broader social dimension, one cannot affirm or deny complete or partial autonomy of media. As a matter of fact, Benson goes straight to the point evoking Bourdieu’s reference to media content as discursively “euphemistic” (Myles, 2010, p.28). This is quite obvious in the sense that a given medium (a television network, radio station, a news paper, etc) can be representative of a community or sub-community to the detriment of other ones (Myles, 2010, p.28).

Benson (2004) develops a new politico-media form of relationship away off from the irresistibly strong hold of politics. At this level, media, according to him, can enjoy some form of autonomy imposed by media structures themselves (Myles, 2010, p.28). Here, the concept of “mediatization” comes to the rescue of such an assumption. Indeed, Benson puts in place questions relative to this point: one of them is essentially the reason why certain political issues come to be discussed, overestimated, or given little importance in comparison with others (Myles, 2010, p.28). In this context, thus, opposing ideological stances are underway. Media, as a transmission outlet, accelerate this process (Myles, 2010, p.28). That is to say, Benson goes the other way round, painting an image of media having increasing power over politics and political issues; even over social structures (Myles, 2010, p.28). He illustrates this assumption through the Chicago media coverage of the heat wave that struck Chicago in 1995. The local media were unanimous in shaping up their discourse, imputing the phenomenon to natural processes rather than to human activities (Myles, 2010, p.28).

Another discourse-inclusive trend in media studies can be attributed to Schultz (2007). She observably orients her critical studies to viewing the media in general and journalism in particular as being inseparably connected with language as a source of power in society (Myles, 2010, p.29). She grounds her stance in the delicacy of situating journalists’ different ideological biases in the media field; henceforth, media studies and critical discourse analysis must be brought together to account for this issue (Myles, 2010, p.29). Furthermore, Schultz not only stops at the heteronomous forces of culture, but also the notion of power. In other

words, language functions as a reflection of a given attitude to the real world and a particular position within a community, likewise (Myles, 2010, p.29). But she, like previous work, tends to over-emphasize the institutional aspect more than discursive power (Myles, 2010, p.29). In the same direction, Matheson (2003) covers journalists' renewed interest in language use as part of their professional standards. It is, according to them an effectual portrayal of the real world, maintaining the significant weight of discourse in media as a source of ideological power (Myles, 2010, p.29). In accentuating discursive differences as a vital feature of media, Matheson diverges from Benson and Wacquant's superficial media-related assumptions (Myles, 2010, p.29). His studies can be perceived as more discourse-inclusive. However, this advance in capturing the discursive dimension of media language does not mean fully comprehensive coverage of discourse (Myles, 2010, p.29). It was Couldry (2000), who remarkably succeeded in elaborating to a certain extent comprehensively on the relationship between the media field and discursive practices. Myles states:

In this respect, Couldry sees the media as key to the "habitus" of modern societies (Couldry and Curran 2003: 42) and argues in his essay on "media meta-capital" that a "return" to Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power has benefits missing from the later developments in the field approach (Couldry 2003a). This refocusing on the specificity of the media as a field in its own right and, more importantly, with its own form of capital, would enable media theory to express the extent of the impact on other fields and stop some of the confusion about just where the boundaries of the field lie in relation to the state and economy, or cultural field. (Myles, 2010, p.30)

All this increasing involvement in media discourse is for the sake of deeply discerning the media field in relation to the socio-cultural field. Couldry's concern is particularly with social structures interposing in between media texts and reception, such as "ritual" occasions (Myles, 2010, p.30). In spite of the obviously tacit reference to the discursive aspect of media texts, Couldry could reestablish Bourdieu's former position represented by his leading theory of symbolic power; Myles goes on adding: "Thus Couldry argues that 'we might, in the long term, see 'media capital' in its own right a new 'fundamental species of capital', in Boudieu's phrase, that works as a 'trump card' in all fields'" (Myles, 2010, p.30). It follows, then, that media can clearly be decisive in relation to effects on social practices and perceptions. Boudieu's concepts embodied in his theory are revived thanks to Couldry's work, which confirmed the value of the symbolic power approach to media discourse (Myles, 2010, p.30). Moreover, this renewed consideration of the media field alongside its relevant discursive

habits has had tremendous advantages for the theory of media itself: one of them is the ability to place media in terms of effect and its extent in connection with other fields. This can be perceptible at the level of media production and consumption (Myles, 2010, p.30). Further, Couldry proves the discursive principles of Boudieu as legitimate: these define logically the thin line between linguistic practices and “the social” in the sense that these practices are symbolically representative of social structural configurations (Myles, 2010, p.31). Henceforth, this testifies to the significance of discourse in media as an autonomous capital that should come under full scrutiny (Myles, 2010, p.31).

## **2 Television uses and interpretations**

As we progress in our dissertation, more emphasis is put on the television medium since it is the core of this work. Two notions come to play a major role in this context: the first is the use of television; the second is the interpretation of television content (Morley, 1986, p.1). To back track a bit in time, both concepts were unfairly segregated; dissociated from each other. The former is studied under the scope of sociological studies relative mainly to researches on habitual viewing of television. The latter pertains to the semiotic analysis of texts and images which deals with the hardships encountered by consumers in terms of interpretation of television output (Morley, 1986, p.1). Preceding studies, in fact, analytically dealt with each concept on its own right, ignoring their value when combined together. It was Morley (1986) that postulated a conceptual framework inclusive of both concepts. To him, this would be quite beneficial for audience study (Morley, 1986, p.1). While earlier work is so scanty in relation to social context, not to say outside its scope, Morley advocates not only the combination of the two concepts, but also putting viewing habits within the broader social environment. In Morley’s scheme of things, the context is the family or the household milieu (Morley, 1986, p.1). He manages to prove how familial television viewing corresponds automatically to his context-based claim. This, according to him, necessitates a closer attention. Actually, television viewing as a household activity and the familial environment of relations are interrelated (Morley, 1986, p.2). Moreover, Morley’s project known as “Nationwide” was the source of inspiration for engaging in researches about different decoding patterns of family members since the project was initially based on studies of audiences in general (Morley, 1986, p.2). The family is, to him, the ideal context of his analytical deed. This can account for the consideration of the new dimension: that of tackling



the issue of watching television at the familial level since members of a family might have different captures of meanings (Morley, 1986, p.2).

Audience studies actually consist in deeply understanding the consequences of such varied technologies among consumers. This suggests that more room should be given to the social context where television watching takes place. This is by all means a prerequisite for grasping an individual's orientation to certain programming materials and subsequent ways of responding to them (Morley, 1986, p.3). Morley builds his project on the "uses and gratifications" approach to audience study as it contributes to the establishment of start-up questions about viewers within the family: in what way is television used?, how choices are made in terms of programmes and the likely responses to them?, who watches them?, at what particular times?, and how are various responses debated by household members? By implication, the whole of the viewing activity is in a purely familial backdrop (Morley, 1986, p.3). That is to say, researches in audience's television consumption habits must be performed in the family milieu, otherwise broadcast choices as well as reactions cannot be fully explained (Morley, 1986, p.3). Furthermore, Television broadcasts, no matter how similar or different, are made sense of and also valued in different ways by viewers (Morley, 1986, p.4). This constitutes the center of interest for Morley. In fact, he is involved in deriving useful insights from descriptions and analyses of various viewers' selections and interpretative reactions to television output. Previous work has proved inconclusive in connection with these varieties; it has failed to uncover them (Morley, 1986, p.4). Besides to the procedure followed, it should be reminded that the studies are concerned with different individuals in the same family as well as with families from various socio-cultural backgrounds (Morley, 1986, p.4).

### **3 Mass communication theories (science and human behavior)**

For decades, the scientific research method has been built in social studies and studies of human behavior patterns equally (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.8). As a branch, among others, of social sciences, the field of mass media is a favorable site for the application of the principles of scientific study. This claim was strongly advocated by Paul Lazarsfeld, an Austrian immigrant in the United States. As sociologist, he could recognize the strength of the scientific research in the field of mass media (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.8). Though, in principle, the scientific method seemed simple, its application to mass media studies have turned out to be more complex than one would expect (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.8).

Nowadays, it is quite remarkable how media coverage is prominent in everyday public affairs. For example, in politics, election campaigns have earned a greater amount of coverage in comparison with earlier times. Besides, technological advances permit minute-by-minute broadcast of candidates' movements wherever they are (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.8); this coverage revolution, as is widely assumed, can determine electoral choice with considerable ease. Henceforth, people are tremendously encouraged to participate in ballot (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.9). Following this mass media rise, voices have started to make assertions about their harmful effects; however, social scholars did not show much sympathy with these attitudes. They justified their skepticism with the absence of any scientific basis in those views about destructive media: scientific principles, such as observation, data gathering, empirical experimentation, hypothesizing, etc are decisive in confirming or rejecting a given view as non valid (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.9). More interestingly, researchers appealed for scientific procedures to render media effects positively constructive; reinforcing Americans' faith in their political democratic system, for instance (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.9). Furthermore, as referred to earlier, the application of scientific rules in mass media research is by no means an accessible matter. Indeed, continuous observation may be disrupted by the fact that consumers of media products do not share the same background. The imminent outcome would be media scholars confronting the hardship of generalizing their findings (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.9). In addition, the sampling of media output might prove problematic: audiences of television, press, the internet, the web, radio, etc switch so regularly across columns and programs that it can be nearly impossible to have "control over conditions" in consumption activities (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.9). Ultimately, it can be said that media effects cannot be measured throughout a limited length of time; effects need longer amounts of time to be noticeably palpable (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.9).

There are four points relevant to the difficulties encountered in the application of scientific principles in mass media studies. Firstly, the human behavior is not open for measurement. It is quite obvious that consumers' degree of loyalty to a program or even a channel or a medium cannot be subject to exact measurement in the way heat, for instance is measured. After all, scholars find it extremely dissuading to probe deep into the ensemble of the human behavior (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.10). Secondly, the behavioral nature is exceedingly complex in the sense that factors underlying different ways of behaving remain obscure: studies conducted about mass media consumers' choices of particular news programs on given news networks do not automatically allow transparency. Here, a variety of factors may

come into play, ranging from family, parents to social influence. Therefore, the resulting behavior in favor of an x or y program cannot be easily attributed to this or that factor (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.10). Thirdly, unlike inanimate phenomena, human beings have control and influence on their choices as well as actions. In media consumption, people think about possible occurrences and their subsequent effects; their reactions are based on future events and consequences, henceforth (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.10). Actually, audiences can decide which values, principles, and beliefs would suit their overall personalities and act according to them; this leads to a specific concentration in terms of media and content types (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.10). The dilemma is how can media researchers control the actions of consumers in their studies, being aware that these are able to control their own actions? Fourthly, the concept of causality may prove harder to cope with in the relationship media-consumers (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). Mostly, we, as humans, tend to admit causality connections in the world we live in: for example, water boils when exposed to high heat (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). However, when causality manifests itself in our daily routines, we reject it altogether (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). We are convinced by the findings of scientists out of our ignorance of them, but are not shaken or affected by statements about our usual media consumption habits; we are resistant to the fact of media flows influencing us, in other words (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). Nonetheless, we are quite convinced that “others” are susceptible to media power; paradoxically, what is commonly known as the “third person effect”. This concept centers on “...the idea that ‘media affect others, but not me’” (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). That is to say, we are not threatened by media, so we need no protection. In contrast, according to Grier and Brumbaugh (2007), others do because we are more intelligent than them; we are autonomous in our thinking modes (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11).

#### **4 Theory in mass communications**

As scientists in physics, social theorists deal with the mass communication domain in theory (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). There exist a large number of theory definitions. It could be defined as ideas explaining the how and why of different worldly phenomena like the social environment as seen by Turner (1998) (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). Another perception of theory can be noticed in Bower and Courtright’s (1984) own definition in which it is conceived of as points of view establishing the connection between different phenomena (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). Berger (2005), similarly, sees theory as a group of consistent

suggestions showing the relationships among elements under study; and setting out to explain them (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). Furthermore, Baily (1982) adopts an eclectic approach to the social environment: he builds several conceptions of social reality into his work, thus considering social structures from different perspectives (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.11). For Baran and Davis, eclecticism is, likewise, on vogue, since they combine some definitions displaying, on one hand, the logical superiority in relation to theory. On the other hand, they assume theory as being a well ordered system of notions relevant to a given school; these two theorists admit variety in regard to mass communication theory definition (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). Moreover, theories are grounded in actual life situations (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). Hence, this is what matches Miller's (2005) opinion that various schools have their own distinct vision of the theory of mass communication; Baran and Davis write: "As communication theorist Katherine Miller explained 'Different schools of thought will define *theory* in different ways depending on the needs of the theorist and on beliefs about the social world and the nature of knowledge'" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). By the same token, mass communication theorists divide media theory into four classes: (1) "post positivist theory", (2) "hermeneutic theory", (3), "critical theory", and (4) "normative theory". Though scholars in the mass media field have a common interest in fully penetrating into the truth about media in the social environment, they display different goals as well attitudes to social structures. "Ontology", perceptions on which their theories are based regarding social organization; "epistemology", how knowledge is created and developed; and "axiology", the principles and values ruling theory, vary from one scheme of thinking to another (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12).

#### **4.1 Post positivist theory**

The post positivist theory is a scientifically-based method followed and implemented in communication studies within the social sphere (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). It is scientific in the sense that parameters of empiricism, objective observation and exact measurement should be integrated in mass communication research (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). These are known as "positivism" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). However, what is applicable to physical phenomena cannot forcibly be so to the complex human nature: the human behavior is always in motion. Hence, a new trend towards the theory of positivism has seen the light; the post positivist theory. This freshly devised conceptual framework addresses the inconsistency of the human behavior (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12), while deploying the

previously mentioned scientific principles. The post positivist theory turns around three major concepts as parts of its goals: explanation, prediction, and control. It explains how mediated programs work, and predicts those with the highest-degree effects on consumers. The latter point can be considered as the control on audiences (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). Furthermore, this theory's ontology (the way it sees social reality), unlike physical sciences, does not admit the constancy of the social environment since the human behavior is continuously changing in its conception of the social organization (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). Therefore, people from different communities come to conceptualize differently in regard to the world around them. Concerning epistemology (the way knowledge is developed), the post positivist theory advocates that knowledge is elaborated through empirical procedures looking for any possible consistencies in perceiving reality and relations of causality. In other words, knowledge is achieved by testing human behavior for regularity and causes underlying it (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). Besides, post positivists strongly believe the most in "inter-subjective" agreement among the scientific group, rather than isolate assumptions. This can be a helpful source for the progress of knowledge (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.12). Ultimately, one can conclude that the influence of the scientific method is at the centre of the post positivist mass media research; it is the fully objective adherence to empiricism that shapes up the theoretical principles of mass communication theory (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13).

## **4.2 Hermeneutic theory**

Theorists and researchers in the mass media field, in this case, are concerned with understanding the "how" and the "why" of human behavior in society (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). Actions as well as communicative texts are subjected to cautious interpretations in the social context where they tend to happen (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). Historically, hermeneutics was a common practice in the interpretative study of holy books, like the bible in Europe (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). In the course of its development, hermeneutics has kept intact and untouched its ideals of the exploration of the "objectifications of the mind", as Morgan and Burrell (1979) would term (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). Miller (2005) uses the principle of "social creations" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). This theory can be further subdivided into other sub-forms. One is "social hermeneutics". This branch tries to make sense of how people come to derive social meanings from texts in their daily interactions with each other: they must resort to cultural structures shaping their life style (Baran and Davis,

2012, p.13). Another sub-division can be mentioned but with more focus since it relates directly to the field of mass media studies: the branch dealing with people's interpretations of the system of symbols deployed by media in the form of texts, images, and videos. This theory is attributed the appellation of "interpretative theory" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). Baran and Davis comment:

Another important idea embedded in these descriptions is that any text, any product of social interaction- a movie, the president's state of union address, a series of twitter tweets, a conversation between a soap opera hero and heroine- can be a source of understanding. (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13)

The ontology relevant to this theory states that people from various communities have distinct visions of the social world. There is not a fixed image of social structures; individuals rely, as schutt (2009) assumes, on their own "preferences" and "prejudices" in communicative acts (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). Therefore, researchers should be careful with this point (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). It follows, then, that, in contrast with scientific theories' objectivity of observation, theorists or researchers seem to share some subjectivity over participants in social context (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13). Here lies the epistemology of hermeneutics. Consequently, the repercussions on the theory's axiology are that personal, subjective influences are admitted as valuable contributions. Baran and Davis even remark: "Personal and professional values, according to Katherine Miller are a 'lens through which social phenomena are observed'" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.13).

### **4.3 Critical theory**

Experts involved in the construction of this theory build their assumption on the deficiency, and, hence, faultiness of social structures (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). It is, ipso facto, evident that their concerns are neither explanation, prediction, control nor are they about the exploration of interactive acts within society (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). The basic goal of critical theorists is to transform the flawed social system altogether, substituting it with an even better one (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). In order to put this into practice, knowledge must be built about the surrounding, rotten social space (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). It can easily be worked out that behind the critical theory there is some form of political engagement, moreover. Partisans of this perspective strive to challenge the already common principles and values regulating both the social system and the institutions implementing them

(Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). Because of the political orientation of this theory, theorists, most of the time, adhere to controversial issues shaking society like injustice and oppression in their broadest sense: economic, political, and social (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). Besides, for critical theorists, mass media can play a potential role in the constant struggle for domination, so having them under control is an absolute necessity (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). In addition, the ideal process of promoting knowledge is by emancipating societies from the rigid authority of dominant structures through useful knowledge (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). The ontology of this theory is full of complexity, hence. The social environment is operated through "...the product of the interaction between structure (the social world's rules, norms, and beliefs) and **agency** (how humans behave and interact in that world" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). The real world is perceived as it actually is out of the clash between the dominant and the dominated. If the elite are in power, the masses' reaction to the world is guided, not to say forced; if freedom from oppression is earned, the masses shape their reality by themselves (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). Further, political activism by theorists and scholars, undertaking the hard task of regaining the labor influential status worldwide, must invoke the critical theory of mass media (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). Others are quite desperate in regard to capitalists' growing, unshakable power over populations around the world as these keep tight a control of mass media (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14).

### **4.3 Normative theory**

As seen above, the post positivist and hermeneutic theories are by all means "representational". The first claims a generally accepted social reality to be attributed to communities; the second, though agreeing with post positivist views, assumes the locality of representation (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). In other words, the reality of the social space is archetypical to each community and sub-community.

The critical theory, by opposition, is non-representational: it looks forwards to the substitution of the already present reality with another more suitable one (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). The normative theory, on the other hand, aims to carry out a quite divergent mission in the mass media domain: that of ruling whether media institutions act in accordance with specific social rules and regulations. This theory can be implemented at different levels of interaction, moreover. However, it is more commonly put into practice in mass communications studies (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). The ontology relevant to the normative perspective, like hermeneutics, is based on the situational context's knowledge.

That is to say, knowledge about media should be well grounded in the actual understanding of social structures where they operate (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.14). When it comes to epistemology, we can say that this theory centers on comparative studies. To achieve conclusive findings, scholars resort to comparisons of the extents to which different media conform to social values, assessing the effectiveness of the whole method regarding media studies, therefore (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.15). Its axiology, in addition, can be qualified as ideologically charged as this type of work on media is undertaken in the hope of establishing a connection between society's schemata of viewing reality and mass communications operative mode (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.15). The standards of research of the normative method might be deployed in evaluating media, like the press, in terms of maintenance of democratic values in a given society (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.15). To conclude, we would refer to this seemingly expressive quotation concerning mass communications theory in Baran and Davis's book by W. James Potter (2009):

“The scholarship about the mass media has grown so large and become so fragmented,” argues W. James Potter, “that it is very difficult for scholars to understand, much less appreciate, the incredible array of great ideas and findings that have been produced.” (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.17)

This statement seems apt to say it all about the various contributions' role in the evolution of the theory of mass communications.

## **5 Four eras in the evolution of mass communications theory**

There has been an incessant call for a convergent incorporation of technologies in mass communications ever since the introduction of the computer in the 1970s (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.22). This dream has become a reality with the emergence of the internet technology. Electronic devices, such as smart phones can embody sound, picture, and video; users of laptops and cell phones may even obtain them without having to resort to Wi-Fi (offline), and resend them to others with unbelievable speed and efficiency (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.22). Indeed, the world population is at the heart of an unprecedented revolution in mass communications. Technological advances has made it possible for various forms of media to be read, listened to, or viewed in just one single device ( pc, cell phone, web page, etc) (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.23). The time when old media had limited services to offer to large consumers is, nowadays, something of the past. Consumption worldwide is orienting faster to



new brands of media away off from classic ones. After all, endless lists of cable or satellite television networks, radio stations, news papers can be reached anytime, anywhere with great velocity. Further, each of them can combine images, sounds, videos, and graphics in one medium (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.23). The immediate result of this boom in the commercialization of these technologies has definitively widened our horizons: one can access films on line or just down load them, enjoy a variety of thematic programs on a large range of television or radio stations, or read infinite world news papers on line. Of course, we should not forget electronic libraries and the large data bases available for researchers (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.23). To sum it up, all preferences can be satisfied nowadays thanks to mass media technologies.

