

## **A Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Iranian and Saudi Arabian Print Media on Civil War in Syria**

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### **Abstract**

This study tried to examine the relationship between language strategies/sources and ideologies, and how ideologies are constructed and expressed through language strategies in different English newspapers with different political contexts. The focus of the study was on the style of representation of Syrian civil war in Tehran-Times and Asharq Al-Awsat newspapers. The data from these newspapers were culled from 2012 to 2013. The analyzed texts, which was conducted on the basis of Van Dijk's (2000) Us-Them and M.A.K. Halliday's (1985) Transitivity Theory, revealed that the newspapers passivized, downgraded, legitimized, delegitimized, euphemized, and demonized the involved parties in the war in order to show their desired parties' standpoint as positive, their positive actions overstated and their negative actions understated. The findings of the study provides implications for syllabus designers, material developers, and language teachers to equip language learners with decent communication and increase their awareness regarding the use of different language sources in a variety of communication contexts.

**Key words:** Ideology, CDA, newspaper, square ideology, transitivity system.

### **Introduction**

In recent years lots of revolutions have happened in Arabic countries and Middle East. This region, i.e. Middle East, with 17 countries, is considered as the geopolitical heart of the world. The general movement was dubbed Arab Spring. Among the revolutions, Syria's revolution was the most controversial and long-lasting. Because there were two groups in Syria who were involved in civil war, one group was against Bashar Assad (government) and the other was for him. Due to the crisis in Syria, other countries in the vicinity of Syria and other parts of the world came to have opposite reactions to this civil war. Countries like Iran, Russia, and China backed Bashar, while countries like Saudi Arabia, America, and England... appeared as antagonists. Among these countries Iran and Saudi Arabia have lots of features in common, e.g. they are Islamic, and they are in same area (Middle East). The existing political crisis in Syria has resulted in a significant amount of media coverage by international journalists. The coverage has both defended Bashar Assad's government legitimacy, and at the same time supported the political desires of rebel forces. These differing political positions reflected in media coverage can be clearly seen in Iranian and Saudi Arabian media. These countries' ideologies are imprinted in newspapers printed in the two countries.

For the purposes of the present study, the researchers selected Tehran Times and Ashrag Al-Awsat from Iran and Saudi Arabia, respectively. They investigated into Tehran Times and Asharq Al-Awsat to see how they represent the opposite ideology and political positions concerning the Syrian crisis. According to Fowler, Hodge, Kress, and Trew, 1979; Fiske, 1994

and Taiwo, 2004, it can be stated that the selected words by print media are not free from impartiality; rather, they bear a power that indicates the preferences of speakers and writers. As Van Dijk (2006, p. 115) puts it, “ideologies are expressed and generally reproduced in the social practices of their members, and more particularly acquired, confirmed, changed and perpetuated through discourse”. Therefore, members of groups like media groups, try to convey and sell their ideologies to their readers through frequent representation (Oyeleye & Osisanwo, 2013). Frames that are chosen and used by journalists are shaped, in part, by the ideology of the newspaper they work for and the process of socialization which they have experienced (Gan, Teo, & Detenber, 2005). In the past current decades one of the salient topics in the investigation of media discourse has been the existing bond between ideology and language. In 1970s, some Critical Linguists like Fowler and his associates were concerned to investigate the ideologically affected media language (Fowler, 1991; Fowler et al, 1979; Hodge & Kress, 1979). In a study Fowler (1991) investigated how the media tried to label some groups and individuals (e.g. young people, women, and strikers) in a partial way. The researcher also realized ‘overlexicalization’ in which some specific individuals and persons were give plethora of labels. In relation to syntactic structure, Trew (1979) showed how the agents can be deleted through the impact of the transformation like passivization (cited in Murata 2007).

To put it in a nutshell, the aforementioned approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been greatly conducive to the illumination of the intricate bond between language and ideology in media discourse in the past two decades. Considering language as the main agent in the creation of social practice and that “anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position” (Fowler 1991, p.10), CDA accentuates the significance of considering the need for the critical examination of the role newspaper language plays. Following CDA, the ideology that news writers have in the selection of linguistic forms is not always overt yet is covert, and the underlying ideologies in news can be clarified only through a critical examination of linguistic structures.