It is crucial to state, though, that as mass communications offer a lot of opportunities for the diversification of knowledge, they can likewise be weapons used to impose particular beliefs (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.23). Consumers might be caught up in them. It would be wise to backtrack a little in time in order to trace the historical evolution of mass media technologies and, especially, relevant theories. The purpose is to go over previously designed theoretical frameworks. On one hand, we can show how they served and affected audiences. On the other hand, we can benefit from older theories' successes and avoid their mistakes (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.24). Each era, during the two last centuries, was characterized with a form of mass media boom: by way of illustration, we can refer to the Golden Age of the Radio (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.24). In other words, as a branch of social sciences, mass communication theory looks back to past theories for innovation and progress (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.24). This statement has been proved right by mass communications studies; Baran and Davis comment on this:

Communication scholar Gary Gumpert makes the same argument, specifically for his “splendid, splintered discipline.” It is important, he wrote, “to know that we are not alone, but connected to what was before, what may be, and what is next to come. (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.24)

Scholarly communities, though different in their aims, refer to preceding perspectives (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.25). It is worth a mention to point out that theories, like societies, are dynamic; always evolving (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.26). Numerous researchers assert that today's technological revolution of new media, like the internet as well as Wi-Fi is much like that brought about by the rise of the wireless radio during the 1900s, motion picture with

sound in the 1920s, television in the 1950s, and also the emergence beforehand of the affordable press in the 1800s in large cities (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.26).

Throughout the two preceding centuries, mass communication theory has witnessed many perceptible developments. In fact, researchers suggest four different points in time during which theory has been in constant progress (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.26). Each era is scrutinized in terms of the dominant theories; the aim is to weigh their pros and cons. This historical account would inform the theorist and the researcher how and why mass communication theories have evolved to present day perceptions. These theories have turned out to be significant, thus widely accepted by people. This is simply because the comprehension of modern media theories requires a return to the classic ones for a deeper understanding (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.26). Theorists have often faced fierce opposition from larger groups in terms of rigid values and restrictive research parameters (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.27). So, how have research communities evolved through time?

Early theoretical perspectives about mass communications saw the light in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the United States, for example, the fast-growing industrialization and the constant cities' extension were also accompanied by a flourishing of the press industry. These were milestones that led to a massive rural exodus to expanding cities, searching for more comfort and work (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.27). Certain mass communication theorists were hopeful about the long-term outcome of the industrial boom, but others expressed openly their concerns, especially about the growing role of media in such a context. Theorists and researchers usually charged growing media with portraying the harsh human conditions of working people in high-risk factories and squalid homes. Thus, elites showed their fears of the eventuality of media being a threat to the existing social order and political stability (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.27). These times were marked by the emergence of "the mass society theory" about mass media (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.27). The atmosphere in which this theory appeared was characterized with a nostalgic spirit of the restoration of rural life style which was undergoing a severe technological invasion (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.27).

Scholars and even laymen accused mass media, in the same way as elites, of accelerating the industrialization process. Others, however, supported the use of technologies to improve life standards. They were critical of media, viewing it as a dangerous threat to the elitists' control (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.27). Mass communications could, then, be shown as a space for struggling perceptions where power and control were the primary objectives. In short, while

some media theorists argued for the maintenance of the existing system, others forcefully suggested a social change. They both, however, converged at the dangerous roles of media (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.28). Thus, virulent attacks were launched on mass media, such as those oriented against news papers of the Yellow Journalism Era during the 1880s and those of the Penny-Press Era in the 1830s (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.28). Furthermore, from the previously stated perspectives, one can assume that mass communications addressed working classes either to keep intact classic social values or to stimulate a radical change in society. The outcome was a hot political debate which established the foundations for the mass society theory (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.28). Both factions (conservatives and radicals) admitted that mass communications would be an effective tool in conserving or uprooting the prevailing order. Each claimed the well being of society. Ultimately, with a more cautious, analytical mind, it can become readily evident how the two sides of this mass media theory were misled by their proper views. Indeed, traditional thinkers unreasonably dreaded the effects of media on consumers, while modernist ones seemed to have underestimated the power of media to maintain the status quo (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.28).

The influences of mass media on populations spanned whole decades. In fact, since the early years of this mode of thinking stretching from the 1800s to the 1950s, the notoriety of the mass society notions was proportional to the emergence of new brands of technologies (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.29). Ever since, there have been periods of reaction and counter-reaction to different menaces to existing social orders. This is vividly reflected in Europe in the 1930s. It was the era of the rise of Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy and the radical socio-political changes sweeping the continent. Consequently, mass communications came to be used again as weapons to gain and maintain power (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.29). Dictatorial regimes could systematically exert tremendous brainwashing on whole populations to force them admit and consume extremist ideologies. This watershed is referred to with the term propaganda. Governments had strong hold on the radio and the press, arguing that this would bring prosperity to their nations. Nevertheless, the contrary was true: dictators got control and power (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.29). Simultaneously, the transition from the 1930s to 1940s was also marked by the newly introduced empiricism oriented towards the examination of mass society theoretical concepts. This revolution was carried out by Paul Lazarsfeld, an Austrian psychologist escaping Nazism to the USA (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). His work over mass media consisted in evaluating the scientific principles incorporated in social sciences: survey, field work, and objective observation to ascertain and classify vague social

phenomena (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). Lazarsfeld was the archetype of the researcher who would base his studies on previous theories for the elaboration of new perspectives about mass communications. He asserted the necessity of involvement in empirical work to prove or reject mass society assumptions over media effects on audiences (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). In addition, his stance was well grounded; he evoked the inefficiency of previous attitudes to media unless field work would reinforce them. Baran and Davis write about Lazarsfeld's scientific vision in mass communications:

Instead, he advocated the conduct of carefully designed, elaborate surveys and even field experiments in which he would be able to observe media influence and measure its magnitude. It was not enough to assume that political propaganda is powerful—hard evidence was needed to prove the existence of such effects. (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30)

Indeed, Lazarsfeld's project "American voter studies" remains one of the most important works about media impact on electors in election times. Later on, the data analysis by Lazarsfeld and his colleagues could demonstrate the invalidity of the alarming concerns about media's subversive power. They found out that people afraid of the ravaging effects of mass communications as well as those being optimistic about their promising future in society held exaggerated assumptions (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). In other words, consumers could keep immovable against repeated media attacks. Their reactions were stimulated by their immediate environment (family, friends, religious conservatives, etc) (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). Rather than being a devastating force, mass communications were viewed as gatekeepers of the already established social system (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). Hence, Lazarsfeld and his fellow colleagues were the instigators of the "limited-effects theory". This theory became popular during the mid 1950s. It assumed the limited influence of mass media on people's daily life style. Besides, this theoretical framework continues to be relied upon in measuring the extent of media impact by means of surveys carried out by specialized official institutions, for instance field work on the capacity of advertising companies to measure the effects of media in exhorting audiences to consume certain types of goods (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30).

The limited-effects theory enjoyed its apotheosis of controversy in the 1950s. Intellectuals and social thinkers were increasingly involved in this trend. The flourishing domain of mass communications in the USA was constantly swamped by the theoretical findings of the

limited-effects framework, moreover (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.30). Bauer and Bauer (1960) stated, furthermore, that this intellectual turmoil led to a confrontation between the followers of this theory and the proponents of mass society theory. This tumultuous situation was mainly heightened by the Communist advance across Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Consequently, Mass media were feared to be absolute weapons in the hands of communists (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.31). Furthermore, resort to limited-effects mode of thinking was much fashionable in mass media research theory, but with remarkable innovation. V.O. Key (1961) pioneered this renewal process. He applied the limited-effects theory in the political and social theory. The corollary was a freshly eclectic theoretical framework termed “elite pluralism” (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.33). This perspective adopts the belief that democracy is composed of various, pluralistic groups directed by popular opinion leaders. These leading elites benefit enormously from media institutions in terms of social and political matters even in case of masses’ ignorance of the political world (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.33).

The Cold War decades, especially the 1950s and 1960s, saw the mass society mode of thinking being bitterly criticized for failing to be scientific in relation to solid evidence. This theory’s involvement in the unreasonably exaggerated stigmatization of Communism brought severe criticism to it by the disciples of the limited-effects theory (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.33). It was actually the “era of McCarthyism” in the USA in the 1950s; therefore, all suspicious Communists in mass communications were chased and singled out for disapproval and eventual purge (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.33). This feeling of suspicion about Communists infiltrating American media foreshadowed mass society theorists’ fears of a huge population control by Red propaganda. However, the new version of the limited-effects theory (elite pluralism) replied by asserting that masses were already defended by opinion leaders. These would be capable of eradicating the Communist threats in mass media before their devastating effects took form (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.33). The latter half of the 1960s witnessed a sudden break in the hot debate between the mass society and limited-effects theories’ disciples. Some theorists and researchers assumed that the field of mass media theory was no more inspiring. Berelson (1959) states in his essay that research in the field of mass media was by then “dead”. It was high time to explore other areas (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.33). Nevertheless, this assumption proved weak simply because of the eminent boom in the mass communication research in the late 1960s and 1970s. Henceforth, new perspectives were to be elaborated. In the following years, there seemed to be more ferment in the mass communication world as new, challenging ideas emerged. While the majority of

social theorists adhered to the limited-effects theory, some unsatisfied scholars from other continents grew suspicious of empirical thinking (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34).

In parallel, some mass society ideas were still popular in Europe. This was barely surprising since the influence of propaganda from the First World War was dreaded by both right-wing and left-wing proponents (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). On the other hand, numerous social scholars were utterly opposed to the Americanization of media research theories. They accused, for example, the post positivist method of being incapable of producing any valid theories due to their typically quantitative approach to mass communications (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). Hall (1982) asserts that the neo-Marxist theorists pioneered resistance to the American hegemony. For them, the mass media are handheld tools used by the already powerful elites following the Second World War; they make clever, dishonest uses of them merely to sustain the current social situation. Instead of exclusive-elite control, neo-Marxists advocate a set of publicly operated mass media in which competition can be justly carried out for cultural dominance (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). In short, they disapprove of the absence of any opposition to the fixed social order. Baran and Davis express this very situation: “Elites dominate these struggles because they start with important advantages. Opposition is marginalized, and the status quo is presented as the only logical, rational way of structuring society” (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). In addition, neo-Marxists opt for cautious analysis of media discourse and institutional organization to measure the extent of resistance or adherence to elitism (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). These claims are encapsulated in what is now known as the “neo-Marxist theory”. Thus, the British School of Cultural Studies was born. Its aim is to examine the contribution of mass media in establishing a newly hegemonic cultural framework which would impose fresh social perceptions on consumers around the world. Its fellows undertake fieldwork studies on the role of audiences in reinforcing these freshly mediated, hegemonic values, moreover (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). Adopting both the post positivist’s social reality principles and limited-effects theory’s empiricism, they show that audiences are mostly resistant to dominant elites’ perceptions. They instead try to impose their proper conceptualizations of social reality (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). Ultimately, Hall, referring to his colleagues’ immense efforts within the “New Left”, lucidly portrays the rise of the “New Left counter-culture” in Britain in the late 1950s (Davis, 2004, p. 9).

Though the British School of Cultural Studies accentuates the ravaging effects of the elitist mass media on consumers, they tend to drift straight on towards empirical studies on receivers

themselves. These are, indeed, portrayed as being active audiences in that they display steadfast opposition to the elitist media's aggressive hegemony (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34). To say things otherwise, the neo-Marxists set forth to investigate the power of Western, elitist media and audiences' aptitude to resist. This is the very point the American social experts put aside in the 1960s; for them, media effects are exaggerated as audiences are quite passive. Baran and Davis write:

Although British Cultural Studies began with **deterministic assumptions** about the influence of media (that is, the media have powerful, direct effects), their work came to focus on audience reception studies that revived important questions about the potential power of media in certain types of situations and the ability of active audience members to resist media influence-questions that the 1960s American media scholars ignored because they were skeptical about the power of media and assumed that audiences were passive. (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.34)

The question of media's power on people was once again rehabilitated during the 1970s in the USA. A group of researchers was founded on the European cultural criticism model with the purpose of countering the limited-effects theory (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). Other scholars, besides, argued in favor of the creation of a purely American school of cultural studies; however, Canadian theorists like McLuhan as well as Harold Innis were the inspiring source (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). Through time, a new perspective about media effects saw the light in the USA and progressively usurped the leading position of the limited-effects theory. This period was the dawn of a forthcoming era: that was the context of meaning-making attitudes to mass communications' effects (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35).

The principles underlying the limited-effects' thinking came to experience a lot of considerable changes. This was in part due to the emergence of the revolutionary cultural studies that put considerable focus upon media influence on consumers. These play a significant role in accelerating this influence by being active receivers of media output (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). Besides, the recent decades technological revolution in mass communications has contributed to a reorientation to media elitism (powerful effects) and a reevaluation of the limited-effects' perspectives (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). In short, it is the era of powerful media flows. This innovation in media research theory can be discernible in the new attitudes to media power developed from such perspectives as "framing theory" and "media literacy". The former is grounded in the use of expectations about social

environment by people to be able to decipher it in media discourse; the latter deals with the possibility for theorists to penetrate the realm of media institutions, analyze and evaluate them with the aim of making their effects known to the large public (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35).

An intrinsic aspect of the “meaning-making theory” is assuming the consumer’s active role in making sense of the various media output, “At the heart of these new perspectives are notions about an *active audience that uses media content to create meaningful experiences*” (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). This assumption attributes the powerful media influence to active consumers’ desires; i.e., individuals always try to make media contents symmetrical with their own intentions in a determined way (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). Nonetheless, meaning-making uses of media content may activate unlooked-for outcomes (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.35). In either case, mass media’s capacity to affect our lives is unquestionable. The latter theory constitutes some solid evidence of the new research horizon about media effects and the evaluation of consumers’ capacity to build meanings out of the same institutions (Baran and Davis, 2012, pp.35-36).

The rise of the meaning-making theory lies much in the weakness of the limited-effects’ theorists to fully grasp the ever-increasing power of influence inherent in media (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37). Worse, even recently, the same scholars have not been capable of catching up with the socio-cultural metamorphoses in the world in general and the USA in particular. This is an era in which mass communications’ entanglement in a lot of sensitively controversial matters cannot be brought into dispute. The most illustrative case is the post 9/11 attacks on the USA and the decisive role media played in the shaping of the American public opinion (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37). Furthermore, the failure of this theory to assess media effects on large audiences can be traced to the notion of “levels of analysis”. Frequently, social scientists covering mass communications’ influence have to resort to certain methodological parameters: “macroscopic” and “microscopic” studies (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37). In effect, they can proceed either from the macroscopic or microscopic level. For example, in research about media effects, such theorists, instead of beginning with larger units (countries, cultures, communities, etc), they might deal with smaller units, such as sub-cultures or even individuals in search of shared findings (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37). In contrast with the standard norms, the limited-effects’ scholars concentrate on isolate cases. Whatever the findings, they tend to generalize them to include the whole community: if there is no media influence, they assume it is also applicable to the entire group. This is another flaw (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37). These theorists deny the media-induced cultural change.



The meaning-making theory is perfectly aware of this crucial phenomenon, on the other hand. This theoretical framework is capable of demonstrating newer forms as well as ways of influence on the masses. Some of them are the advertising techniques deployed by advertisers to provoke large-scale changes in consuming patterns. They support their theory claiming that ideological struggles have always been in existence and they will surely be so. Hence, some perceptions get imposed to the detriment of others (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37). This accounts for the mass media's huge role in determining the type of desired effects. The outcome is beneficial for giant companies, including media; the public welfare comes next (Baran and Davis, 2012, p37).

## **6 Media theory in the age of propaganda**

The aftermath of the First World War saw an enormous interest in propaganda as a potentially effective means of mobilization for war. Indeed, the period of the First World War was characterized with an unprecedented surge for war. Individuals in Europe could not stand firm against the devastating power of propaganda (Baran and Davis, 2012, p79). The corollary was a human carnage: there had never been a huge number in human casualties as that of the Great War beforehand. In the USA, Harold Lasswell, an expert in political studies, could quickly discern the decisive role of propaganda in assembling the masses (Baran and Davis, 2012, p80). Most social scientists adhered to this orientation to propaganda especially in the 1920s and 1930s. They were as Lasswell, strongly convinced by its power in shaping the population's mode of reasoning in the planned way, mainly in times of conflict with other nations (Baran and Davis, 2012, p80). In Europe, propaganda practices witnessed a tremendous rise. Nations set out to expand their power beyond their borders. In Germany, following Hitler's accession to power, all mass communications became in his hands as efficient tools for propaganda (Baran and Davis, 2012, p80). In the USA, the struggle for control over propaganda was at its utmost. Elites (the upper classes) had nearly all the social institutions under their control: political power, parties, industry, universities, mass communications, etc. Other groups openly expressed their opposition to elitism. These were mostly Communist, Nazi, and Fascist supporters. Furthermore, elites warned ceaselessly against their eventual impact as a subversively foreign danger to the American lifestyle (Baran and Davis, 2012, p80).

The socio-economic context of the late 1920s and the early 1930s was quite favorable for anti-capitalists to manifest themselves in Europe and maybe the USA. Social researchers

firmly assumed that the working class would be sensitively attentive to any propagandist influence from abroad. They attributed this probable propaganda reception to the cultural as well as psychological marginalization undergone by those working groups (Baran and Davis, 2012, p80). Besides, scholars could not observe in complacency while propaganda served “extremist” regimes in Europe. Thomson (1977) describes the powerful propaganda techniques deployed in Nazi Germany under the responsibility of Goebells, stressing their psychological penetration. Masses were repeatedly exposed to Nazi media output to the point of indoctrination with an anti-democratic ideology (Baran and Davis, 2012, p81). Henceforth, research was funded in the USA to ascertain the reasons underlying the practicality of propaganda. Eminent figures in social studies and propaganda would contribute to a work of considerable value for media theory. Most theories were inspired either by behaviorism or Freudianism. Others combined both (Baran and Davis, 2012, p81).

## **6.1 Behaviorism**

The pioneering figure of this theory was John B. Watson. He assumes that all human behavior is stimulated by surrounding stimuli. He rejects the mentalist viewpoint of consciously mental processes controlling human behavior. For Watson, such a cognitive operation of behavior is solely limited to rationalizing actions out of social stimuli. Behaviorists carried their theoretical framework beyond the mentalist thinking, trying to establish the link between human behavior and heteroneous factors (Baran and Davis, 2012, p81):

One of the central notions in behaviorism was the idea of conditioning. Behaviorists argued that most human behavior is the result of conditioning by external environment. We are conditioned to act in certain ways by positive and negative stimuli- we act to gain reward or avoid punishment. (Baran and Davis, 2012, p81)

This theory had an enormous influence on scholars involved in the study of mass communications’ stimulating force, provoking instant reactions from audiences. In the USA, a new theory was developed out of behaviorism: “the hypodermic needle theory”. Termed also the “magic bullet theory”, it claims that audiences cannot resist against mass communications’ propaganda practices as these automatically lead to the activation of the desired form of behavior most of the time (Baran and Davis, 2012, p81). In other words, media, as tools of manipulation, exert direct, powerful influence on the masses to achieve certain political aims

(University of Twente, 2010). At that time, the political scene in Europe and the USA was characterized by an atmosphere favorable to the implementation of such a theory. Actually, it was the era of the rapid propagation of new forms of media: Radio, motion pictures, and the businesses of persuasion (advertising and propaganda). In Germany, all these mass communications were monopolized by the Nazi (University of Twente, 2010).

The main assumptions of this perspective are based on the belief that media institutions have the capacity to cast a sweeping authority on populations. This can occur by “injecting” great doses of powerful messages into people’s heads. This way, producing audiences thinking and acting as intended (University of Twente, 2010). The immediacy and the force of the magic bullet theory can be reflected in the metaphorical use of “needle” and “bullet”. The needle is suggestive of the injection of thousands of information into the skin of the inactive consumer; the effects are instantaneous. The bullet, on the other hand, is indicative of media being weapons pointed at static audiences to manipulate them (University of Twente, 2010). Thus, the two metaphors testify to the extraordinary powers of media in manipulating the hundreds of thousands of scattered consumers:

The population is seen as a sitting duck. People are seen as passive and are seen as having a lot of media material “shot” at them. People end up thinking what they are told because there is no other source of information. (University of Twente, 2010)

Later on, criticisms emerged to unveil the weaknesses of the hypodermic needle theory. In fact, field work by specialists like Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet during the electoral campaign of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1940 showed people’s resistance to media flows (University of Twente, 2010). Campaigns conducted by candidates themselves proved more effective in regard to voters’ choice than media’s repeated flow injections (University of Twente, 2010).

The archetypical example of the magic bullet theory’s apotheosis was the 1938 Orson Welles’s theatrical performance. While his group was acting the famous story by H.G. Wells “War of the Worlds” on radio, large audiences were suddenly shocked by news of an attack by Martians on the Earth to invade it. The outcome was quite instant. The population, actually, plunged in a deep hysteria. In effect, around a million listeners, easily deceived into believing the alien invasion, rushed madly through the streets to flee the cities to the country for shelter (University of Twente, 2010). Besides, stores as well as shopping malls were

densely overcrowded by the excited masses seeking sufficient rations. In short, that broadcast has been considered as a watershed in the field of mass media as it could revolutionize media practicing norms, on the one hand. On the other hand, it demonstrated the fragility and the passivity of receptive audiences (University of Twente, 2010).

## **6.2 Freudianism**

As an influential trend in 20<sup>th</sup> century psychology, Freudianism, though different from behaviorism, converged with it in regard to the human cognitive capacity over behavior (Baran and Davis, 2012, p82). Freud, indeed, carried out psychological studies on women from middle classes. These underwent moments of emotional breakdowns. They would occasionally cry and get hysterical in public places. Freud observed that such an uncontrollable behavior took place at the peak of daily problems for those women. Hence, Freud set forth to find out about the likely causes underlying such excited behaviors (Baran and Davis, 2012, p82). In his study, he came to identify the notion of the “self” that controls the human behavior. Furthermore, the self is divided into two opposing parts: the “Id” and the “Ego”. The first is the dark side of the human nature. The second constitutes the mind’s authority over the behavior. The Ego resorts to the assistance of the inner cultural restrictions in its permanent struggle to control the Id. Freud used the term “Superego” for this highest authority. The Ego is, therefore, stuck between the severe restrictions of the Superego and the disobedience of the Id. When the Id manages to free itself from the Superego, people turn hysterically uncontrollable. If the super ego wins, individuals are in deep depression and totally under social domination (Baran and Davis, 2012, p82).

Mass communication theorists had to resort to Freudianism to explain the ravaging media effects on audiences. They painted an even darker picture of mass media’s power in targeting the Id to stimulate the evil side of humans. In addition, they claimed that the Superego can exert pressure on the Ego getting it to approve of any horrific outcome from the Id. So, theorists used Freudianism in order to account for consumers’ vulnerability to the continuous aggressions of mediated propaganda (Baran and Davis, 2012, p82). Among the most renowned scholars was Harold Lasswell. Being remarkably influenced by psychological theories, he went over Freud’s theory with the aim of applying it in political sciences (Rahman J. M. C. in Wordpress.com, 2015). The Second World War era stimulated Lasswell to get more involved in the domain of mass communication and propaganda. He was particularly interested in elaborating a theoretical framework which would enable theorists to

finds clear answers to media and their propaganda-intended aims (Rahman J. M. C. in Wordpress.com, 2015). His work was the product of a combination of behaviorism as well as Freudianism (Rahman J. M. C. in Wordpress.com, 2015).

Lasswell's model starts with the "who" component which deals with the group holding control of mass media. Termed also "sender", the analysis of this notion relies on "control analysis". The second component is "says what". This relates to the message to be conveyed. It is, in fact, a portrayal of real situations, persons as well as stereotypical attitudes about them. "Content analysis" is the parameter for this analysis. For the "channel", Lasswell assumes that contents are conveyed through various channels synonymous with the human senses. In addition, every situation determines the type of channel appropriate to a given sense. All this process comes under "media analysis". It explains the choice of one medium to the exclusion of others. "To whom" relates to the receiver. It is a valuable source of information: gender, job, social status, ideologies, etc. This is done through "audience analysis". Concerning "effect", he focuses on the impact the message has on audiences. This is achieved by means of "effect analysis" (Rahman J. M. C. in Wordpress.com, 2015).

Lasswell gives an alarming account of the capacity of mass communications in shaping populations' perceptions of the world (Baran and Davis, 2012, p83). In his theory, he claims that the force of mediated propaganda resides in the psychological fragility of audiences, hence being susceptible to media flows. He draws attention to severe economic depressions and political struggles people may inevitably experience. The outcome is imminent psychotic mental states among laypeople. They mostly feel utmost insecurity and an unreasonable need for propaganda support, whatever its consequences (Baran and Davis, 2012, p83). Moreover, Lasswell believes that the democratic system is faulty. For him, democrats usually perform their debates with transparency, so in cases of discord, a general feeling of trauma and psychosis spreads within audiences. Matson (1964) stresses this point in Lasswell's deduction that even minor political clash could be psychologically destructive for ordinary people. The most effectual way to relieve this eventual situation is to put an end to escalation in political disagreements; this consists in substituting the malevolent propaganda by an even kind, democratic one (Baran and Davis, 2012, p83). Furthermore, Lasswell treats the behaviorist stimulus-response theory as ordinary. By this, he wants to prove that propaganda attacks, no matter how powerful, cannot always achieve planned results; however, the continuous broadcast of strong messages over a long period of time can result in positive reactions (Baran and Davis, 2012, p83). Therefore, symbols have to be devised to represent emotional states of

mind. In other words, to provoke the desired behavior, people should be systematically subjected to the repeated reception of these symbols. The aim is to cultivate the emotions embodied in these symbols in the minds of consumers (Baran and Davis, 2012, p84). In case the symbols turn out to be effective, they are automatically given the term “master symbols” or “collective symbols”. These are broadcast in written, spoken, in picture, or in musical form, “Lasswell argued that successful social movements gain power by propagating master symbols over a period of months and years using a variety of media” (Baran and Davis, 2012, p84).

Lasswell advocated a renewal of propaganda science by empowering the modern elite to use it positively through media. For this, he and his colleagues coined the concept of “science of democracy” to refer to this new propaganda approach. The latter was intended to strengthen democracy, not to subvert it (Baran and Davis, 2012, p85). Most of social researchers supported this approach, thus. In effect, joining Lasswell’s assumption which considers the masses lacking in good sense in their vision of the world; social theorists suggested a solution to this popular misjudgment. They encouraged benevolent research to counter the growing dangers of propaganda against democracy (Baran and Davis, 2012, p85). Among the most influential figures in the public opinion domain was Walter Lippman with his “theory of public opinion formation”. He could grasp with concern the intrinsic incapacity of ordinary people to comprehend social reality. So, it was not surprising that their actions would prove unwise (Baran and Davis, 2012, p85). Evoking the gap between media and laymen, Baran and Davis write:

The world of the 1930s was an especially complex place, and the political forces were very dangerous. People simply couldn’t learn enough from media to help them understand it all. Even if journalists took their responsibility seriously, they couldn’t overcome the psychological and social barriers that prevented average people from developing useful pictures in their heads. (Baran and Davis, 2012, pp.85-86)

As a columnist, Lippman was close to people’s everyday life; therefore, he could discern their traumas and predisposition to propaganda’s effects. He questioned the role of the free press in informing the seemingly ignorant masses about the outside world alongside dangers from radical groups (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.86). Besides, Lippman’s theory calls for a relative control of mass communications so as to safeguard democracy (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.86). To crystallize such a project, he suggested that an intelligence office would be set up by the

government. The aim of this was to assess the different information, and decide what was suitable for audiences. Then elites would make further decisions (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.86).

There were instant reactions to the previous propaganda theories. It is clear that such Freudianism-based theories were elaborated to study, analyze, and define the role of propaganda, in an era of worldwide vortex and democracy protection. Nevertheless, crises and wars continued, with them the threats of propaganda (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.86). Thus, criticisms of these theories followed later to disclose their failures. Dewey (1927), an eminent philosopher, stood against Lippman's perspectives. He qualified as useless the establishment of elite committees to safeguard the masses against propaganda; instead, he was in favor of a public form of education. This alternative, for him, would be the key to sensitize people and fight off extremist, anti-democratic views. This model consists in reinforcing people's comprehension of social reality, rather than preventing them from the advantages of scientific theorization. This way, consumers can resist against propaganda fallacies (Baran and Davis, 2012, pp.86-87). According to Alterman (2008), Dewey viewed these technocracies as groups with an exclusive monopoly of knowledge. That is to say that the afore-mentioned theories serve more elites, ignoring the large public (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.87). In addition, Dewey was determined to advocate the role media was to play in interaction with community members, involving them in public affairs: "He saw democracy as less about information than conversation. The media's job, in Dewey's conception, was to interest the public in public interest" (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.87).

Dewey himself was criticized as an idealist who actually did no efforts to accelerate the public's education. Neither did he address mass communications better than his predecessors. Dewey, besides, adhered to a purely philosophical orientation to news papers in the hope of developing the art of information-seeking and an analytical mind among the readership. In effect, he aimed to create mature readers, rather than just consumers of news. However, his efforts did not get many echoes (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.87). It should be made clear that Dewey's theoretical framework is based on the principles of pragmatism. It is a philosophical trend claiming that the value of something is embodied in its practical effects (Marcel Danesi, 2009, p. 239). Pragmatism presents knowledge as an effective tool to master social reality; hence this provides the power to manage and control it (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.87). As a summary, providing large audiences with sufficient knowledge would develop their aptitude to receive media output with critical minds. Carey (1989) asserts that much of Dewey's

contribution was in advance to its time in foreseeing the value of educating audiences. It is still a useful source of research associated with developing critical minds among audiences (Baran and Davis, 2012, p.87).

## **7 Media and cultural imperialism**

The concept of “media imperialism” has been very controversial. Some scholars argue for the segmentation of media imperialism into characterizing media institutions and the way they operate. Others, on the end of media theory, orientate towards focusing on media discursive practices (Tomlinson, 1991, p.34). The latter point can be said to reveal a direct association between media imperialism and the larger scope of “cultural imperialism”. Nevertheless, much of the work on this issue seems devoid of a clear explanation of the notion of “cultural” (Tomlinson, 1991, p.34). Thus, the center of attention is the cultural dimension of media domination, not to the exclusion of the other dimensions. There are, in fact, three concerns when embarking on critical studies about media imperialism. Most often, the notion of media imperialism tends to be equated with such domains as political domination; political influence, leading to economic imperialism. The cultural, thus, being viewed irrelevant is the first concern (Tomlinson, 1991, p.34). The second concern in media imperialism is connected to the economic level. Since much attention is paid to media output looking for markets, the cultural implication is undeniable. However, it is quite vague how to address such a dimension: is this due to the oddity of the media output itself? Or is it because of relying on simplistically interpretative assumptions to unveil the culture underneath? Here resides the difficulty of the cultural in terms of effects on consumers (Tomlinson, 1991, p.34). Commenting on this point, Tomlinson writes:

The second issue is the *hermeneutic naivety* of much of the discourse of cultural imperialism. Not only do the claims of some media analysts provide nice examples of this, there is an existing debate within media theory generally about the problems of inferring ‘media effects’ to which we can conveniently refer. (Tomlinson, 1991, p.34)

The third concern is relative to the central position of mass communications in the modern Western culture. It can be deduced that the main mission of mass media is to propagate and firmly enforce this Occidental culture worldwide (Tomlinson, 1991, pp.34-35). In fact, Western capitalism and mass communications are closely interrelated. This can be perceived



in the economic benefits out of Western media's output in different world markets (Tomlinson, 1991, p.35).

Notable is the point that to make sense of cultural imperialism, scholars should cautiously consider that major content of media from Western society. Is it merely made up of images, sound and texts? Or is it heavily charged with capitalist-based cultural perceptions? Cultural imperialism is, after all, seen as the cultural products from powerful nations conquering the markets of other less developed nations. The result is the displacement of local or indigenous values under such economic, political, and cultural hegemony (Marcel Danesi, 2009, p.83). By considering the above aspects of media imperialism, our research direction becomes clear enough: according to Tomlinson (1991), more concentration is to be put on the media impact exerted by Western nations on Third World societies. Of course, this should by no means neglect the politico-economic domination. Tomlinson, stressing an eclectic approach to media imperialism with some focus on the cultural, advocates, "what we must do is to resist becoming settlers as we visit each area," he goes on, "we must keep our distance. Ours must be a nomadic discourse" (Tomlinson, 1991, p.35).

Fejes (1981) produced an evaluative work about research into media imperialism. He concludes that most of the literature in this field converges at Western hegemony in terms of transnational media across world markets. Multi-national media companies have tight control over the production and distribution of output (Tomlinson, 1991, p.35). Despite the reference to Western media domination, Fejes stresses most the incorporation of media imperialism and politico-economic specifications in establishing the relationship between the developed and developing world. What is remarkable, on the other hand, is the significant point of neglecting the cultural dimension in previous work on media imperialism (Tomlinson, 1991, p.36). Besides, he sheds some light on the palpably expressed concerns with the devastating effects of those transnational media on local cultures in the Third World. This is a pinpoint proof, giving the status of cultural to media imperialism as a research theory (Tomlinson, 1991, p.36).

From what has been said so far, one can deduce the two angles from which media imperialism is tackled. The first relates to mass media being under the control of Western corporations. This is quite measurable in the sense that transnational media monopolize both the quality as well as the quantity of output. In other words, the dominance multi-national media enjoy over the world's media market, with a huge amount of TV, radio, and advertising programs

(Tomlinson, 1991, p.36). The second angle, in based on the cultural implications: the economic hegemony of the West is potentially meaningful to the audiences of the Third World as it signifies cultural invasion and the subversion of traditional societies. As an illustration, one may refer to the spread of the Occidental value of “consumerism” in local cultures (Tomlinson, 1991, p.36). This term might be alien in some cultures; it means an interest in material products (media output) (Danesi, 2009, p.76). The world market domination by Western media corporations pertains to “political economy” which is at the heart of the new imperialism practiced by the West in many regions in the Third World. This is generally known as “macro sociology” of Western-led mass communications (Tomlinson, 1991, p.36). Fejes refers straightforwardly to the “dependency theory” elaborated in the developed societies as being a tangible proof of the Western-media hegemony. The cultural implication, in Fejes’s view, is quite different from the economic one in terms of domination. Indeed, it should be dealt with in another type of analysis: that which covers the content encapsulated in media texts; further, it points out the power this content exerts on social patterns (Tomlinson, 1991, p.36). Nevertheless, Fejes himself acknowledges that the cultural aspect of media imperialism has been going short of insightful studies by experts in the field. He ascribes this lack of inquiry into the cultural implications in Western media to the inability of scholars to adopt a uniform method in addressing the cultural issue (Tomlinson, 1991, p.36).

Fejes’s attitudes to media are in agreement with much of media theorists’ work. Herbert Schiller (1979), among others, puts a lot of focus on multi-national institutions dominating world markets, including the Third World (Tomlinson, 1991, p.37). For Fejes, Schiller portrays the “new world system” in which the politico-economic hegemony lies in the hands of the capitalists. This is in terms of technologies, financial resources, and mass communications (Tomlinson, 1991, p.37). In fact, Schiller (1969) asserts the traditional American control over different media (Morley, 2006, p.32). In the 1920s, the US government could recognize the potential of Hollywood in effectively advertising US goods and promoting the American lifestyle all around the world (Morley, 2006, p.32). Moreover, he moves forwards to the 1940s to draw attention to the perspective elaborated by Luce (1941). This one argues that the criterion for global hegemony resides in the control of media to have more influence on audiences. Later on, mass communications became tools in the hands of the US foreign policy (Morley, 2006, p.32). Morley (2006), rehabilitating Schiller’s work writes:

In Schiller's vision, this is still a world of principally one-way flow; where America still dominates the international trade in film and television; where key areas of the media - such as news- are still controlled by a small number of Anglo-American agencies; and where, through the export of formats as much as contents, America has, in effect, written the grammar of TV production worldwide. (Morley, 2006, p.32)

In acknowledging the active role of the masses in the post-modernist era of media consumption, the neo-Marxists adopt a rather optimistic stance vis-à-vis Western hegemony. They minimize the assumption of Schiller concerning media's impact on audiences. This does by no means undermine the firmly established Western- media imperialism (Morley, 2006, p.31). To recapitulate, Schiller puts it clearly that America's power to export its lifestyle is intertwined with globally active mass communications, resulting in Western culture's hegemony worldwide (Morley, 2006, p.33).

By contrast, the Third World is situated outside the bounds of this system. Developing countries are increasingly in need of the West in economic matters. The corollary is politico-economic dependency. This state of affairs seems also harmonious with the neo-Marxists' perspectives about dependency theory: they point out the sheer dependency of former colonies on colonial powers in nearly all fields (Tomlinson, 1991, p.37). This global capitalist system, according to Schiller, is best encapsulated in the powerful transnational corporations. Moreover, Schiller attributes to Western media the role of being the ideological outlet for the capitalist system. That is to say, Western-owned media are vital tools for the dissemination and maintenance of capitalist values around the globe (Tomlinson, 1991, p.38). In short, when it comes to capitalism, Mattelart and Dorfman unveil a set of capitalist ideological principles. These range from the compulsion for money-making through exploitative attitudes to the under developed countries' natural resources, the legitimization of the capitalist system, to unlimited consumerism (Tomlinson, 1991, p.42).

It is evident that mass media tend to develop very advanced strategies to expand their presence beyond their borders. Schiller stresses the role of media in advertising for capitalist corporations, with manipulative effects on audiences. This way, the western lifestyle model based on capitalism is spread worldwide through media output (Tomlinson, 1991, p.39). In addition, the criterion of development lies in the propagation of the capitalist lifestyle among world consumers: the evolution of consumers is relevant to capitalist culture promoted through media (Tomlinson, 1991, p.39). Smarajiva paints an even darker image of the quasi-

global Western media domination in the world market, leaving no space for the Third World media for competition (Tomlinson, 1991, pp.39-40).

It is worth a mention that a consideration of the international media market from a politico-economic point of view is indicative of cultural domination. The definition of cultural domination is still problematic. It is hard to say whether the cultural is synonymous with Western media flows to the rest of the world or it is a set of implications in real-life situations (Tomlinson, 1991, p.40). While the neo-Marxists' perception claims a close link between culture and media output, Fejes, being pessimistic about the unveiling of the nature of cultural hegemony, asserts more focus on individuals. Their reception of Western media flows and the subsequent cultural effects on their vision to reality deserve greater attention (Tomlinson, 1991, p.40). Further, Fejes assumes that the broad equation between capitalism and the cultural defended by Schiller is vague; a deeper penetration into the way audiences receive Western capitalist values must be undertaken. This is not an easy task. Tomlinson stresses Fejes's point:

This concerns the difficult question of *how* people experience the culture of capitalism. Perhaps it is not so powerfully manipulative - or its effects are experienced differently by different individuals? Perhaps the export of consumerist values and the ethics of the market-place are mediated by other factors as they cross cultural boundaries? Religion might be an obvious example of such a mediating influence. Such considerations suggest that Schiller's approach is too broad, too shallow, and perhaps too pessimistic. (Tomlinson, 1991, pp.40-41)

According to Fejes, the issue of the cultural approach to media imperialism is open to more investigation, regarding the reception and the making of sense of media output under various contextual conditions (Tomlinson, 1991, p.41).

## **7 The complexities of media flow and counter-flow in global communications**

The long established archetype of cultural imperialism is strongly dismissed for putting too much stress on the Anglo-American domination of media flows worldwide (Morley, 2006, p.35). In other words, Schiller's pessimistic view of the single- direction flows from the USA to the other continents is nowadays treated as less influential. This could be ascribed either to

his neglect or underestimation of the mounting role of regional counter-flows. These can be represented by new voices, such as Telenovelas, broadcast throughout Southern America and Latin Europe; the Brazilian TV Globo; India in film production; Japan in cartoons, etc (Morley, 2006, p. 35). Mattelart (1984) affirms that the quick rise of such counter-hegemonic trends comes to complicate the media context already claimed by Schiller, furthermore. Notwithstanding the increasing significance of the emerging media, more research is required to assess the value of such media on the international media scene (Morley, 2006, p. 35). It would be useful to remind the American domination of the world market in terms of TV and film production. For instance, the USA holds 80% of the European market (Morley, 2006, p. 35).

Painter (2008) affirms that ever since the creation of CNN in 1980, there has been an unprecedented growth in TV stations, namely news-based ones. A number of global news networks followed in a series, such as CNNI (1985), the BBC as well as BBC World service (1991) (Painter, 2008, p. 9). Moreover, South East Asia has become the terrain for the boom in TV institutions, particularly in India and Taiwan: there are currently more than one hundred transnational and regional channels (Painter, 2008, p. 9). These emergent TV Stations differ in a range of aspects. Firstly, they have various capacities of reach (local, regional, global). Secondly, their sponsorship is different (state-funded, private). Thirdly, in terms of language range and agenda, they are distinct from each other. Fourthly, technology and news-gathering capacities are also another point of distinction. Fifthly, TV stations possess divergent contents and forms, targeting different types of audiences (Painter, 2008, pp. 9-10).

According to Castells (2000), flows tend to shape up our modern lives altogether. These flows fluctuate from capital to sound, image, and symbols. In a world overrun by global mass communications, we witness multi-directional flows embodying huge quantities of information. These are broadcast with such a great speed that no one could have imagined before (Thussu, 2007, p.10). A UNESCO report on the global media order published in 1998 focuses attention on the “new world communication order”. In this context, Western media are largely present around the world. However, it brings to the fore the space for other voices from different cultural and historical backgrounds (Thussu, 2007, p.10). With this media diversity, the international media order is more complex than ever before. This media boom is the outcome of several reasons: the privatization and deregulation of mass communications, the affordable possibility for digitization, and the emergence of new forms of online media.

All this spurred media institutions to cross borders in search of new markets (Thussu, 2007, p.11).

The USA, Great Britain and then France are typical examples of global hegemony in terms of media output. In effect, The Anglo-American media (online as well as offline) are globally influential with all their program genres: news-based programs, entertainment, or infotainment (Thussu, 2007, p.11). According to Thussu (2006); Bagdikian (2004); and Boyd-Barrett (2006), the American politico-economic power is the impetus for US-produced media output. This omnipresence could be either in dubbed or “indigenized” form. Besides, Britain, America’s traditional ally, is a major actor in the US-led, Western media globalization: it is dominant in the domain of news and current affairs (Thussu, 2007, p.11). The only non-western media genre in the global sphere is the animation cartoon produced in Japan. This brand owes its worldwide reach to Japan’s flourishing economy in support of its cultural output. This American-led Western domination of the world media market is referred to as “dominant media flows” (Thussu, 2007, p.11). Despite the recent emergence of flows from other continents, the Anglo-American alliance is still the master of the global market in media and film production. This hegemony ranges from news and current affairs networks (CNN, Discovery, and BBC World Service) through the young-based channels (MTV), entertainment for children (Disney), cinema industry (Hollywood), sports programs (ESPN), and internet (Google) (Thussu, 2007, p.11). The factors behind Western media’s hegemony can be traced to the privatization and deregulation of TV channels. Moreover, the globalization of the Anglo-American film and TV programs has given an impetus to this domination (Thussu, 2007, p.11). It is a process by means of which regional as well as local cultures are reached by the effects of globalization (economic, cultural, and technological). The outcome is that they are rendered similar: this process is termed “glocalization” (Danesi, 2009, p.135).