The present study thus aimed to investigate the newspapers and writers’ use of language strategies or sources in expressing and conveying their ideologies to their readers. In unmasking the existing ideologies, Van Dijk’s (2000) *Us-Them* and M.A.K. Halliday’s (1985) *Transitivity Theory* were followed as models.

## **Methodology**

### **Data Collection and Sampling**

This study tried to investigate the existing ideologies in the two newspapers; namely, *Tehran Times* and *Asharq Al-Awsat* from the contexts of Iran and Saudi Arabia, respectively. *Tehran Times* as an Iranian newspaper is pro-Bashar whereas *Asharq Al-Awsat* as a Saudi Arabian newspaper is an anti-Bashar or pro-rebellion. The rationale behind choosing these two newspapers was that they possess the two features Fowler (1991, p. 122) states for the expression and formulation of ideologies in printed media, i.e. the extent of publication and the number of readers. Thus, the online versions of these newspapers were used because they are accessible to most people.

### **Instrument and Procedures**

In this study, Van Dijk’s (2000) *Us- Them* and Halliday’s *transitivity system* (1985) were followed. Van Dijk (2000, p. 44) proposes two general strategies of most ideological representation: “say positive things about Us; say negative things about Them.” He extends this general positive-negative realization of the self and other, and suggests an “ideological square”.

## Data analysis and results

### *Tehran Times*

Iranian media especially newspapers, focus of this study, try to legitimize and support Assad and, reversely try to delegitimize the rebels and their supporters like Western and Arabic states. Iranian media and authorities consider three parties involved in the crisis, Syrian government, armed rebels, and West and Arabic countries. Examples of this viewpoint are as follows:

**1) Humanitarianism:** *On Sunday, the Syria-based opposition groups said the opinions expressed by the opposition abroad did not represent the will of the Syrian people.*

**2) Cause of Crisis, Evil doing, Terror:** *Syria has been experiencing unrest since March 2011. The Syrian government says that the chaos is being orchestrated from outside the country. It accuses Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, France, and the United States of backing the deadly insurgency that has claimed the lives of many Syrians, including security and army personnel. (On Line: 28 November 2012 16:48 In Print: Thursday 29 November 2012)*

**3) Evil doing:** *Meanwhile, Syria's Ambassador to the UN Bashar al-Jaafari said on Friday that the Syrian crisis should be resolved by diplomatic means, adding that the countries arming and funding the armed groups should stop their activities (On Line: 28 November 2012 16:48 In Print: Thursday 29 November 2012).*

**4) Cause of crisis, Evil doing, Exemplification, Trickery:** *Damascus says outlaws, Saboteurs, and armed terrorists are the driving factor behind the unrest and deadly violence while the opposition accuses the security forces of being behind the killings. (On Line: 28 November 2012 16:48 In Print: Thursday 29 November 2012).*

**5) Evil doing, Cause of crisis:** *Miqad said on Wednesday that since the four-day meeting in the Qatari capital, Doha, rejected any dialogue with the Damascus government to end the crisis and instead called for the continuation of fighting inside the country, it amounts to “declaration of war.” (On Line: 14 November 2012 16:26 In Print: Thursday 15 November 2012).*

**6) Cause of crisis, Categorization, Hyperbole, Negative attribution:** *He also described the so-called National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces a foreign-backed structure formed to destroy Syria (On Line: 14 November 2012 16:26 In Print: Thursday 15 November 2012).*

**7) Categorization, Cause of crisis, Evil doing:** *Syria holds Erdogan responsible for the militarization of the situation at the border between Syria and Turkey, and the increase of tension (On Line: 25 November 2012 15:56 In Print: Monday 26 November 2012).*

**8) Hyperbole, Cause of crisis, Evil doing, Categorization:** *In Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that the Turkish move could spark a regional conflagration, adding that any deployment of Patriot missiles by Turkey could tempt Ankara to use the weapons and spark a “very serious armed conflict” involving NATO (On Line: 25 November 2012 15:56 In Print: Monday 26 November 2012).*

**9) Number game, Categorization:** *A Syrian newspaper on Tuesday published the names of 142 foreign fighters who were killed alongside local rebels in Syria. (On Line: 27 November 2012 15:29 In Print: Wednesday 28 November 2012).*