The merging of TV with broadband technologies has made it possible for Western media conglomerates’ flows to reach the furthest cultures both regionally and locally. The aim is to make their output globally popular (Thussu, 2007, p.11). Simultaneously, southern and non-Anglo-American media may benefit from the technologies of the glocalization process as well. In certain cases, non-Western channels, by being part of this process, have become worldwide media actors (Thussu, 2007, p.11). Consequently, this is the second order of international media institutions. This consists of private and state-owned media (Thussu, 2007, p.12). In film industry, India’s Bollywood is the best example. For TV networks, we can mention the Brazilian Telenovelas, CCTV9 (a Chinese news channel), the multi-language

Euronews, and TV5 (targeting francophone audiences) (Thussu, 2007, p.12). Other government-sponsored news networks include such examples as Telesur and Russia Today (RTTV), and Al Jazeera Arabic. These are mostly news channels financed out of oil and gas incomes (Painter, 2008, p.13). For example, the all English news network Russia Today was started in 2005. Its funding is 50% by commercial banks and 50% by the state: it is part of the Kremlin's policy consisting in encouraging Russian companies to promote national projects. This TV station encompasses Russia's vision towards international issues, especially the nuclear problem opposing the West to Iran and issues in Middle East (Painter, 2008, p.13). In other words, RTTV broadcasts news from a Russian point of view (Thussu, 2007, p. 12). To conclude, we would say that the transnational media actors (RTTV, AJA, CCTV9, TV5, France 24, Telesur, Telenovelas) are relevant to the "subaltern flow" or, in clearer terms, "contra-flows" (Thussu, 2007, p. 12). They are transnationally active with the aim of globalizing their reach (Thussu, 2007, p. 12).

The third type of flows relates to media targeting diasporic markets around the world. In Fact, the immigration of people in many different directions because of economic globalization has led to the emergence of language and culture-based media flows (Thussu, 2007, p. 13). Diasporic communities worldwide maintaining cultural as well as linguistic ties with their home countries have become privileged targets for what is nowadays known as "geo-cultural" media (Thussu, 2007, p. 13). Hence, networks as MBC and Chinese Phoenix, respectively aiming at the Arab and Chinese diasporas, are illustrative of the geo-cultural flows (Thussu, 2007, p. 13). Language-oriented flows are relevant mainly to such languages as Mandarin, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and French being part of diasporic communities around the globe (Thussu, 2007, p. 13). Nonetheless, not only the linguistic factor can be decisive in the search of diasporic communities, but also the cultural one. Actually, the Indian network Zee TV targets the new generation of Indian immigrants with a limited mastery of Hindi: in this case, cultural identity is what matters the most (Thussu, 2007, p. 13). To sum it up, such channels, in targeting diasporas, provide them with programs of various genres, allowing them to keep close to their original societies. Ultimately, this type of media can act both at the geo-cultural or at the transnational level; therefore, they are by all means "contra-flows" (Thussu, 2007, p. 13).

**Chapter three: The application of Halliday’s SFG (qualitative method) and the quantitative method**

**1 Samples for analyses**

The corpus to be analyzed applying Halliday’s SFG is RTTV and the sample is a set of five news bulletins. These cover the Syrian conflict in the year 2012. They can be organized in the following way:

**Table 1.1** Sample data

<b>Sample Data</b>	
Sample N. 1	Foreign-funded Terrorists to Blame for Syria Atrocities.
Sample N. 2	France to Give Heavy Artillery to Syria Rebels to “Smash Assad Regime”.
Sample N. 3	Good Guns, Bad Guns? US Arms in Reach Of Syrian Rebels.
Sample N. 4	War Under the Table Ex-Blackwater Mercs in Syria ‘Backed by US’.
Sample N. 5	Syria “Friends” Fuel Murder with Promises of Weapons for Rebels.



## 2 Analyses of sample N.1

### 2.1 Elements of context

The elements of context of the first news bulletin can be identified in the following table:

**Table 1.2** Elements of context in sample N. 1

<b>Elements of context</b>		
<b>Field</b>	<b>Tenor</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Accusing the foreign-backed terrorists of perpetrating Hama atrocities.  Countering media of the West which ascribed the killings to the Syrian government	The news reader of Russia Today addressing the political analyst Christoph Hoerstel through an interview.	Spoken language being alternatively a dialogue and a monologue. Also, the text is pragmatic-oriented.

## 2.2 Ideational analyses

### 2.2. a Transitivity

RT's news reader: "For more reaction on Syria now from the political analyst Christoph Hoerstel, who has extensively covered [Physical action] events in Arab states. Thanks for joining us on RT. Who do you think [mental process] might have been [relational] behind these later killings in Hama?"

Political analyst: "Again please?"

News reader: "Who do you think [mental process] might have been [state of being] responsible for these killings?"

Political analyst: " It is very clear [state of being] now, and that has been reconfirmed [verbal action] yesterday to the shock of many people by a catholic bishop coming back from extended travels in Syria that the Western media are not telling [verbal action] the truth about the situation in Syria. There are [relational] terrorists at work. Very clearly and very clearly they are sponsored [physical action] from abroad. Openly, Saudi Arabia has said that [verbal action] Qatar, the same Turkey is involved [state of being]. People, you know [mental process], fighters come [physical action] over the borders from Jordan, from Lebanon, from Iraq, from Turkey, and that, in fact, heats up [physical process] the situation very much. And there are [relational] all kinds of media lies. The most recent was [relational] from Homs, where we hear [mental process] that eighty people were killed [physical action] in a massacre. Well, the same resistance group, you know, publishing this said [verbal action] a little later that there were [relational] just fifty, and then it was [relational] twenty-four. This was [relational] all an official German radio, and, in fact, the government says [verbal action] it was nine. But the killing was done [physical action] by the terrorists, and I think [mental process] that is believable [state of being], and the other things are [relational] lies. The usual lies we hear [mental process] since a year."

News reader: "So what will they be trying [physical action] to achieve then, the perpetrators of this atrocity?"

Political analyst: "You see, what we have here is [relational] a strong disability of the

outgoing Syrian government to handle this public-relations case. They were unable [state of being] to point out what is a very simple truth. This so-called revolution was instigated [physical action] from abroad. Yes, the government was not, you know, [mental process] very fair [state of being] to many of its citizens. There was [relational] torture, there was [relational] imprisonment, people have disappeared [physical process], yes. But a revolution going on that was made [physical action] from abroad. We have eye witnesses. I have quoted [verbal action] this on this TV station thanks to you. And now we have the situation that either, it's [relational] an either or question, either the new government in Syria tackles [mental action] and comes [mental action] to terms with this challenge of, you know [mental process]; challenging the Western media at home or they will fail [mental process]. That is very clear [states of being], and the solution can only come, you know [mental process], if the lying stops [verbal action]; and those countries behind terror are openly addressed [verbal action].”

News reader: “Well, the peace process is [state of being] now clearly stored in Syria with Western and Arab states calling for action, as you say [verbal action]. What impact will this later course likely have [physical process] on this bloodshed?”

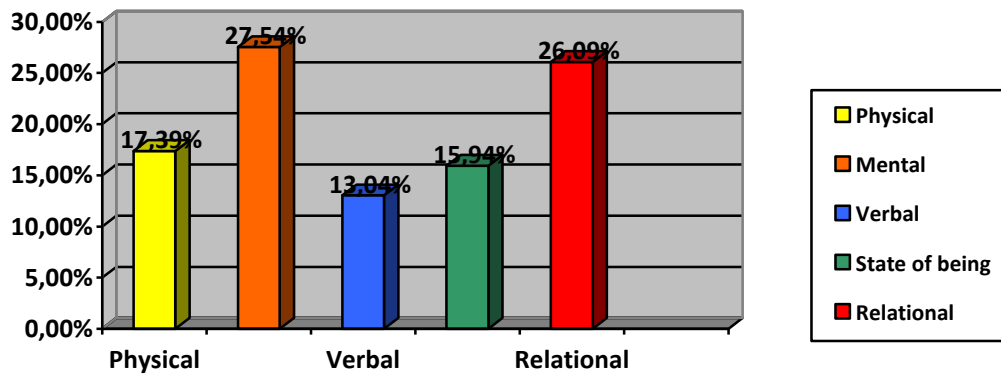
Political analyst: “You see, the bloodshed going on right now that is [relational] a desperate fight. When the terrorists called off [mental action] the Anan peace plan that was [relational] in fact a joke. They had never stuck [mental process] to it. So, what they did [mental action] was they, you know [mental process], committed [state of being] to this non-acceptance of this plan openly. That is [relational] a new quality, and now what I hear [mental process] the recent news of today is there is [relational] an all over fight going on between the Syrian-government troops and those terrorists. And I do think [mental process] the vast vast majority of the poor Syrians are trapped [state of being] in the middle. That is [relational] a very bad situation.”

News reader: “Ok, the political analyst Christoph Hoerstel, thank you for joining us here.”

**Table1.3** Transitivity in sample N. 1

<b>Action/process types</b>					
<b>Journalist/Analyst</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>	<b>Verbal</b>	<b>State of being</b>	<b>Relational</b>
<b>Total</b>	12	19	9	11	18
<b>Percentage</b>	17,39%	27,54%	13,04%	15,94%	26,09%

**Figure 1.1** Transitivity in sample N. 1



This figure represents the ideational function of the first sample. What can be noticed here is the following:

- The mental processes, relational verbs, and physical processes predominate in the bulletin, followed by states of being as well as verbal actions.

-The mental processes depict the perspective of RTTV over the Syrian conflict which opposes that of Western media.

- The relational verbs relate the different parts of the sentences together; for example, “that is a new quality”, and “this is a very bad situation”.

-Physical actions are frequently used to show the extent of the armed conflict on the battle field. What is noticeable here is the association of most of the physical actions with the “terrorists” and their “sponsors” from abroad. For example, “...the killing was done by the terrorists....”

- States of being are employed to give a clear image of the “terrorists’ atrocities”, the “lies of the Western media”, as well as the “support from foreign sponsors”. For example: “It is very clear...”, “Who might have been responsible for these killings?”

-The verbal actions are made use of so as to make given attitudes (including those of RTTV) about the situation in Syria clear, either by being expressed directly or quoted.

-The participants also evoke the process of possession through the use of the verb “have”; possession of the proof about the situation in Syria.

-The participants make use of present, past, and future times through their relative tenses: Simple past, present perfect, and past perfect for the past; simple present, present continuous for the present; and future simple and future continuous for the future time. Thus, there is a time pattern all through the text.

-There are grammatical structures in the text relevant to participants in the processes. For example, certain structures include two participants. In some cases, we have a subject but not actor; for example, “... that has been reconfirmed... by a Catholic bishop”; the latter part of the sentence is an object and actor. In others, there is a subject without an object. For instance, “they had never stuck to it”; here the subject functions as an actor.

-We can see also names referring to groups in the context of situation, such as “terrorists”, “fighters”, “Syrian-government troops”, “Syrian people” and “perpetrators”. Items also include “media lies”, “bloodshed”, “and fight”. There are also some accompanying features like “vast”, “desperate”, and “majority”.

- To conclude, we can remark the counter-hegemonic attitude RTTV adopts towards the Syrian conflict; and the way this influences its coverage of the overall situation in Syria.

### 2.2.b Theme /Rheme analyses

**Table 1.4** Theme/Rheme in sample N. 1

Marked Theme	Unmarked Theme	Function	Class	Rheme
	Who	Subject (actor)	Nominalization	Might have been responsible for....
	It	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is very clear now....
	That	subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Has been reconfirmed by....
That		complement	Nominal group pronoun as head	The Western media are not ....
	There	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are terrorists at work....
	They	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are sponsored by....
Openly		Adjunct	Adverbial group	Saudi Arabia has said that....
	People/fighters	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common noun as head	Come across the borders....
	That	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Heats up the situation....

	There	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are all kinds of media lies.
	The most recent	Subject	Phrase complex	Was from Homs....
	People	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Were killed in a massacre
	The same resistance group	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Said a little later there was just....
	This	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Was all an official German radio.
	The government	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common noun as head	Says it was nine.
	The killing	subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Was done by the terrorists.
	I	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Think that is believable.
	The other things	Subject	Phrase complex	Are lies.
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Hear since a year.
What		Complement	Nominal group	Will they be trying to achieve...?

	What we have here	Subject	Nominalization	Is a strong disability....
	They	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Were unable....
	The so-called Syrian revolution	Subject	Phrase complex	Was instigated from abroad.
	The government	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Was not fair....
	There	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Was torture.
	People	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Have disappeared.
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Was made from abroad.
	We	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Have eye witnesses.
	I	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Have quoted this on this TV.
	We	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Have the situation that....
	The Syrian government	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Tackles and comes to terms with....



	They	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Will fail
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is very clear
	The solution	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Can only come if....
	These countries	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Are openly addressed.
	The peace process	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Is clearly stored
What impact		Complement	Nominal group	Will this later course likely....
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is a desperate fight.
	they	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Had never stuck to it
	What they did	Subject	Nominalization	Was they ...Committed to the non-acceptance of this plan.
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is a new quality.
	What I hear in	Subject	Nominalization	Is there is an all

	the recent news of today			over fight going on....
	I	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Do think that the vast vast majority....

The Theme-Rheme structure in the text is characterized by the following:

-A number of Themes function both as subjects and actors. This way, reflecting experiences alongside their doers. For example, when there are killings, terrorists are the doers; when it comes to reactions to Western media, the Syrian government is the doer.

-In certain cases, Themes function just as subjects; these agree with their predicates in number as well as the nature of the subject (human or situation). Thus, this shows that what the participants say during the course of interchange is the truth.

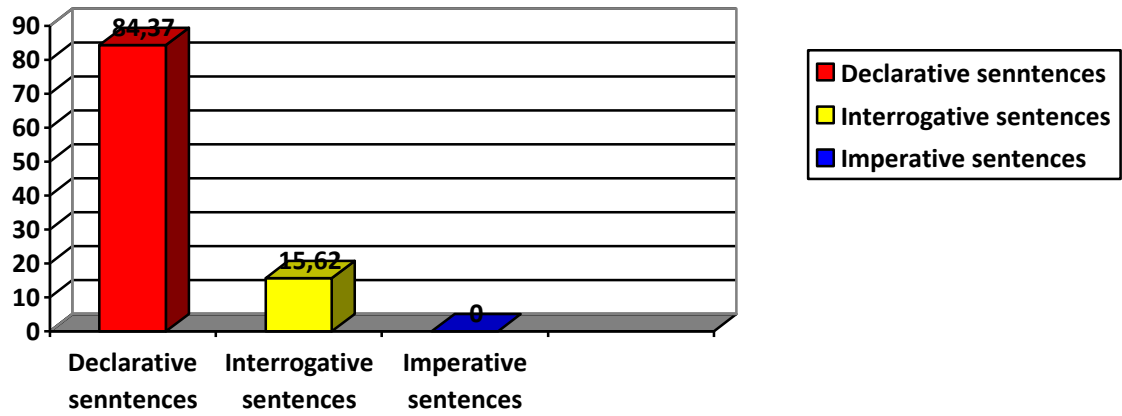
## 2.3 Interpersonal analyses

### 2.3.a Mood

**Table 1.5** Mood in sample N. 1

Mood choice	Number	Percentage
Declarative clauses	27	84,37%
Interrogative clauses	5	15,62%
Imperative clauses	0	0%

**Figure 1.2** Mood in sample N. 1

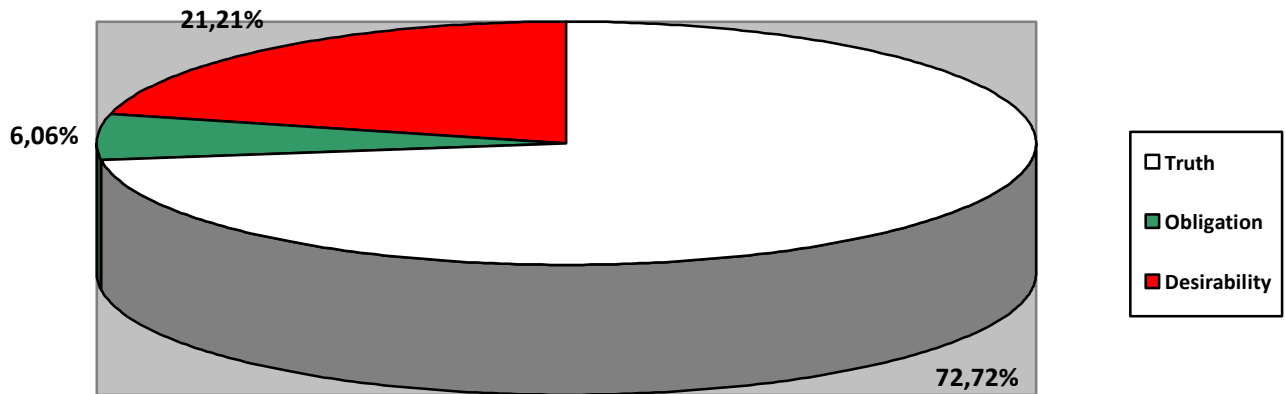


**2.3. b Modality**

**Table 1.6** Modality in sample N. 1

<b>Modality</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Truth	24	72,72%
Obligation	2	6,6%
Desirability	7	21,21%

**Figure 1.3** Modality in sample N. 1



Concerning modality in the interpersonal interaction, we can say the following:

-Truth predominates in modality; this is to show the actual situation as it is (according to RTTV's perspective). In the second position comes desirability; this is mainly to express disapproval of the atrocities committed by the "terrorists" and occasionally of the Syrian government's unfairness to its people, and of the situation as a whole. In the final position we find obligation; this is expressed metaphorically to indicate that the Syrian government must challenge Western media to stop their "lies".

-RTTV's news reader refers to the contributor with the term "political analyst" and later with the pronoun "you", meaning the same. The political analyst, on the other hand, uses the pronoun "I" and "you" to refer to himself and the journalist.

-The news reader leads the discussion through questions to the contributor. This is aimed at getting him to confirm or else reject the channel's vision over the war in Syria, which accuses "terrorists" backed up by foreign powers of committing crimes in Syria. Turn taking is at work in the interview with questions and answers exchanged.

## 2.4 Textual analyses

**Table 1.7** Vocabulary relevant to war in sample N. 1

<b>Vocabulary relevant to war</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	31	45,58%
<b>Adjectives</b>	9	13,23%
<b>Adverbs</b>	6	8,82%
<b>Verbs</b>	22	32,35%

There are some remarks concerning the textual function of the text in the news bulletin. They can be mentioned in the following way:

-The text is spoken, taking on the form of monologue and dialogue alternatively. The text is also pragmatically-based.

-Certain nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs relevant to war are used, and even some are repeated in such a way that cohesion in the text is ensured.

-The frequent use of “exophoric pronouns”, such as “that” and “it” and “anaphoric pronouns” like “they” is indicative of the pragmatic dimension of the news text. They refer respectively to the actual situation in Syria and to textual items. Moreover, conjunctions of various types are deployed to give the spoken text more cohesion in terms of its constituents (clauses). For example: and, or, if, when, where, that, what. Pronouns as well s conjunctions give more cohesion within the text.

-Since the text sounds quite pragmatic, it is supposed to embody certain meanings in it. We can mention two: a criticism of Western media for their lies about the situation in Syria and the massacres perpetrated by the “terrorists” and an urge for the Syrian government to counter those media. As for the rhetorical meaning, one can say that the text is expository as well as persuasive.

- Concerning the phonological structure, we can notice that the syllables are arranged in such a regular way in terms of strong and weak ones: one strong (beat syllable) and one or more off-beat ones. These are parts of the feet forming the whole oral text. So, there is a regular rhythm, with the beat syllables uttered at regular intervals. This way, more emphasis is put on certain important syllables; for example: “//**figh**//ters//, //o//ver//”, //out go//ing//; //re//**la**//tions//, //re//**sis**//tance//; //re//con//**firmed**//, and //a//**broad**//. The salient syllables are indicated in bold; it is not the case for the weak ones. This also creates a variation in intonation: rising-falling, falling-rising-falling, and falling-rising.

- The tone groups, within which the feet operate, are mostly organized in the form of rising intonation on initial syllables, falling by the end. This is remarkable in both declarative and interrogative sentences, except for the request by the analyst “again please?” Here, the intonation is rising.

- Since variation through the tone group in terms of intonation is important for conveying meaning, we can say that it is the same for this text. Here, most of the tone groups adopt a ddfalling intonation. In declarative sentences, it corresponds to truth: all that is said is believable; in questions, it indicates a search for a piece of information that is not available at hand. Thus, the intonation pattern of RTTV’s news reader as well as the analyst gives the impression that the “terrorists” are responsible for the Hama massacre; in addition, it shows the support these groups enjoy from countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey.

## **2.5 Quantitative analyses of sample n. 1**

### **2.5. a When? and where?**

This news bulletin was aired on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This news program was broadcast from RT’s studios in Moscow with a contribution from RTTV’s bureau in Berlin.

### **2.5. b Prominence**

Headlines relative to the Syrian conflict are all placed in the foreground of the bulletin’s headlines. This gives the impression that news about Syria forms the foremost issue. The other news comes next in order of importance. We can quote some headlines as illustration: “Massacre Uncertainty”, “Women, Children, Found Bound And Executed in Houla-Style Slaughter”, “US & Allies Quick to Blame Assad For Killings Despite Mixed Reports”.

### **2.5. c Speakers**

The speakers here are RT's news reader (journalist) and a political analyst (contributor).

### **2.5. d Sources**

As a news network founded and sponsored partly by the Russian government and partly by its financial allies, the source of this channel's political stance is the Kremlin.

### **2.5. e Themes**

The major themes in this news bulletin turn around condemning both the western media for failing to speak the truth about the situation in Syria, and the foreign-funded "terrorists" for committing atrocities. The main objective is clearly to counter the flows of Western media which attribute the killings to Bashar Assad's government, making Russia's perspective about the war known worldwide.

### **2.5. f Imagery**

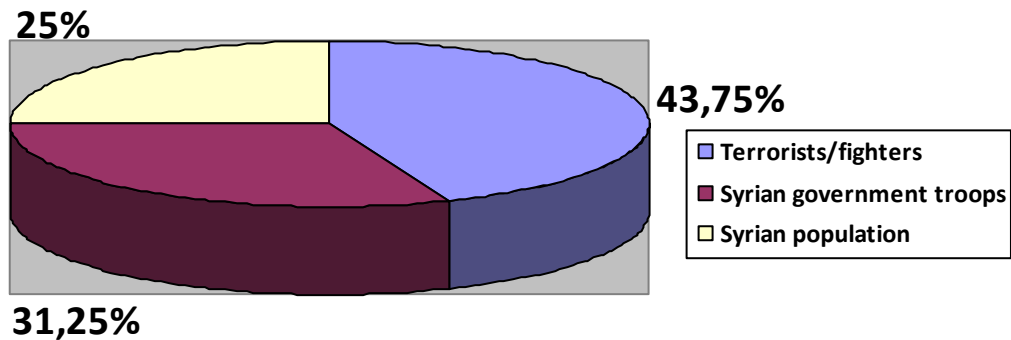
This news bulletin starts with images depicting the dead bodies of children and women killed in the Hama massacre. The last part of it shows Syrian government troops patrolling the city in a way that gives the impression that they are defending it against "terrorist" attacks.

### **2.5. g linguistic modifiers**

**Table 1.8** words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 1

<b>Words and expressions to refer to groups</b>		
<b>Groups</b>	<b>number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Terrorists/fighters</b>	7	43,75%
<b>Syrian government troops</b>	5	31,25%
<b>Syrian population</b>	4	25%

**Figure 1.4** Words and expressions referring to different groups in sample N. 1



The process of quantifying the most endemic words to indicate certain groups reveals the following:

-The words employed in the news bulletin interview to refer to armed groups present in Syria range from “terrorists” through “fighters” to “perpetrators of atrocities”.

-These words and expressions are frequently repeated all through the bulletin. This implies that these groups should be or even are the actors behind the Hama killings, not the “Syrian Army”, which was then accused by Western media of being responsible for that.

-The other group being the “Syrian Army” is given the appellation of “the Syrian government troops”. This is indicative of the military institution that should be recognized as legal. It is systematically repeated. However, in terms of frequency it is less than the other groups (“terrorists”) so as to give the image of the “terrorists” to be the aggressors of Syria, and the “Syrian government troops” as the defenders of the land.

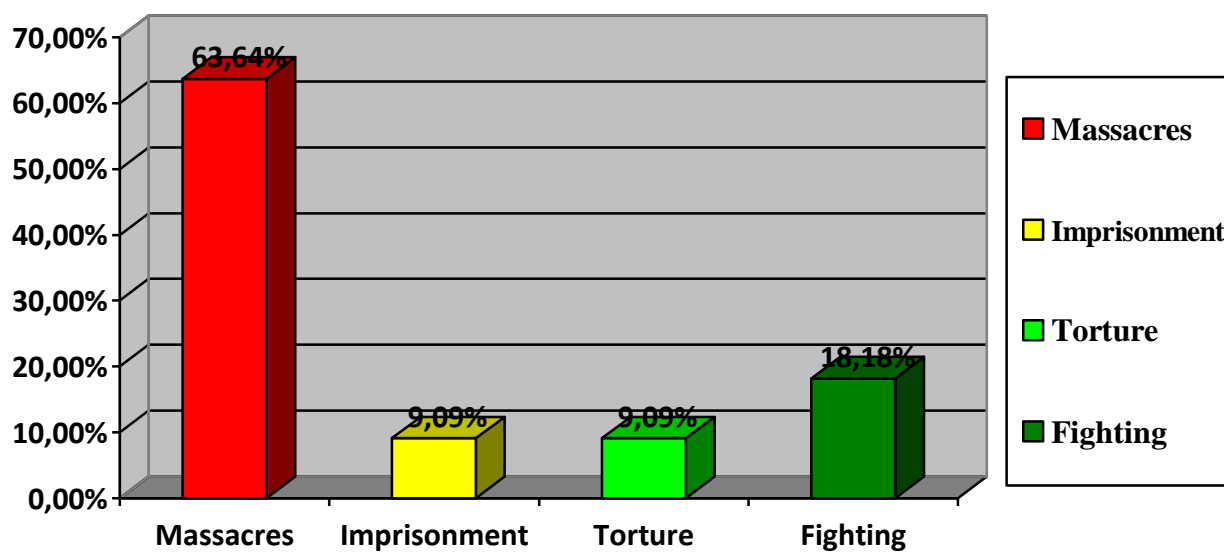
-The “Syrian population”, on the other hand, does not recur so often. People (civilians) are shown as poor victims of the “terrorists”, and they are helpless amid the intense fight between the “Syrian Army” and the “terrorists”.



**Table1.9** words referring to events and situations in sample N. 1

<b>Words referring to events</b>		
<b>Events</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Massacres</b>	7	63,64%
<b>Imprisonment</b>	1	9,09%
<b>Torture</b>	1	9,09%
<b>Fighting</b>	2	18,18%

Figure 1.5 Words and expressions referring to events in sample N. 1



### 3 Analyses of sample N. 2

#### 3.1 Elements of context

The elements of context of the second text are identified in the following table:

**Table 2.1** Elements of context in sample N. 2

<b>Elements of context</b>		
<b>Field</b>	<b>Tenor</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Reporting and criticizing the French government's intention to back up rebels in Syria.	RTTV's news reader and RTTV's correspondent in Tel Aviv: Paula Slier.	Spoken language being a monologue. It is purposefully pragmatic.

### **3.2 Ideational analyses**

#### **3.2.a Transitivity**

News reader: "Now France is considering [mental action] supplying heavy artillery to the Syrian rebels to help them fight President Assad's forces. And that's [relational] according to diplomatic sources, who say [verbal action] Paris is also stepping up [physical action] support for the Syrian opposition to help them forge a government-in-waiting. RT's Paula Slier has [verbal action] the story."

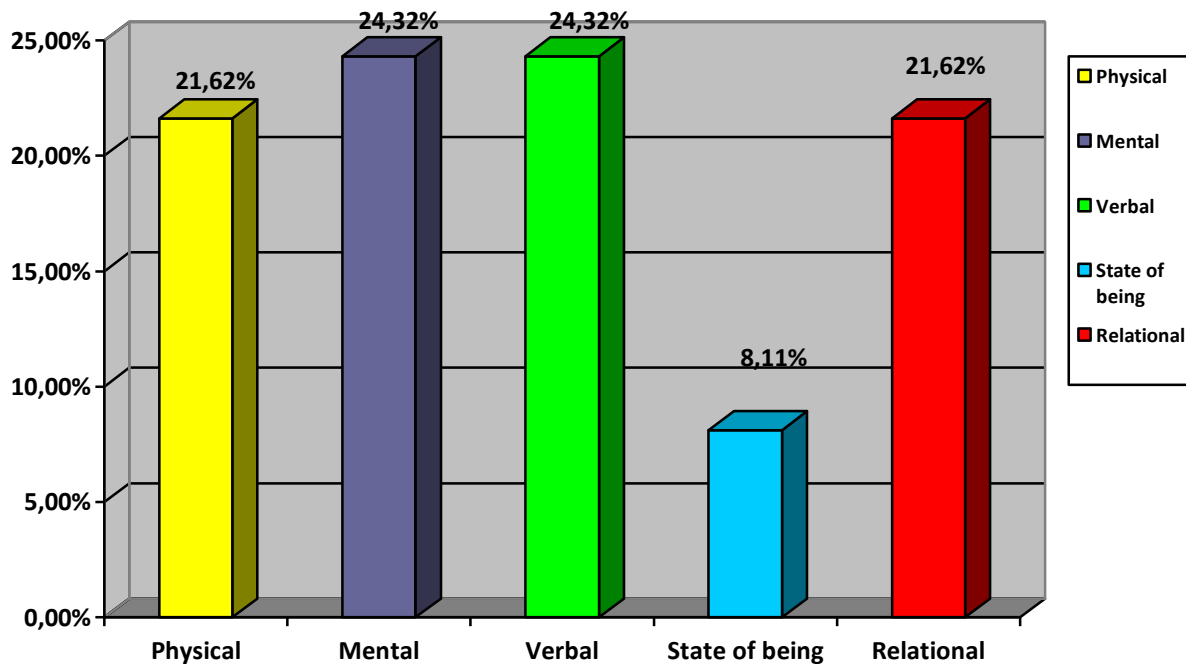
Correspondent: "France has started [physical action] providing direct aid and money to five Syrian cities as Paris intensifies [physical action] its efforts to weaken the presidency of Bachar Assad. Now this is [relational] the first time a Western power has made [verbal action] these announcements and this kind of moves, and our follower reports [verbal action] last week that Paris had indentified [mental process] areas in the north, the south and the east of Syria that are [state of being] free of Assad's control. And that they will consider [mental action] sending heavy artillery to these zones. Now the zones are being [verbal called] called so-called "liberated zones", areas that are [relational] in the hands of rebels and that will ultimately be governing [mental action] themselves. But what has become clear [state of being] is [relational] that this whole offering of this kind of zones is [relational] really an

alternative by the West to an idea that it has put [mental action] forward, and that is [relational] namely “battle zones” to be created inside the Syrian territory. The idea that did not receive [verbal action] approval at the United Nations Security Council because of the positions of Russia and China- the concern really is [relational] that you create [mental action] a battle zone merely as a pretext for creating military intervention because without having a no-fly zone, you cannot create [mental action] a battle zone; and to create a no-fly zone, you certainly need to have military involvement. And to this end, the French foreign minister has admitted [verbal action] and I am quoting [verbal action] him that ‘to ensure the protection of displaced people, there must be anti-aircraft and A assets as well as ground forces that would also be needed’ [mental process]. What is [relational] the coming clear [state of being] is that Paris has become [relational] the locomotive of the Syrian opposition. Paris has said [verbal action] that ‘the opposition in Syria needs to unite and it will be standing by [physical action] to recognize the opposition as the official government of Syria.’ The rare trick coming out of Paris against Assad is [relational] also increasing [physical action]; we are hearing [mental process] from the French foreign minister that ‘the Assad regime needs to be smashed.’ The problem is [relational] that when you use [physical action] this kind of rare trick, and when you start [physical action] sending heavy artillery into Syria, you are doing [physical action] everything, except promoting peace initiatives. If anything, you are doing [physical action] the opposite, with many saying that the scene is being created [mental action] for more violence, more death, more destruction, and more devastation inside Syria. Paula Slier, RT, Tel Aviv.”

**Table 2.2** Transitivity in sample N. 2

<b>Action/process types</b>					
<b>Journalist/ correspondent</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>	<b>Verbal</b>	<b>States of being</b>	<b>Relational</b>
<b>Number</b>	8	9	9	3	8
<b>Percentage</b>	21.62%	24.32%	24.32%	8.11%	21.62%

**Figure 2.1** Transitivity in sample N. 2



The ideational function of the second text is characterized by the following points:

-There is a predominance of mental and verbal processes which are followed by physical processes, relational, and states of being. This is to express certain attitudes about the current situation in Syria and show what is actually going on there.

-There are certain grammatical structures relevant to the participants in the news bulletin. RTTV's correspondent functions both as subject (unmarked theme) and actor with the story as an object.

-When it comes to actors in the Syrian conflict, what is remarkable is that France and its official are mostly subjects (unmarked themes) and actors. This ascribes certain deeds to Paris (the deed of arming the Syrian rebels).

-There are certain names of objects and items being part of the context of situation like: "artillery", "devastation", "destruction", "death", "anti aircraft", "intervention", "battle zones", and "no-fly zone". There are also some accompanying items, such as "heavy", "direct", "military".

-A system of time reference is used to refer to present (present continuous and simple present), past (simple past and present perfect), future (simple future).

### 3. 2. b Theme/Rheme analyses

**Table 2.3** Theme/Rheme in sample N. 2

<b>Marked Theme</b>	<b>Unmarked Theme</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Rheme</b>
	France	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Is considering supplying heavy artillery....
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is according to diplomatic sources....
	Who	Subject (actor)	Nominal group	Say Paris is also stepping up support....
	Paula Slier	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Has the story
	France	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Has started providing direct aid....
	Paris	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Intensifies its efforts to weaken....
	This	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is the first time a Western power....

	Paris	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Had identified areas in the north....
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are free of Assad's control.
	They	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Will be considering sending heavy artillery....
	The zones	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Are being called so-called....
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are in the hands of rebels.
	That	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Will ultimately be governing themselves.
	What has become clear	Subject	Nominalization	Is that this whole offering of this kind....
	It	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Has put forward.
	That	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Is namely battle zones to be created....
	The idea	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Did not receive approval....

	The concern	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Really is that you create battle zones....
	You	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Cannot create a battle zone....
	You	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Need to have military involvement.
	The French foreign minister	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Has admitted....
	I	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Am quoting him....
	What is the coming clear	Subject	Nominalization	Is that Paris has become the locomotive....
	Paris	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Has said that the opposition in Syria....
	They	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Will be standing by to recognize....
	The rare trick coming out of Paris against Assad	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Is also increasing.
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are hearing from the French....

	The problem	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Is when you use this kind of rare tricks....
	You	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are doing everything, except promoting peace....
	You	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are doing the opposite with many saying....
	The scene	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Is being created for more violence....

### 3.3 Interpersonal analyses

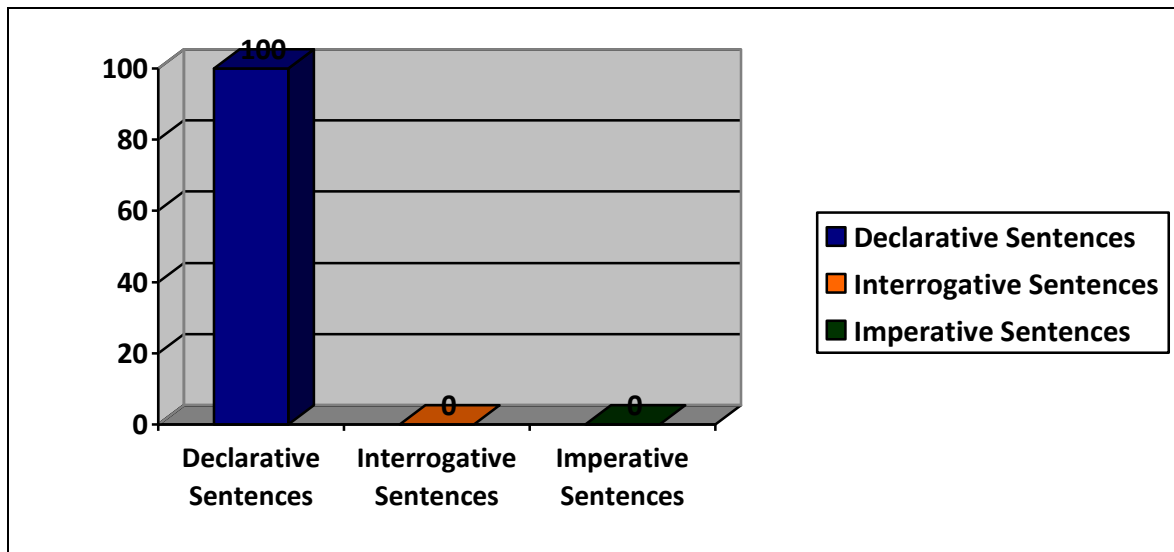
#### 3.3. a Mood

**Table 2.4** Mood in sample N. 2

<b>Mood</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Declarative clauses</b>	18	100%
<b>Interrogative clauses</b>	0	0%
<b>Imperative clauses</b>	0	0%



**Figure 2.2** Mood in sample N. 2



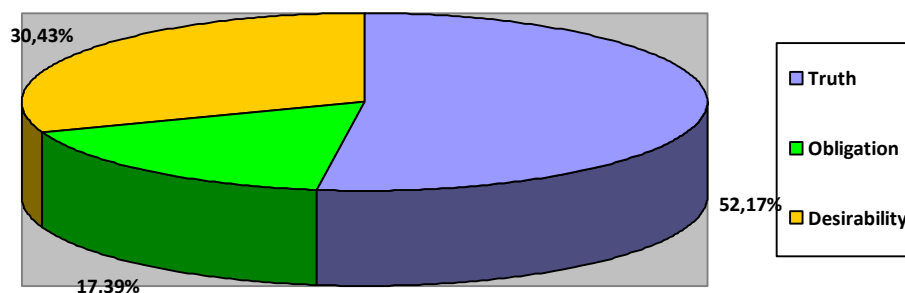
-Declarative clauses are clearly predominant in the bulletin; this is to reinforce the channel's credibility in the coverage of the actual situation in Syria. There is, on the other hand, a total absence of both interrogative and imperative clauses.

### 3.3. b Modality

**Table 2.5** Modality in sample N. 2

<b>Modality</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Truth</b>	12	52,17%
<b>Obligation</b>	4	17,39%
<b>Desirability</b>	7	30,43%

**Figure 2.3** Modality in sample N. 2



The interpersonal aspects of the second sample can be commented on as follows:

-The relationship between RTTV’s news reader and the correspondent of the channel is indicated in the implicit use of the personal pronoun “she”. The correspondent also uses the title “Foreign minister” to refer to a French official. So, the two pronouns are implicitly “she” and “he”.

- The correspondent is the one who carries forwards the course of the news report by making only statements. She quotes a French official to underpin her statements. The same is true for the news reader, who guides the opening of the news bulletin through statements. This is reflected in the mood choice of declarative sentences.

-Turn-taking convention is at work in the text; this is indicated through the expression “Paula Slier has the story”, giving her the occasion to report and analyze events in Syria.

### 3.4 Textual analyses

**Table 2.6** Vocabulary relevant to war in sample N. 2

Vocabulary relevant to war	Number	Percentage
Nouns	40	57,97%
Adjectives	10	14,49%
Adverbs	1	1,45%
Verbs	18	26,09%

What can be said about the textual analyses of sample N 2 is the following:

-The text adopts the monologue form. Hence, there is a total absence of questions and answers.

- Specific vocabulary to do with the armed conflict is used all through the bulletin; this contributes to more cohesion among the nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and nouns.

- Pronouns, such as that, this, themselves, they, its, and them are used. On the one hand, they create cohesion by referring to previous groups (Syrian rebels) and situations (like backing up rebels). Those referring to elements within the text are called “anaphoric pronouns”, and those referring to situations are termed “exophoric pronouns”. On the other, they keep the text consistently pragmatic through reference to groups and current situations like: rebels, military support, battle zones, etc. Besides, the use of different conjunctions ensures cohesion between actions and processes. For instance: as, that, and, because, when, if, but.

-The major function of the text is a criticism of the French and Western powers’ support for the Syrian opposition and a warning of the destructive outcome. The text has also the rhetorical function of being mostly expository and persuasive as it tries to explicate the dangerous move by the French government to supply Syrian rebels with heavy artillery and money to overthrow the Assad regime. This, from RTTV’s viewpoint, will blow away all peace initiatives.

-The rhythmic organization of sample number 2 is achieved through phonological feet being made up of salient syllables and weak ones. The salient syllables, though they do not have fixed positions, tend to happen at regular intervals. They sometimes happen at initial positions, at other times, they occur at final positions, or in the middle, therefore offering a pattern of rising-falling, falling-rising then falling-rising-falling intonation. For example, //hea// vy// //ar//ti// //le//ry//, //su//port// //for// //sy//rian// //oppo//zi//tion//. The falling intonation frequency in most syllables is demonstrative of the assumed truth of the information being provided.

## **3.5 Quantitative analyses of sample N. 2**

### **3.5. a When? and where ?**

This news bulletin was broadcast on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 13:13 PM GMT, 17: 13 Moscow time from RTTV's studios in Moscow and its bureau in Tel Aviv.

### **3.5. b Prominence**

This news report about the French decision to step up military support to Syrian rebels as an alternative to the creation of battle zones holds the top of the news headlines. This is in terms of the importance of both the actual situation and the French move. The two major headlines that can be excerpted are: "Zone Warfare" and "France Divides Syria to Send Rebels Aid & Heavy Weapons in 'Safe Zones'".

### **3.5. c Speakers**

The participants in the news bulletin consist of the news reader at the studio assisted by RTTV's correspondent in Tel Aviv.

### **3.5. d Sources**

Here the correspondent of the channel quotes the French foreign minister's statements directly. This is done to attribute the statement of backing up the rebels in Syria officially to the French government. On the other hand, the expression of concern over the peace initiatives by the journalist is representative of Russia's position about the Syrian conflict. Indeed, the Russian government disapproves of any Western military intervention in Syria.

### **3.5. e Themes**

After viewing the whole news bulletin, it becomes quite clear that the main theme is the dangerous conspiracy against Syria. The other themes are: concern and disapproval expressed by Russia over the Western moves in Syria.

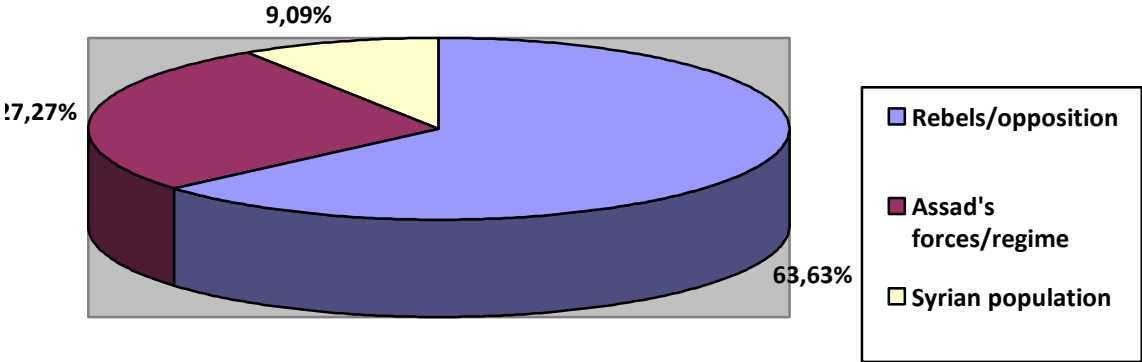
**3.5. f Linguistic modifiers**

**Table 2.7** Words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 2

<b>Words referring to groups</b>		
<b>Groups</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Rebels/opposition</b>	7	63,63%
<b>Assad’s forces/regime</b>	3	27,27%
<b>Syrian people</b>	1	9,09%

-People fighting the Syrian government army are referred to with the nouns “rebels” and “Syrian opposition”. These two terms are contradictory: the first is used by the Russian channel with the aim of representing those fighters as acting illegally against a legitimate government; the second is coined by the French government to attribute more legitimacy to Syrians at war against Assad. What can be noticed is the high frequency of these nouns. They denote the great ideological clash between Western countries and Russia about the situation in Syria, not only at the diplomatic level, but also at the media one. The Syrian population is left at the last position; this may be explained by the fact that it is not the Syrians that can determine their destiny, but the world powers (the West and Russia).