**10) Trickery, Victimization, Cause of crisis:** *Syria's new opposition leadership, painfully forged under Arab and Western pressure, set out on Monday to gather recognition and wider backing for the struggle to topple President Bashar al-Assad and take over the country (On Line: 12 November 2012 17:12 In Print: Tuesday 13 November 2012).*

**11) Number Game, Hyperbole, Empathy:** *Syria has been the scene of unrest since March 2011, and many people, including large numbers of security and army forces, have lost their lives in the violence (On Line: 11 December 2012 16:12 In Print: Wednesday 12 December 2012).*

**12) Comparison, Cause of crisis, Evil doing:** *At the beginning [of violence in Syria], people from Al-Qaeda committed horrible crimes like what they did in Libya and Iraq and now they are carrying out suicide attacks (On Line: 27 October 2012 17:50 In Print: Sunday 28 October 2012).*

The above-stated and analyzed texts from *Tehran Times* indicate that the writers of the newspaper have used different techniques and wording in order to affect their readers. Following the Us-Them framework, the researchers found that *Tehran Times* used specific words and phrases to show that Syria is not involved in a civil war and, at the same time, to demonize the foreign factors which instigate and exacerbate the existing condition in Syria. The writers of *Tehran Times* used sentences like the following to indicate the "cause of crisis" and "evil doing": **'orchestrated from outside the country, backing the deadly insurgency, Opposition Forces a foreign-backed structure formed to destroy Syria, Syria holds Erdogan responsible for the militarization of the situation at the border between Syria and Turkey, A Syrian newspaper on Tuesday published the names of 142 foreign fighters, Al-Qaeda committed horrible crimes like what they did in Libya and Iraq'**. *Tehran Times* concentrated on blaming the U.S.A and its regional allies, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey, for funding and arming the anti-Damascus militants.

In the following section, the researchers tried to deal with the content of the analyzed texts from *Transitivity theory* vantage point. Actually, another approach that we encounter in linguistic structures related to ideological position of media, especially printed media, is the process of *passivization*. By passivization writers put the main doer or doers at the end of sentence or clause in order to decrease their acts' effect. As Van Dijk (1985) puts it, "Words may be put up front through so called 'topicalization', or they may be 'downgraded' by putting them later in a clause or sentence, or leaving them out completely" (p. 54-55).

### **Analyzed sentences**

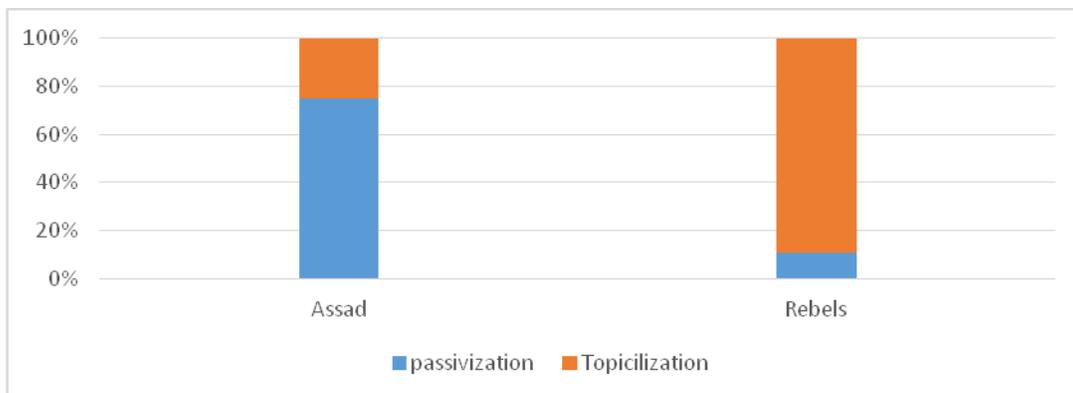
**1) Syrian rebels killed at least 190 civilians and took more than 200 hostage during an offensive in Latakia province in August, Human Rights Watch said on Friday, in what it calls the first evidence of crimes against humanity by opposition forces.**

**2) A Syrian rebel commander in a main Islamist brigade was killed and two others were injured in an air strike by President Bashar al-Assad's forces on Aleppo, activists said on Friday, in a setback to rebels defending the city against a loyalist attack.**

3) A suicide bomber driving a truck packed with 1.5 metric tons of explosives killed at least 31 people and wounded dozens in the Syrian city of Hama on Sunday, state media and a monitoring group reported.(On Line:20October201318:22 In Print: Monday 21 October 2013).

4) Foreign-backed militants have killed a top intelligence officer in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor, Syrian state media has announced (On Line: 18 October 2013 16:44 In Print: Saturday 19 October 2013).

In the preceding sentences the writers have used *passivization* repeatedly to make the rebels and their actions negative and more prominent. In example number 1, the sentence “Syrian rebels killed at least 190 civilians” is *topicalized* to make the rebels action of killing civilians more prominent. In the second sentence (A Syrian rebel commander in a main Islamist brigade was killed and two others were injured in an air strike by President Bashar al-Assad’s forces) the killer is Bashar Al-Assad’s force, but the doer or killer has not been topicalized, it is downgraded or passivized in order to decrease the role of Assad’s forces who committed the crime. In sentences 3 and 4 (A suicide bomber driving a truck packed with 1.5 metric tons of explosives killed at least 31 people and wounded dozens in the Syrian city of Hama & Foreign-backed militants have killed a top intelligence officer) again the rebels have been *topicalized* and the casualties have been *downgraded* in order to make the role of the rebels prominent as the doers. They are actually demonized. Another point in sentence number 4 is reference to the foreign countries’ role as the main instigators of the crisis. In this phase of the study a total number of 50 sentences were analyzed. The analysis indicated that 12 sentences out of 50 were related to the role of Assad and his allies in the war and 38 of them were related to the rebels. The sentences were categorized based on the notions of *passivization* and *topicalization*. The categorized data is shown in figure 1 below:



**Figure1.** Distribution of Passivization and Topicalization in Tehran-Times

### ***Asharq Al-Awsat***

In this Saudi Arabian newspaper, which is the focus of this study, the writers of the newspaper try to demonize Assad and its allies (Iran and Russia). This newspaper considers three groups to be involved in the war: the Syrian nation with a severe and illegal crackdown on them, Assad and his forces that are called Assad’s regime, and his backers, Iran and Russia, that are considered the external factors that cater ammunition to Assad in order to suppress the revolutionaries and people. Exemplar sentences are as follows:

**1) Evil doing, Cause of crisis, Negative attribution, Terror:** the Syrian government should immediately stop all actions of violence and killing, protect Syrian civilians and guarantee the freedom of peaceful demonstrations for achieving demands of the Syrian people (Written By: Asharq Al-Awsat on : Wednesday, 28 Mar, 2012).

**2) Number games, Evil doing, Hyperbole:** He said that tens of thousands of civilians had fled Daraya during weeks of government assault but that 5,000 remained, along with hundreds of rebels (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Monday, 31 Dec, 2012).

**3) Dramatization, Negative attribution, Number games:** Nawa is in the southern Daraa province, where the popular uprising against President Bashar al-Assad's iron-fisted rule erupted in March 2011. Monitors say 9,100 people have been killed since then (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Sunday, 25 Mar, 2012).

**4) Comparison, History as Lesson, Warning:** “People are talking about Syria being split into a number of small states ... this is not what will happen, what will happen is Somalisation: war lords,” he said. Somalia has been without effective central government since civil war broke out there in 1991 (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Sunday, 30 Dec, 2012).

**5) Evil doing, Hyperbole, Victimization,:** Syrian forces pounded the already battered city of Homs with tank and mortar fire and troops raided a rebellious northern town on Saturday, leaving 10 civilians and four soldiers dead, opposition activists said (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Saturday, 24 Mar, 2012 ).

**6) Evil doing, Empathy, Negative attribution, Number game:** The Syria crisis, in which monitors say almost 10,000 people have died in a bloody crackdown on a year-long uprising against President Bashar al-Assad (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Wednesday, 28 Mar, 2012).

**7) Reasonableness, Terror, Negative attribution, Evil doing:** The British-based Observatory, which supports the opposition, has been collating the names of the dead since government security forces started shooting pro-democracy protesters in March 2011 (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Friday, 23 Nov, 2012).