**Figure 2.4** Words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 2



**Table 2.8** Words and expressions referring to events/situations in sample N. 2

<b>Words and expressions to refer to events/situations</b>		
<b>Events/situations</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Support/supplying</b>	12	48%
<b>Destruction</b>	4	16%
<b>Free zones/battle zones</b>	9	36%

This table quantifies the use of certain words and expressions to do with events and situations in Syria. It shows things as follows:

- The news bulletin frequently makes use of vocabulary as well as expressions relevant to military support by the French government; this gives the impression that the French support to the rebels is a fact.
- Certain words reflect the catastrophic outcome of providing the rebels with heavy artillery.
- Words naming military zones are also deployed to depict the actual situation.

### **3.5. g Imagery**

Concerning the images accompanying the coverage of the French decision to provide the Syrian rebels with heavy artillery and weapons, we can see rebels in the city of Aleppo conducting street fighting.

## **4 Analyses of sample N. 3**

### **4.1 Elements of context**

The elements of context (field, tenor, and mode) of the third text are show in the following table:

**Table 3.1** Elements of context in sample N. 3

<b>Elements of context</b>		
<b>Field</b>	<b>Tenor</b>	<b>Mode</b>
The news bulletin covers the US huge military sales of weapons to Middle East countries. These arms will likely be provided to Syrian rebels.	RTTV’s news reader and the correspondent of the channel. Other contributors (editors, US Ambassador to the UN, an author and journalist, and a political activist).	Spoken language which is quite purposefully pragmatic. There is also an alternation between monologues and dialogues through interviews.

## **4.2 Ideational analyses**

### **4.2. a Transitivity**

News reader: “The US is setting up [physical action] an international coalition aimed at supporting rebels in their struggle. The so-called “friends of democratic Syria” will involve [physical process] countries willing to prop up the opposition, and pile more pressure on the regime. Direct military action is ruled out [mental action], but reports suggest [verbal action] British and Qatari Special Forces are already in the conflict zone. And while the US and its allies criticize [verbal action] Russia for supplying military hardware to Damascus, there are [relational] now calls from American lawmakers to arm the opposition. As RT’s Marina Portnaya reports [verbal action], ‘the region is already being flooded [physical action] with fire power made in the USA.’”

RT’s correspondent: “At the United Nations Security Council, America holds [physical action] one permanent seat; but when it comes [relational] to weapons, the world’s largest arms exporter is often seen [mental process] as sitting on two chairs.”

Susan Rice, the US ambassador to the UN (courtesy MSNBC): “They say [verbal action] there isn’t [relational] an international embargo on arms preventing them from doing that. That is [relational] a fact, but that doesn’t change [physical action] the immorality of

supplying a dictatorial regime that is killing [physical action] its people in massive numbers every day, and we are deeply concerned [mental process] about that.”

RT’s correspondent: “As US officials continue publicly scolding [verbal action] countries over relations with Syria, critics say [verbal action] the accusations are being thrown [verbal action] from a tremendous glass house.”

Corey Pein (editor Warisbusiness.com): “The US is not usually... because they have longer been [relational] the largest arms dealer, and most of those weapons that the US sold [physical action] historically, more than four hundred billion dollars, were since the 1960s have gone [physical process] to the Middle East. And you can argue [verbal action] seriously that it has made [physical action] that region anymore stable.”

RT’s correspondent: “In the past few years, nearly fifty percent of US weapons exports have been flowing [physical process] to the Middle East. Many countries with the biggest appetite for American weapons have also met [physical process] headlines for carrying out brutal crackdowns against dissidents and opposition groups.”

Chris Hedges (author and journalist): “If you are [relational] our thug, you are [state of being] ok; and if it’s [relational] their thug, you are [relational] not. I mean [verbal action] this is [relational] for all of us who had been [relational] overseers that the duplicity and hypocrisy of American foreign policy is [state of being] painfully evident.”

RT’s correspondent: “According to congressional figures, America has sold [physical action] one billion dollars worth of weapons to Bahrain since 2000, and America struck [physical action] its single biggest arms deal when Saudi Arabia ordered [verbal action] sixty billion dollars worth of arms. The US has long subsidized [physical action] the Israeli military, and recently supplied [physical action] them with bunker buster bombs. Experts say [verbal action] this strategic arming of Middle Eastern countries is aimed [mental action] at Iran, and extending US dominance in the region.”

Gilbert Mercier (editor in chief, news junkie post): “The deal that is going [physical action] on right now is [relational] a massive build-up against Iran. It is [relational] not at all about, you know, human right issues; and it is [relational] all about some geo-political games.”

RT’s correspondent: “FBI Whistle blowers Sibel Edmonds has accused [verbal action] America of playing particularly dirty, while leading a campaign for regime change in Syria.”



Sibel Edmonds (President, NAT'L Security Whistle blowers Coalition): “It is not [relational] some kind of simultaneously uprising situation where people are rebelling [physical action], and then suddenly they are mysteriously armed [physical action]; and, mysteriously, arms are being smuggled [physical action] into Syria from Turkey. Well, who is providing [physical action] these arms? Nobody is asking [verbal action] in the US media. Well, these are [relational] US arms shipped to Turkey.”

RT’s correspondent: “This, as the US military complex flashes [physical action] with record revenue, continues [physical action] to lobby its interests on Capitol Hill.”

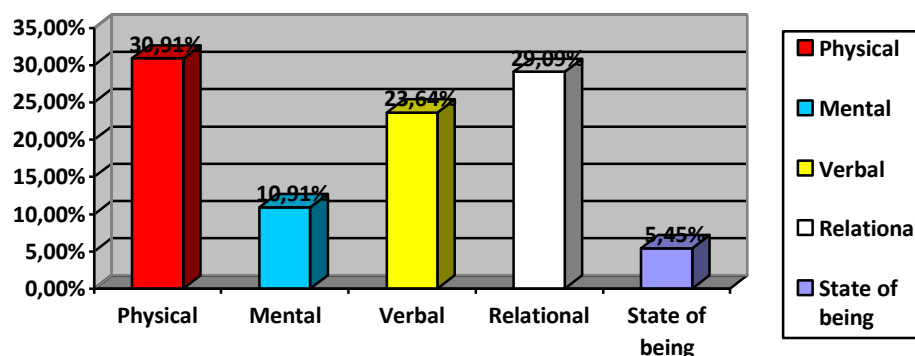
Corey Pein: “Arms manufacturers are [relational] some of the biggest companies in America. There is [relational] some of the most powerful Lockheed Martin. Not only do they make [physical action] and sell [physical action] arms for the defense department around the world, there are [relational] federal contractors in many other levels; they are [state of being] even involved in elections.”

RT’s correspondent: “This statue outside the UN headquarters is [relational] a symbol of global peace and non-violence, but critics say [verbal action] the idea has been twisted [mental action] by the US, which goes [verbal action] around advocating peace, while arming countless conflicts more often for the sake of profits. Marina Portnaya, RT, New York.”

**Table 3.2** Transitivity in sample N. 3

<b>Action/process types</b>					
<b>Journalist, correspondent, contributors</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>	<b>Verbal</b>	<b>Relational</b>	<b>State of being</b>
<b>Number</b>	17	6	13	16	3
<b>Percentage</b>	30,91%	10,91%	23,64%	29,09%	5,45%

**Figure 3.1** Transitivity in Sample N. 3



Concerning the ideational function of the text, we can say the following:

-we remark that the physical processes as well as the relational forms are predominant. The first is indicative of a situation that is obvious: the act of arming the Syrian opposition. The second, on the other hand, attributes certain qualities to major actors having some influence on the Syrian scene through predicates (verbs and their complements). Then verbal as well as mental processes express different attitudes to the Syrian conflict that are symmetrical (the contributors) and asymmetrical (the US ambassador to the UN) with RTTV's. Thus, there is a divergence in ideological stances over the Syrian issue.

-There are certain grammatical structures relevant to the participants in the news bulletin and the actors in the Syrian conflict. Participants in the news bulletin (the correspondent of the channel) and the reported sources (including Sibel Edmonds, FBI Whistleblowers) are unmarked Themes functioning as subjects. Concerning the actors in the conflict, the US and its allies as themes function as subjects and doers of actions (actors). However, arms and military equipment are unmarked Themes functioning as subjects only. Actors are implicitly the US and its allies.

-When subjects are not actors, as seen above, their agreement with the predicate in number and the nature of the subject is a proof of the truth of the situation. This is of course from RTTV's perspective.

-A pattern of time reference is deployed to look back at past (simple past, present perfect, present perfect continuous), to present (simple present and present continuous), and future situations (simple future).

- Some evaluative expressions are used while evaluating the Syrian situation. Sibel Edmonds, FBI Whistle blowers, reportedly charged the US of “...playing particularly dirty...”, Gilbert Mercier (an editor in chief) says: “The deal that is going on right now is a massive build-up against Iran.”

-These specific choices all through the news bulletin’s text are indicative of the ideational dimension- the Russian channel’s experience of the world: the US arms sales to Gulf countries fuels the military situation in Syria as those arms end up in the hands of rebels. This is according to RTTV’s view point.

#### 4.2. b Theme /Rheme analyses

**Table 3.3** Theme/Rheme analyses in sample N. 3

Marked Theme	Unmarked Theme	Function	Class	Rheme
	The US	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Is setting up an international coalition....
	The so-called “friends of Syria”	Subject	Phrase complex	Will involve countries willing to prop up the opposition....
	Direct military action	Subject	Phrase complex	Is ruled out.
	Reports	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common noun as head	Suggest British and Qatari forces are already in the conflict zone.
	The US and its allies	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Criticize Russia for supplying military hardware to Damascus.

	There	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Are calls from American law makers....
	Marina Portnaya	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Reports “The region is already being flooded with firepower....
	The US	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Has long subsidized the Israeli military....
	Sibel Edmonds	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Has accused America of playing particularly dirty....
	Arms	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Are being smuggled into Syria from Turkey.
	They	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Make and sell arms....
	Who	Subject (actor)	Nominal group	Is providing these arms?

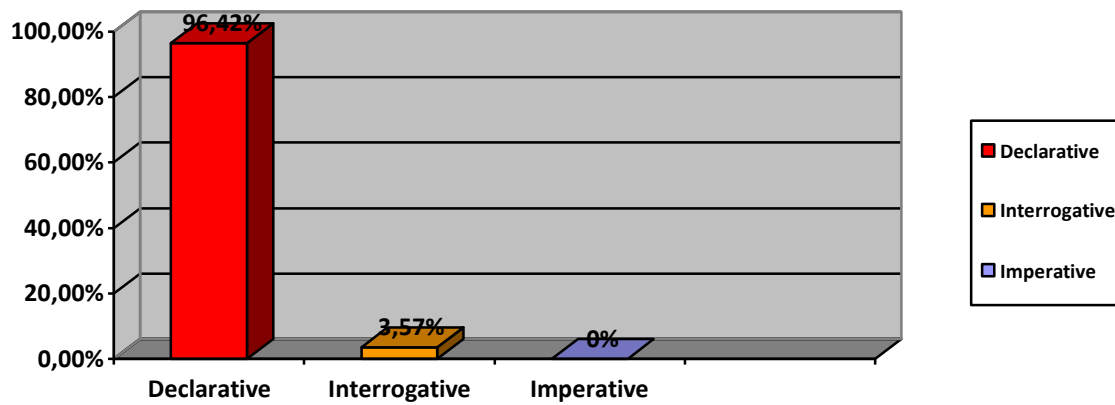
### 4.3 Interpersonal analyses

#### 4.3. a Mood

Table 3.4 Mood in sample N. 3

Mood	Number	Percentage
Declarative clauses	27	96,42%
Interrogative clauses	1	3,57%
Imperative clauses	0	0%

Figure 3.2 Mood in sample N. 3

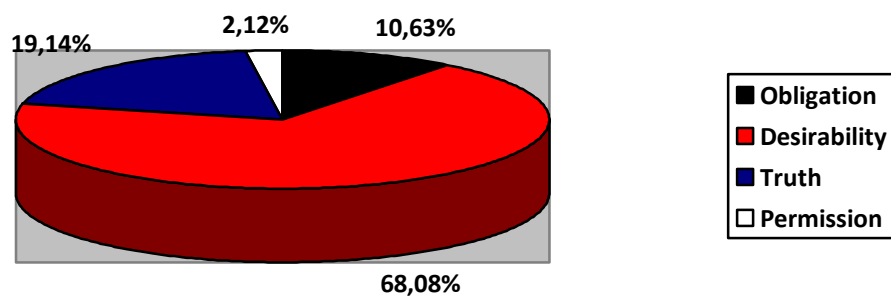


### 4.3. b Modality

Table 3.5 Modality in sample N. 3

Modality		
Type	Number	Percentage
Truth	9	19,14%
Obligation	5	10,63%
Desirability	32	68,08%
Permission	1	2,12%

Figure 3.3 Modality in sample N. 3



The interpersonal function of the third sample is characterized by these points:

-The interaction between the journalist and RTTV's correspondent is expressed by mentioning the name of the channel's correspondent "Marina Portnaya", which implies the personal pronoun "she". The news reader in this news bulletin excerpt also refers to RTTV, as

an institution, implying the personal pronoun “us”. Thus, she addresses the channel’s news reader.

-The adherence to the turn-taking convention is most reflected in the use of the expression “As RT’s Marina Portnaya reports” to give the floor to RT’s correspondent.

-When interviewing the contributors to the news bulletin in the excerpts, the conventions of turn-taking are also followed with questions being implicitly asked to contributors either via broadband services (as with the first and the third contributors) or at RT’s bureaus in Washington and New York. RTTV’s journalists are leading the discussion forward through statements and questions with the major aim of getting their interviewees to confirm the channels experiences or reject them. All this is reflected in the mood choice (declarative followed by interrogative).

-Concerning the modality component of the text, we can say that the status of the contributors (having expert knowledge) is also reflected in the modality choices: predominance of desirability and truth, expressing disapproval about the actual situation.

#### 4.4 Textual analyses

**Table 3.6** Vocabulary relevant to war/military supplying in sample N. 3

<b>Vocabulary relevant to war/military supplying</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	52	46,84%
<b>Adjectives</b>	21	18,91%
<b>Adverbs</b>	11	9,90%
<b>Verbs</b>	27	24,32%

Concerning the textual analyses of the third sample, we can give the following remarks:

-The repetition of vocabulary relative to war is noticeable throughout the texts; this is achieved by means of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, or verbs, making cohesion between the textual items possible.

-The texts in this news bulletin are orally conveyed mostly in monologue forms.

-They are pragmatic in that they express different perspectives and try to achieve certain effects on the audiences worldwide. This shows the ideological relations based on dominance and power: the Western stance in relation to the Syrian conflict which severely criticizes the Syrian government and arms the Syrian opposition; on the other hand, RTTV, as the outlet of the Kremlin, accuses the West of trying to destabilize not only Syria, but also the whole region.

-Pronouns, such as it and that referring to the situation in Syria are used to reinforce the pragmatic basis of the text's sentences.

-Cohesion in the texts is realized thanks to anaphoric pronouns referring to elements mentioned earlier. As an illustration, we can list some like: their, them, it, its, etc. Besides to pronouns, conjunctions contribute to cohesion within the text: if, and, but, while, that, etc. This way, structures and processes are related with one another.

-When it comes to the Theme in the texts, we remark that it's the subject and doer of the action, in certain cases; and it's just the subject in terms of structural order in others.

-The phonological organization of the texts in terms of rhythm and intonation lies in the tone group and its constituents (foot and syllables). Some feet are made up of strong syllables followed by weak ones, and vice versa: //re//gime/, //su//pply//; //ma//ssive//, //num//ber//, //ex//porter//. In addition, the number of syllables following or preceding the beat ones is variable: there is no fixed number. For example, //flood//ed //; //per//ma//nent//; si//mul//ta//ne//ous//ly//; mys//te//rious//ly// have a different number of weak syllables after or before the strong beats. This gives rhythmic patterns to the texts with varying intonation across them: rising-falling, falling-rising, and falling-rising-falling intonation. As an indication of the meaning to be expressed, the intonation patterns in the texts are mostly rising-falling. This is to assert the truth of what is claimed from different ideological perspectives.



## **4.5 Quantitative analyses of sample N 3**

### **4.5. a When? and where ?**

This news bulletin was broadcast on February 10th, 2012 at 14:01 Moscow time; 10:01 GMT. It was aired from RTTV's studios in Moscow with contributions from its bureaus in Portland, New York, and California, USA.

### **4.5. b Prominence**

Headlines about US arms being smuggled into Syria for rebels under the influence of anti-Assad lobbies in the USA (arms manufacturers) are in top position.

### **4.5. c Speakers**

We have here RTTV's news reader with contributions by the correspondent of the channel and some experts, authors, and journalists.

### **4.5. d Sources**

Both the journalists of this news network tend to represent the Russian government's perspectives over the actual situation in Syria, except the US ambassador to the UN, who represents the US government.

### **4.5. e Themes**

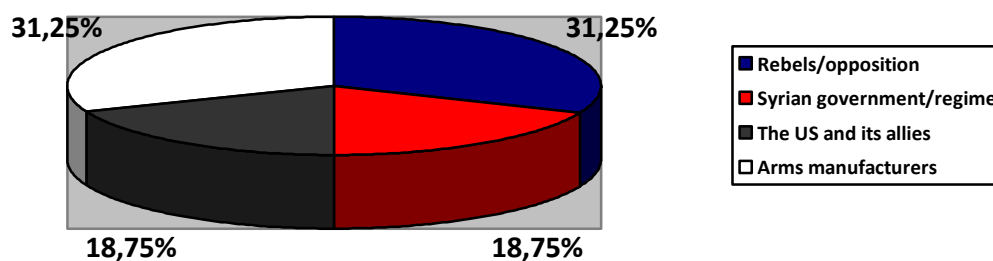
The themes pervading this news bulletin are mostly conspiracy and geo-political strategies. Every part involved directly or indirectly in the Syrian conflict, especially the US, Russia, and their respective allies try to have more power and influence on the political and the military scene in Syria.

#### 4.5. f Linguistic modifiers

**Table 3.7** Words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 3

<b>Words and expressions to refer to groups</b>		
<b>Groups</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Rebels/Opposition</b>	5	31,25%
<b>Syrian government/Regime</b>	3	18,75%
<b>US and its allies</b>	3	18,75%
<b>Arms manufacturers/Dealer</b>	5	31,25%

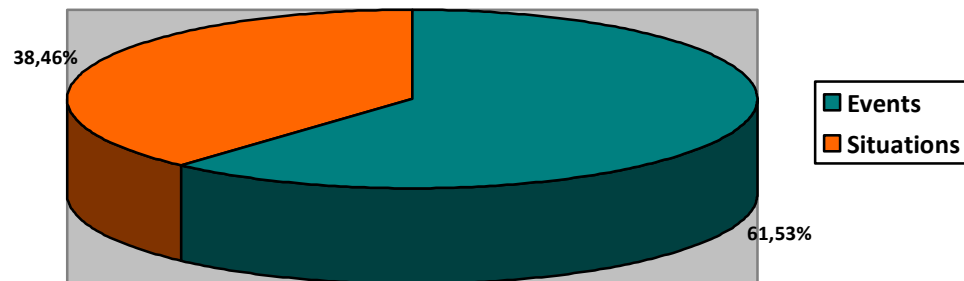
**Figure 3.4** words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 3



**Table 3.8** Words and expressions referring to events and situations in sample N. 3

<b>Words and expressions referring to events and situations</b>		
<b>Events</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Supplying/arming/Deal/ Supporting/Playing dirty/uprising/	16	61,53%
Situations	10	38,46%

**Figure 3.5** Words and expressions referring to events and situations in sample N. 3



#### **4.5. g Imagery**

- The first part of the news report shows Syrian rebels conducting street fighting against the government troops.
- The second part of the report shows a UN Security Council meeting
- The third part of the report shows images and videos of US weapons on their way to the Middle East.
- The fourth part of the report shows crackdowns in some Middle East countries.
- The fifth part of the report shows US weapons in the hands of the Israeli army.

## 5 Analyses of sample N. 4

### 5.1 Elements of context

Table 4.1 Elements of context of sample N. 4

Elements of context		
Field	Tenor	Mode
US-trained mercenaries sent to Syria constitute an obstacle to the peace efforts and the fragile ceasefire.	RTTV's news reader and Christoph R Horstel, a Government consultant	Spoken language varying from monologue to dialogue. It is also pragmatic with a particular aim: accusing the US of destabilizing the peace process in Syria.

### 5.2 Ideational analyses

#### 5.2. a. Transitivity

RT's news reader: "The opposition fighters in Syria might be [relational] getting help from a different source- in the form of training from the US private security firm, formerly known as the notorious Blackwater Group. Security circles reportedly confirmed [verbal action] the information which was released [verbal action] earlier by wiki-leaks- that the company is sending [physical action] mercenaries from Iraq into Syria. Let's now discuss [verbal action] this with Christoph R Horstel- who is [relational] a government and business consultant. He joins [verbal action] us live from Germany. Mr. Horstel, so what exactly will these mercenaries be doing [physical action] in Syria?"

Horstel: "According to my sources in Syria, the obvious task is [relational] doing targeted killings, doing terrorist attacks, and then also engaging in shoot-outs with security personnel, or interfering in peaceful demonstrations. So, we have [mental process] all kinds of activities

as in the past; but this time it seems [relational], as they say [verbal action], that this is [relational] “x e” services furnishing the mercenaries themselves.”

RT’s news reader: “Now, if all the speculation was [state of being] true, what is [relational] the US government’s role in all of this?”

Horstel: “We can say [verbal action] very clearly, and there is [relational] ample proof of it that without the United States of America, any interference in Syria would not have been [state of being] possible. It is [state of being] very clear that neither Qatar nor Saudi Arabia nor France nor Britain nor Turkey would dare [mental action] doing anything in Syria, without a very clear-cut green light, “ok”, or “go!” From Washington.”

RT’s news reader: “Now, Kofi Anan’s peace plan implies [mental process] that all sides must lay down [physical action] arms, yet we have these reports of possible combat training for opposition fighters. Doesn’t this really contradict [verbal action] the UN-brokered peace efforts?”

Christoph: “Yes, in fact, it annihilates [physical action] all these peace efforts. We have [mental process] clear cut-double situation: one situation is [relational] that honest Syrians feel [mental process] oppressed by the Assad government, and then take up [physical action] arms from themselves. That is [relational] one story, and for them only any UN-brokered peace plan and any Kofi planning may be applying [physical action], but for the others like the mercenaries of “x e” services or anybody paid as in the last, you know [mental process], “Enemies Conference of Syria” in Istanbul, they said [verbal action] ‘We are going to pay [physical action] them.’ Well, we know [mental process] this was [relational] a joke; they had been paying [physical action] these mercenaries all the time. So, for those people, of course, there is [relational] the right to self-defense of the Syrian government in support of the peace for Syrian people. So, that is [relational] a very clear-cut violation of any peace efforts in Syria that mercenaries had been sent [physical action] there, and that means [mental process] it is [state of being] vital now that there will be accusations [verbal action] in the Security Council of the United Nations against the US and all their supporters in this Syrian war under the table, as I will call [verbal action] it.”

RT’s news reader: “Now, what about the international community? How can we expect [mental action] them to act to preserve the already fragile ceasefire?”

Christoph: “Now, in fact, the international community has [mental process] the duty according to all international right and the UN charter to defend the sovereignty and the peace of Syria. And that means [mental process] they would have to oppose policies projected by the US, by France, Great Britain, Turkey, and Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, and others who might interfere [physical action] there. I understand [mental action] that also Germany is [state of being] involved with secret services er, you know [mental process], personnel on the ground, so this cannot continue [physical process] this way! We cannot allow [mental process] a group of countries, even if it is [state of being] native, and I am [relational] a native citizen, you know, to plunge peaceful nations into war, even if we are criticizing [verbal action] Assad’s government and the style of it. Of course, there was [relational] torture, there were [relational] prisons, there were [relational] killings, yes. But this is [relational] not a reason to stage an international war little by little.”

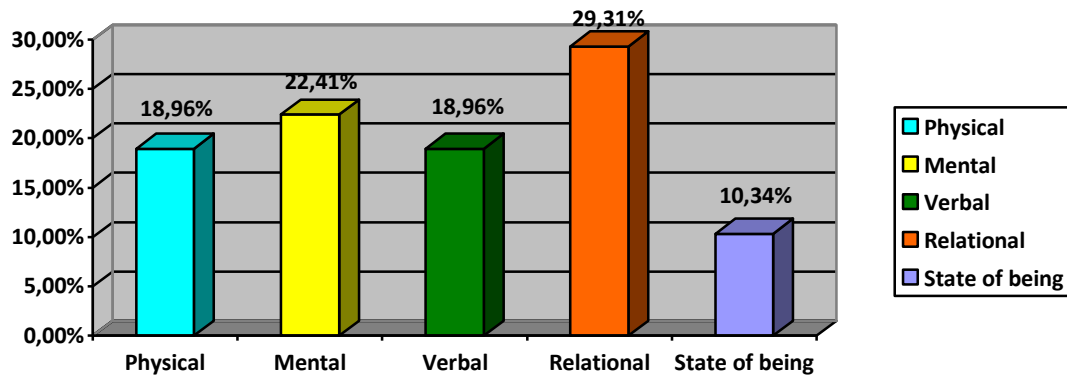
RT’s news reader: “All right, Christoph R Horstel, managing director of Horstel networks live from Germany, thanks for being with us.”

Christoph: “Thank you, Carlen.”

**Table 4.2** Transitivity in sample N. 4

<b>Action/process type</b>					
<b>Journalist /Contributor</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>	<b>Verbal</b>	<b>Relational</b>	<b>State of being</b>
<b>Number</b>	11	13	11	14	7
<b>Percentage</b>	18,96%	22,41%	18,96%	29,31%	10,34%

**Figure 4.1** Transitivity in sample N. 4



What we can say about the ideational analyses in the fourth sample is the following:

-Physical actions as well as processes are expressed through verbs, such as: send, annihilate, lay down, interfere, pay, etc. These are clear indicators of the actions taking place in Syria amid the conflict. These actions, according to RTTV, are aimed against the Syrian government.

-Relational verbs are also used to ascribe certain actions and facts to particular actors in the conflict. For example: is, are, seems, and am followed by complements.

-The contributor on RTTV, besides, deploys particular adjectives while describing the situation, like: vital, involved, oppressed, and possible. This makes RT's version of the Syrian conflict more credible. This is expressed by state of being verbs (is, seems, am, are followed by adjectives).

-Verbs relevant to verbal actions express different perceptions contradicting each other, which are in turn reflected through verbs of mental actions and processes, like expect and know.

-All these types of processes reflect the actual situation in Syria (physical, states of being, and relational) and the opposing attitudes to the conflict, including RTTV's attitude (mental and verbal processes).

-We can notice also grammatical structures relative to the different participants in the Syrian conflict: when it comes to mercenary-training companies, they are unmarked Themes (subjects and actors) with mercenaries as objects; when it is to do with mercenaries themselves, they are sometimes unmarked Themes (subjects and actors), and other times only

Themes (subjects not actors). The actors here are implicitly given: (the US BlackWater). For RTTV’s contributor (the consultant), the Theme is mostly the subject and actor too. This is expressed through “we” and “I”. All this indicates the doers (actors) behind the situation in Syria.

- In cases where the subject is not an actor we can observe the agreement between the subject and the predicate. This shows the truth of RTTV’s vision of the events in Syria.

-A pattern of time reference is used to direct attention to past events (simple past, past perfect continuous), present situation (simple present) and future plans (present continuous for future plans).

-Participants use certain expressions to evaluate the overall situation: the consultant says: “We have a clear double-cut situation...”, “... the obvious task is doing targeted killings, doing terrorist attacks, and then also engaging in shoot-outs with security personnel, or interfering in peaceful demonstrations.” The situation is, from RTTV’s perspective, very alarming.

-All these choices are indicative of the experiential side of the news text which further expresses the field- what the content of the text is about: The training and sending of mercenaries into Syria by the US and its allies including Arab states puts the frail peace process on shaky foundations.

### 5. 2. b. Theme/Rheme analyses

**Table 4.3** Theme/Rheme in sample N. 4

<b>Unmarked Theme</b>	<b>Marked Theme</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Rheme</b>
	The opposition fighters in Syria	Subject	Phrase complex	Might be getting help from a different source....
	Security circles	Subject (actor)	Nominal group	Reportedly confirmed the information....



			common noun as head	
	The company	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common noun as head	Is sending mercenaries from Iraq into Syria.
	The obvious task	Subject	Phrase complex	Is doing targeted killings, doing terrorist attacks....
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Have all kinds of activities as in the past....
	All the speculation	Subject	Phrase complex	Was true.
What		Complement	Nominal group	Is the US role in all of this?
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Can say very clearly....
	We	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Have these reports ....
	It	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as	Annihilates all these peace efforts.

			head	
	We	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as head	Have a clear-cut double situation.
	They	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Said, “we are going to pay them.”
	The mercenaries	Subject	Nominal group common noun as head	Had been sent to Syria.
How		Complement	Nominal group	Can we expect them to act...?
	The international community	Subject	Phrase complex	Has the duty....
	I	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Understand that also Germany....
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Cannot allow a group of countries....
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group	Are criticizing Assad’s government.

			pronoun as head	
What exactly		Complement	Nominal group	Will these mercenaries be doing?
Doesn't (theme 1)	This (Theme 2)	Subject (Theme 2 actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Contradict the US-brokered peace efforts?

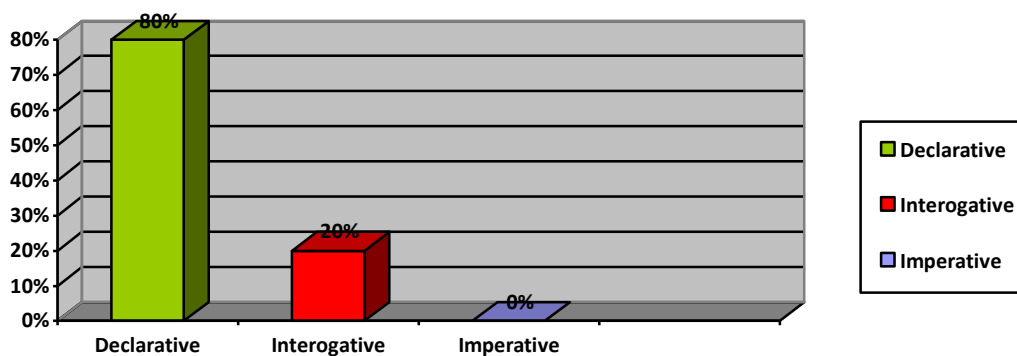
### 5.3 Interpersonal analyses

#### 5.3.a Mood

**Table 4.4** Mood in sample N. 4

Mood	Number	Percentage
Declarative sentences	20	80%
Interrogative sentences	5	20%
Imperative sentences	0	0%

**Figure 4.2** Mood in sample N. 4

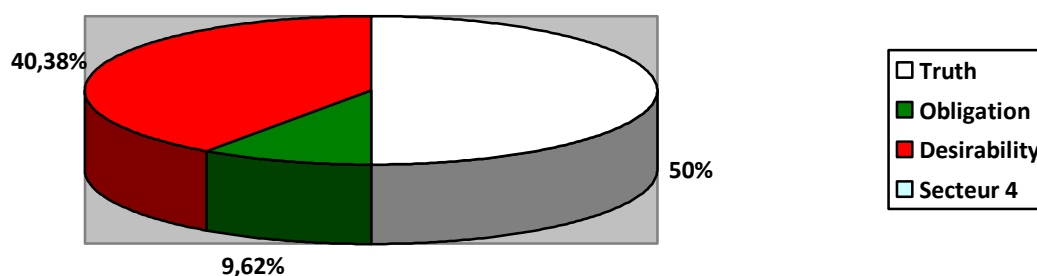


### 5. 3. b. Modality

**Table 4.5** Modality in sample N. 4

Modality		
Type	Number	Percentage
Truth	26	50%
Obligation	5	9,62%
Desirability	21	40,38%

**Figure 4.3** Modality in sample N. 4



The interpersonal relationship between the news reader and the contributor (consultant) is shown through the mood:

-The news reader leads the overall discussion, using both declarative sentences as well as questions. She asks questions to get the contributor either to agree or not with what she states.

- Personal pronouns also establish the interpersonal relationship between the two: Pronouns like “us”, “we”, “he” are examples of this.

-We remark also the adherence to the interactive conventions by using such titles as “Mr.” and the social status “government and business consultant”. Moreover, turn-taking standards

allow the discussion to progress smoothly and alternately from one to the other: “Let’s discuss this with....”

-Modality is also indicative of the interpersonal relationships: the consultant’s status and knowledge give more credibility to his statements and judgments when addressing the questions by the journalist.

#### 5. 4 Textual analyses

**Table 4.6** Vocabulary relevant to military intervention in sample N. 4

<b>Vocabulary relevant to military intervention</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	44	50,57%
<b>Adjectives</b>	17	19,54%
<b>Verbs</b>	23	26,43%
<b>Adverbs</b>	3	3,44%

Concerning the textual analyses of the fourth sample, we can say the following:

-The lexis relative to military intervention is repeated all through the text even though in synonymous items. This contributes to cohesion within the whole text. Nouns are the most recurring, followed by adjectives, verbs, and then adverbs.

-The news text is an alternation between spoken dialogue and monologue. It is also pragmatic with a purpose to be achieved. When it becomes a dialogue, a set of questions and answers is in use. Besides, the fact of it being pragmatic is reflected in the use of exophoric pronouns referring to people and situations like: demonstratives (this, these, those, and that), and possessives (their).

-Cohesion in the text is noticeable through anaphoric pronouns referring back to items in the text as well as conjunctions relating one process with another. Pronouns include: it, they, we, and them; for conjunctions, we can mention: that, if, and, but, yet, and so.

-The rhythmic pattern in this text is, as usual, indicated by the rhythmic group (foot and syllables). Here, the salient (strong syllable) occurs regularly across feet, though it doesn't come at one particular position. In certain feet it comes first; for example, //sour//ces //, //Sy//ria//, //tar//ge//ted//, //ki//llings//. In others, it comes second, like //with//out//, //re//leased//, //inter//fere//. The salient syllable can also happen in the middle of some feet: //in//for//ma//tion//, //no//to//ri//ous//, //de//mon//stra//tions//. This way, a variable intonation pattern is realized through the mobile position of the salient syllables: Rising-falling in //tar//ge//ted//; falling-rising in //with//out//; falling-rising-falling in //in//for//ma//tion//.

-The tone groups in this text vary also in terms of the number of feet they contain; this accentuates the intonation variation.

-The intonation pattern is mostly falling across the tone groups; this is an indication of truth in declarative sentences and answers in questions with Wh-words.

## **5.5 Quantitative analyses of sample N. 4**

### **5.5. a When? and where?**

This news program was aired on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 15:12 Moscow time, 11.12 GMT from RTTV's studios in Moscow with a contribution by a consultant from Potsdam, Germany.

### **5.5. b Prominence**

The headlines pertinent to the Syrian conflict hold the top position as they are the core of the discussion: "Black tidings", "Reports former-BlackWater Squads Entering Syria Over Iraq Borders"

### **5.5. c Speakers**

The Speakers here are RTTV's news reader and a business and government consultant.

### 5.5. d Sources

The source behind RTTV's discourse is the Russian government as the channel is a tool in its hands to convey its perspectives about the Syrian conflict.

### 5.5. e Theme

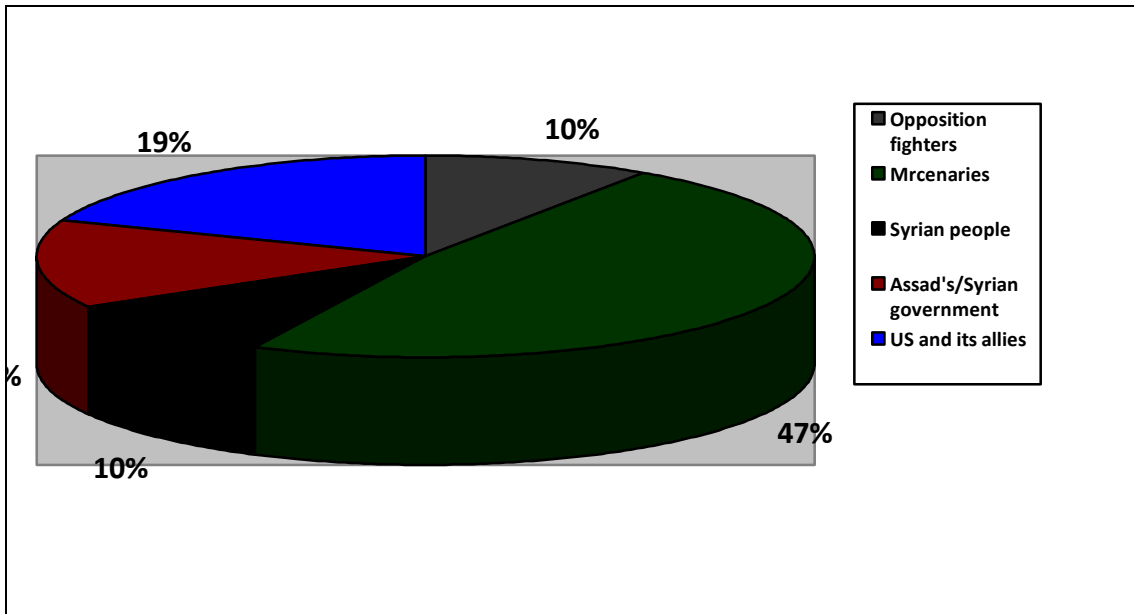
The major themes here are conspiracy, violation of peace process, military intervention with mercenaries, condemnation of the US and its allies' policy in Syria.

### 5.5. f Linguistic modifiers

**Table 4.7** Words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 4

<b>Words and expressions to refer to groups</b>		
<b>Groups</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Opposition fighters</b>	2	9,52%
<b>Mercenaries (BlackWater)</b>	10	47,61%
<b>Syrian people</b>	2	9,52%
<b>Assad's/Syrian government</b>	3	14,28%
<b>US and its allies</b>	4	19,04%

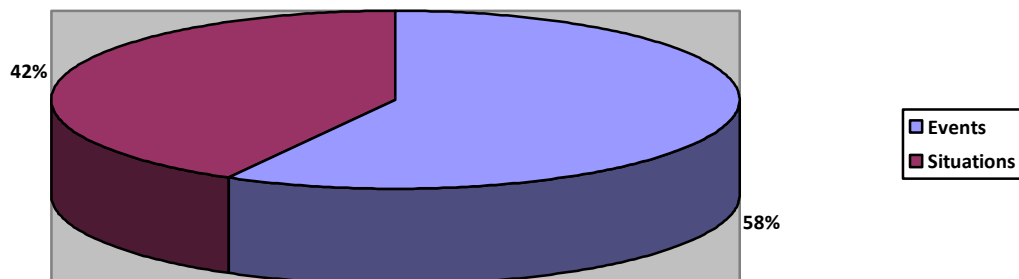
**Figure 4.4** Words and expressions referring groups in sample N. 4



**Table 4.8** Words and expressions referring to events and situations in sample N.4

Words and expressions to refer to events and situations		
situations/events	Number	Percentage
Events	18	58,06%
Situations	13	41,93%

**Figure 4.5** words and expression referring to events and situations in sample N. 4





## 5.5. g Imagery

-Images of mercenaries being trained by BlackWater tutors in the US followed by images of Syrian opposition fighters in Syria.

## 6 Analyses of sample N. 5

### 6.1 Elements of context

**Table 5.1** Elements of context in sample N. 5

<b>Elements of context</b>		
<b>Field</b>	<b>Tenor</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Accusations against Syria's "friends" as well as the West for backing up armed opposition without determining exactly which type of opposition. This causes great concern for the future of Syria.	RTTV's news reader and the channel's correspondent in Syria, with excerpts from speeches by the French President, François Holland, and the US Secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, and David Cameron, the British Prime minister. Some Syrian citizens are interviewed.	Spoken language taking the form of monologue. The language is also pragmatic in that it has some aims to achieve.

### 6.2 Ideational analyses

#### 6.2. a. Transitivity

RTTV's news reader: "Syria's President says [verbal action] countries like the US, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey are hindering [physical action] peace in his country by supporting those he calls [verbal action] "terrorists". Bachar Al Assad accused [verbal action] Washington of being partially responsible for the deaths of innocent civilians by partnering with the rebels. The Syrian army have started [physical action] large-scale drills simulating defense against outside attacks. Some opposition leaders previously appealed [verbal action]

to the West for foreign intervention against the regime, but as Maria Finoshina reports [verbal action] from Syria, many in the country are fearing [mental process] for their lives if the rebel forces get [physical action] what they want [mental action].”

RTTV’s correspondent in Syria: “Since the uprising in Syria escalated [Physical process], the West has been consistently calling on [verbal action] Assad and his government to step down, effectively to give in to the demands of the armed opposition, but it seems [physical process] so far there is [relational] no clear understanding of who exactly they are.”

French President: “These fighters of the Syrian opposition they are [state of being] brave, determined, full of pride, they took [mental action] their fate in their hands.”

RTTV’s correspondent: “But for some, taking control of their destiny meant [relational] taking up arms. In this amateur video posted on YouTube, which cannot be independently verified [mental action], gun men calling themselves members of the “opposition militia” from Idleb explain [verbal action] why this man was hanged [physical action]: He helped [physical action] the Syrian regime and was killing [physical action] the rebels they say [verbal action].”

François Holland: “On behalf of all France, let me express [verbal action] my admiration by their bravery.”

RTTV’s Correspondent: “But this kind of justice only adds [physical process] more anger to what has already been called [verbal action] a civil war.”

Citizen interviewed: “They are [relational] terrorists, criminals, murderers; I believe [mental process] killing them is [state of being] necessary for any citizen to live in peace.”

Hillary Clinton: “We cannot ask [verbal action] the opposition to unilaterally give up their struggle for justice, dignity, and self-determination.”

RTTV’s Correspondent: “In another video whose origin is [state of being] hard to establish, these men say [verbal action] they captured [physical action] this Syrian air force officer. Then they dispense [physical action] even more rough justice.”

Hillary Clinton: “The United States will continue [physical action] providing non-lethal assistance to help those inside Syria who are carrying [physical action] the fight to organize and better communicate.”

RTTV’s correspondent: “In this video, the boy behind camera says [verbal action] ‘the fight must go on [physical action].’” “It warns [verbal action] ‘this will happen [physical action] to anyone who cooperates [physical action] with the Assad government.’”

Citizens interviewed: “They are [relational] top criminals these people, top of criminality. How do they have the right? If you are [state of being] sad, when you find [mental process] you country destroyed, our country we have been building [physical action] all our lives.”

David Cameron: “The whole world wants [mental action] to see a political transition from this illegitimate regime, to actually see the one that can take [physical action] care of its people.”

RTTV’s correspondent: “Many here however fear [mental process] that should such people force [physical action] Assad to leave? Scenes like these could become [physical process] a familiar occurrence and have [mental process] little faith in Western forced democracy.”

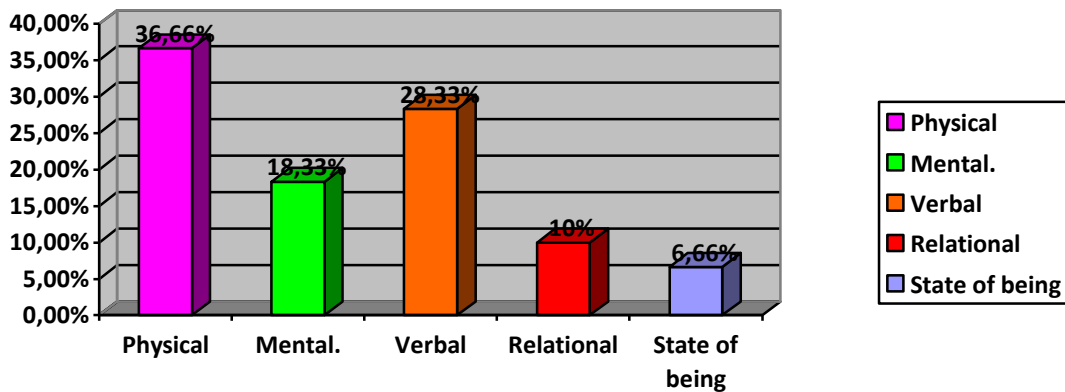
Citizens interviewed: “Why are they not talking [verbal action] about democracy in the Gulf or in other countries? We are [relational] Syrian people; we should decide [mental action] these things ourselves!”

RTTV’s Correspondent: “This mantra that the Syrian people alone should determine [mental action] their country’s future has been repeated [verbal action] by many nations, and has finally been recognized [verbal action] by major world powers. But with some states continuing to call on Assad to leave and supporting his opponents, fears mount [physical process] here in Syria that it is [relational] the people that will pay [physical process] the ultimate price. Maria Finoshina, RT, from Damascus, in Syria.”

**Table 5.2** Transitivity in sample N. 5

Action/process types					
Journalist/ correspondent / others	Physical	Mental	Verbal	Relational	State of being
Number	22	11	17	6	4
Percentage	36,66%	18,33%	28,33%	10%	6,66%

**Figure 5.1** Transitivity in sample N. 5



The ideational aspect of sample number five is characterized by the following:

-Concerning transitivity, types of processes, we can notice the predominance of physical processes followed by verbal processes, then mental, relational, and finally states of being.

-This implies the existing, observable situation in Syria (physical processes, states of being, and relational) from the view point of RTTV (mental and verbal actions). The situation is that the West and certain Arab states are unwisely stepping up support for terrorists who are quite dangerous for peace in Syria.

- Different participants in the news bulletin have different attitudes to the situation. This is achieved by means of evaluative expressions. For example: the French president says: “let me express my admiration by their [opposition fighters] bravery”, RTTV’s correspondent says: “But this kind of justice [recognizing the rebel forces] only adds more anger to what has already been called a civil war”, and another Syrian citizen saying: “They are top criminals these people [opposition fighters], top of criminality.”

-The participants make reference to the present (present simple and present continuous), past (simple past, present perfect, present perfect continuous and past continuous) and future (simple future) times. Hence, there is a time reference pattern throughout the text.

-The above mentioned choices reflect the ideational (experiential) function of the text, which, in turn, expresses the channel’s experience of the world: the Arab-Western alliance in the Syrian conflict and their support for terrorists is dangerous for the lives of Syrians.

## 6.2. b. Theme/Rheme analyses

**Table 5.3** Theme/Rheme in sample N. 5

Marked Theme	Unmarked Theme	Function	Class	Rheme
	Syria’s president	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common proper noun as head	Says countries like the US, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and turkey are hindering peace in his country....
	Bachar Al Assad	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Accused Washington of being....
	The Syrian	Subject	Phrase	Have started large-scale

	army	(actor)	complex	drills....
	Some opposition leaders	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Previously Appealed to the West....
	Maria Finoshina	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Reports from Syria....
	The West	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Has been consistently calling for on Assad....
	These fighters f the Syrian opposition	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Are brave, determined, full of pride.
	They	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Took their fate in their hands.
	Gun men	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common noun as head	Explain why this man was hanged....
	They	Subject	Nominal group	Are terrorists, criminals, murderers....

			pronoun as head	
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Cannot ask the opposition to unilaterally give up their struggle....
	These men	Subject (actor)	Nominal group common noun as head	Say they captured this Syria air force officer.
	They	Subject (actor)	Nominal group pronoun as head	Dispense even more rough justice.
	The United States	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Will continue providing non-lethal assistance....
	The boy behind the camera	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Says: "the fight must go on."
	The whole world	Subject (actor)	Phrase complex	Wants to see a political transition from this illegitimate regime....
	Many here	Subject	Nominal group pronoun as	Fear that should such people force Assad to leave?

			head	
	We	Subject	Nominal group proper noun as head	Are Syrian people.
	We	Subject (actor)	Nominal group proper noun as head	Should decide these things our selves.

### 6. 3 Interpersonal analyses

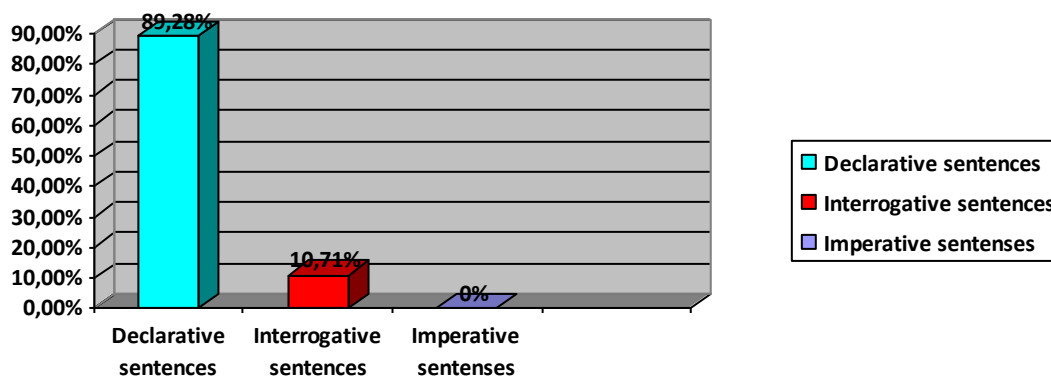
#### 6. 3. a. Mood

**Table 5.4** Mood in sample N. 5

Mood	Number	Percentage
<b>Declarative sentences</b>	25	89,28%
<b>Interrogative sentences</b>	3	10,71%
<b>Imperative sentences</b>	0	0%



**Figure 5.2** Mood in sample N. 5

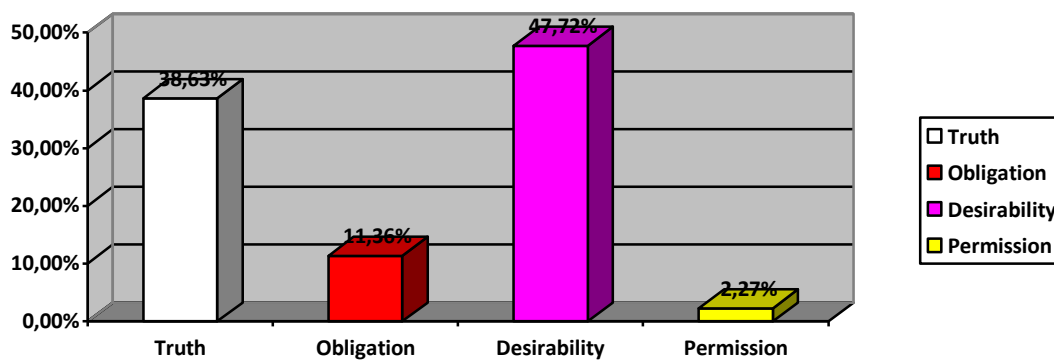


### 6. 3. b. Modality

**Table 5.5** Modality in sample N. 5

Modality		
Type	Number	Percentage
Truth	17	38,63%
Obligation	5	11,36%
Desirability	21	47,72%
Permission	1	2,27%

**Figure 5.3** Modality in sample N. 5



We can comment on the interpersonal function of the fifth text by making the following remarks:

-The relationship between the news reader of RTTV and the channel's correspondent is implicitly indicated by the expression "But as Maria Finoshina reports from Syria", which indirectly means "she". She reports for RTTV and its audience "us". Thus, we have the two pronouns "she" and "us". Thus, we have the correspondent of the channel as the speaker and the audience (English-speaking communities) as addressees.

-In the news report, RTTV's correspondent leads the discussion through statements and interviews with some Syrian citizens. This is indicated by the mood choices: declarative sentences and implicit interrogative sentences (in the excerpts about citizens' interviews). The aim behind these excerpted interviews is to get Syrian interviewees to share RTTV's experience about the current situation in Syria. Simultaneously, the desirability choice is predominant in modality as a way of expressing disapproval of the current situation on the part of pro-RTTV's experience of the conflict (proponents).

-On the other hand, opposite experiences are expressed through Western leaders' declarations like: the French President, the British Prime minister, the US Secretary of state. Again, mood choice is noticeable with polarity indicative (positive and negative: indicative + not). Hence, there is an ideological asymmetry between Russia's experience over the Syrian conflict and that of Western powers and their allies (France, the US, the UK, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey). This is expressed through RTTV's discourse and the agreement it receives from interviews with people, sharing the same attitudes to the Syrian conflict.

## 6.4 Textual analyses

**Table 5.6** Vocabulary relevant to Western support and recognition of rebels in sample N. 5

<b>Vocabulary relevant to Western support and recognition of Syrian armed opposition</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	9	33,33%
<b>Adjectives</b>	7	25,92%
<b>Adverbs</b>	3	11,11%
<b>Verbs</b>	8	29,62%

**Table 5.7** Vocabulary relevant to Syrian peoples' right to self-determination in sample N.5

<b>Vocabulary relevant to Syrian people's right to self- determination and disapproval of Western support for rebels</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Nouns</b>	6	35,29%
<b>Verbs</b>	6	35,29%
<b>Adjectives</b>	5	29,41%

Concerning the textual function of the fifth text, we can mention the following remarks:

-The text is spoken with alternating monologues and dialogues (this is shown through excerpted, implicit interviews with some Syrian citizens). The text is also pragmatic with particular aims.

-The fact that the text is pragmatic is reflected in the use of “exophoric” pronouns referring to the Syrian situation, such as it, this, these, and those.

- The use of “anaphoric pronouns is also remarkable though the text. For example: he, their, they, his, it. Such pronouns refer back to items in the text, ensuring cohesion within the whole text in terms of its elements.

-Cohesion is also expressed by different conjunctions linking processes, such as: if, what, since, and, but, who, which, when, and that.

-The pragmatic orientation of the text is also expressed via the repetition of certain vocabulary all through the text. For example, the vocabulary relevant to Western support for Syrian opposition is repeated though by using synonymous words and expressions. This also creates cohesion across the text.

-For the phonological level, we focus on the tone group and its components (the phonological foot and syllables). Concerning the rhythm groups, they are made of strong (salient) and weak (off beat) syllables. Sometimes the salient syllables come first; for example, we can illustrate with //Sy//ria's//, //Pre//si//dent//, / says//. In other cases, they are final, like: //de//stroyed//, //de//cide//, //our//selves//, //a//lone//, //be//come//. Also, salient syllables are in the middle in feet, such as: //cri//mi//na//li//ty//, //con//ti//nue//, //de//moc//ra//cy//. This creates a variable pattern of intonation along the tone groups with rising-falling, falling-rising, and falling-rising-falling intonations.

-As intonation is important for meaning creation, we can remark most tone groups in the text end with falling intonation; this is indicative either of truth (declarative sentences) or true answers to general questions (Wh-questions). There are some exceptions with a yes/no question, and an exclamation both adopting the usual falling-rising intonation.

-These aspects represent the textual meanings; i.e.; what the text is expected to do for RTTV in the context of the Syrian conflict.

## **6.5 Quantitative analyses of sample N. 5**

### **6.5. a When? And where?**

This news bulletin was aired on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 7:10 GMT, 11:10 Moscow time from RTTV's central studios in Moscow.

### **6.5. b Prominence**

The headlines relevant to the Syrian conflict occupy the top position in comparison with other headlines as this issue is predominantly important. For example we can mention the headline "Foreign Fight", "Syria Holds Drills Accusing the U.S. Of Threatening Peace In the Country", and "Fears Syria Will Fall Into Abyss If Rebels Get Foreign Help They Want".

### **6.5. c Speakers**

The direct speakers here are RTTV's news reader and the channel's correspondent in Syria. They are the ones addressing the audience directly.

### **6.5. d Sources**

The news bulletin reports directly a speech by the French President (François Holland) and another one by the US Secretary of State (Hillary Clinton), and a brief declaration by the British Prime Minister (James Cameron). Moreover, it reports directly some Syrian citizens' speech. Concerning the armed opposition groups, they are reported alternately directly and indirectly. When it comes to the channel, we can deduce from its discourse that the Russian government addresses English-speaking audiences, especially in the US and Western Europe.

### **6.5. e Themes**

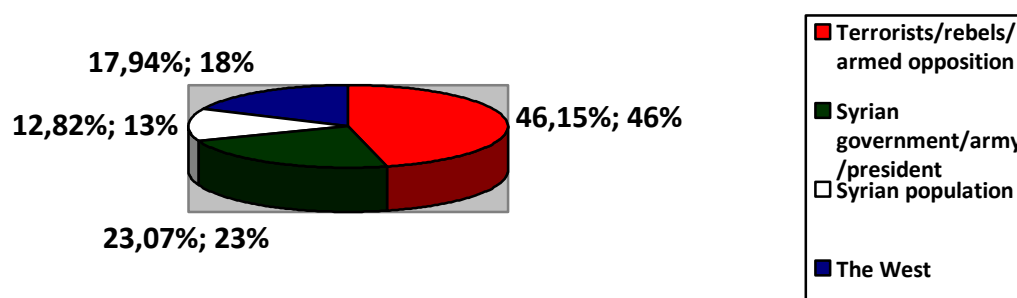
The major themes in the text turn around the conspiratorial destabilization of peace in Syria, support for the armed opposition, and expressed fears about the future of Syria in case of arming the opposition.

## 6.5. f Linguistic modifiers

**Table 5.8** Words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 5

<b>Words and expressions to refer to groups</b>		
<b>Groups</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Terrorists/rebels/armed opposition</b>	18	46,15%
<b>Syrian government/army/president</b>	9	23,07%
<b>Syrian population</b>	5	12,82%
<b>The West</b>	7	17,94%

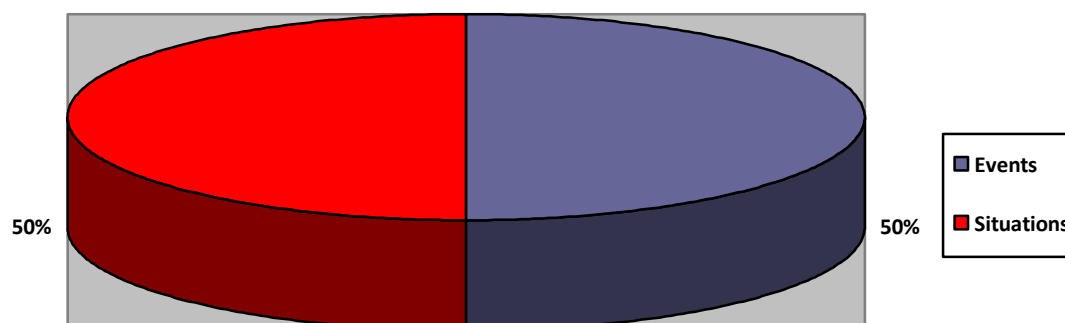
**Figure 5.4** Words and expressions referring to groups in sample N. 5



**Table 5.9** Words and expressions referring to events and situations in Sample N. 5

<b>Words and expressions to refer to events and situations</b>		
<b>Events/situations</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Events</b>	13	50%
<b>Situations</b>	13	50%

**Figure 5.5** Words and expressions referring to events and situations in sample N. 5



### **6.5. g Imagery**

- The first part of the bulletin shows military drills by the Syrian army.
- The second part shows rebels conducting street fighting against the Syrian army.
- The third part shows a press conference held by the French President, François Hollande in Paris.
- The fourth part shows a Syrian opposition militia executing a Syrian civilian.

- The fifth part shows Hillary Clinton delivering a speech in a congress about Syria in Paris.
- The sixth part shows a press declaration by David Cameron, the British Prime Minister.
- There are some occasional interviews with some Syrian civilians.



## General conclusion

By going over the five texts of RTTV's news bulletins corresponding to the first year of the Syrian war, we could come to some useful findings. These might constitute primarily a set of answers to the hypotheses suggested beforehand; at the same time, they can provide us with a clear idea about the channel's political discourse and its underlying ideology.

What can be deduced is that RTTV's discourse, including the political discourse is predominantly counter-hegemonic. In fact, the coverage by this channel of the Syrian armed conflict is carried out from a quite different angle in comparison with that of Western media like the BBC and CNN, and even Al Jazeera. This is remarkable in the lack of any sympathy with the Syrian opposition; it attributes to it such appellations as "rebels", "terrorists", "perpetrators of atrocities", "fighters", and "armed opposition" to contradict the terms sympathetically used by both Western media and political leaders. In addition, it portrays the US-led West as being the only responsible for the calamitous situation in Syria through its support for the Syrian "rebels". The transitivity (ideational function) within the texts is the proof; verbs expressing physical actions, states of being (verbs + adjectives) are a common practice throughout the texts. They are indicative of the Western active implication in arming and exhorting the Syrian opposition to subvert the Syrian government. Verbs of mental and verbal actions are also deployed by the channel to show different attitudes to the conflict including Western ones through political leaders and officials. However, RTTV's political vision is the predominant one. This is conveyed via selected contributors (editors and consultants) who are seemingly opposed to the Western policy regarding the Syrian conflict and also the correspondents of the channel abroad.

RTTV's news coverage of the Syrian conflict is, by the same token, perceptibly biased towards the Syrian government in its military struggle against the armed opposition. The channel's discourse seems to recognize the Syrian government under Assad as the official institution ruling the country. Such expressions as "President Assad", "Syrian government", "Assad's government", "Syrian government troops" and the "Syrian army" are frequently deployed all through the texts. These implicitly give more credibility to the political system in place while contradicting the terms coined by Western leaders and their media likewise, such as: "illegitimate regime", "dictatorial regime", "Assad's forces", "Assad's control", and "liberated zones". This bias is also implicitly demonstrated through mood as well as modality (the interpersonal function). The omnipresence of declarative sentences in the texts gives the

impression that RTTV's version of events in Syria is to be taken for granted as true. Moreover, interrogative sentences during interviews with certain experts and, occasionally, Syrian citizens are meant to obtain some confirmation of the channel's experience with the Syrian political reality. Furthermore, the components of modality (especially truth, desirability, and permission), on the one hand, reinforce the point of view of the news network and, on the other hand, provide some hints about its stance over the Syrian conflict.

Throughout the course of analysis of the five texts, we have each time noticed that the pragmatic aims center around displaying strong criticism against the US and its allies for destabilizing peace in Syria. As a matter of fact, by explicating the Western powers and their allies' (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey) indirect and direct involvement in Syria, RTTV sets forth to make Russia's perspective over this issue heard worldwide. This is no wonder because Russia has traditionally been the strategic ally of Syria in political, economic, and military affairs. This has, henceforth, to a certain extent brought an ideological equilibrium to the coverage of the war in Syria. The hegemonic flows of Western media with all their technologies, savoir-faire, and systems of knowledge are confronted by the counter-flows of RTTV with its Russian perspectives and set of ideological structures in a world of media and information globalization.

RTTV, as a global news network, is actually a tool in the hands of the Kremlin to restore Russia's former powerful diplomatic position, support its foreign policy and preserve its reputation worldwide. This can be seen in the important political role Russia has been playing in Syria since the outbreak of the armed conflict. To sustain this role in the region and elsewhere, President Putin has launched RTTV with a transnational-broadcasting capacity. This news channel is aimed at English-speaking communities around the world essentially audiences in the US and the UK to help them grasp Russia's attitudes to global as well as regional affairs.

This news network has been expanding on the international scene and so have been its effects. In effect, the channel's You Tube version, from which the news bulletins have been selected, clearly shows figures attaining up to five hundred (500) million you tube viewers. This is the first news channel to have set a new benchmark for news networks (You Tube, 2012). Therefore, we can establish the fact that RTTV has omnipresence in regional and international matters, including the Syrian conflict as it has been enjoying mounting audiences worldwide.

Ultimately, we can extrapolate from the previously carried out qualitative as well as quantitative analyses over RTTV's political discourse how discursive processes between producers and receivers operate. That is to say, the way mediated messages may come under certain social, cultural, and political constraints that determine different attitudes to the world. This does by no means automatically condition consumers' receipt of media output; the interpretative reaction can be quite challenging because of ideological backgrounds underpinning their own daily experiences. This relation of influence and domination worldwide involving mass communications as well as audiences is typical of the complex media order of Western flows confronted by mounting counter flows beyond the Occident.

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