**8) Evil doing:** Syrian warplanes bombed rebel positions on the outskirts of the central city of Homs on Tuesday to try to break a siege of an army base housing dozens of soldiers, opposition activists said (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Tuesday, 30 Oct, 2012).

**9) Cause of crisis, Evil doing:** Al-Assad's massacres against the Syrian people are ongoing and taking place on a daily basis, and he is being openly supported in this by Iran and Hezbollah (Written By : Tariq Alhomayed on : Saturday, 20 Oct, 2012).

**10) Cause of crisis, Humanitarianism:** Syrian government forces have dropped Russian-made cluster bombs over civilian areas in the past week as they battle to push back rebel gains, Human Rights Watch said on Sunday (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Sunday, 14 Oct, 2012).

**11) Evil doing, Terror, Humanitarianism:** *HRW previously reported Syrian use of cluster bombs, which have been banned by most countries, in July and August but the renewed strikes indicate the government's determination to regain strategic control in the northwest (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Sunday, 14 Oct, 2012).*

**12) Comparison, Evil doing, Humanitarianism:** *I was astonished when following the testimony of the former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic in front of the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague, on charges of committing crimes against humanity in Bosnia. He was just like Bashar al-Assad in the interview he gave for Addounia television channel six weeks ago! (Written By: Emad El Din Adeeb on: Thursday, 18 Oct, 2012).*

**13) Evil doing, Terror, Reasonableness:** *Syrian jets hammered a rebel town on Friday, the second day of an assault in which the regime is accused of using cluster bombs, as peace envoy Lakhdar Brahimi landed in Damascus to press for a truce (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Friday, 19 Oct, 2012).*

In the above analyzed sentences from Asharq Al-Awsat, we encountered sentences that tried to show Bashar Assad as the cause of terror and evil doing. Bashar Assad is shown as a tyrant who does his best to suppress his people who do not want to be under his regime. He is actually depicted to use every illegal facility and ammunition at his disposal in order to have severe crackdown on his oppositions. Bashar Assad's actions are delegitimized and demonized. He is pictured as a person who disobeys international laws and rules of abandoning to use bombs and slaughtering civilians and nonmilitants.

**14) Cause of crisis:** *The Syrian rebel fighter pulled a small copper-plated bullet from his trouser pocket, offering it as supporting evidence as he leveled charges of Iranian involvement in President Bashar al-Assad's army crackdown (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Thursday, 29 Mar, 2012 ).*

**15) Cause of crisis, Evil doing, Negative attribution, Planned question:** *We are now witnessing Iran openly getting involved in the Syrian revolution, after it was previously taking action in secret to support al-Assad with equipment and arms and more. Tehran has today taken the decision to politically involve itself [in the Syrian crisis], warning the international community and regional states against any unilateral intervention in Syria, and even offering the possibility of helping out [in Syria]. Why is Iran doing this now? (Written By : Tariq Alhomayed on : Saturday, 31 Mar, 2012 ).*

**16) Cause of crisis, Terror, Negative attribution:** *Iran is playing the role of the saboteur in the Arab arena, exploiting issues of regional tension at the time of the Arab Spring revolutions. This is in order to heat up the region so as to disturb Tel Aviv and Washington, prompting them – at the end of the day – to accept negotiations with Tehran on Iranian terms (Written By : Emad El Din Adeeb on : Wednesday, 21 Nov, 2012).*

**17) Terror, Cause of crisis, Evil doing:** *Russia continues to take an increasingly stubborn stance in defense of the Syrian regime's killing machine, and continues to maintain the same policy it has adopted ever since the start of the crisis; politically, by providing unlimited support to al-Assad and his regime in all international organizations, and logistically on the ground by*

offering weapons and training to the regime's military and security cadres (Written By : Abdullah Al-Otaibi on : Tuesday, 27 Mar, 2012 ).

**18) Evil doing, Cause of crisis, Number Game, Reasonableness:** Iran has been using civilian aircraft to fly military personnel and large quantities of weapons across Iraqi airspace to Syria to aid President Bashar al-Assad in his attempt to crush an 18-month uprising against his government, according to a Western intelligence report seen by Reuters (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Thursday, 20 Sep, 2012 ).

**19) Cause of crisis, Planed question, Negative attribution:** It is clear today that everyone realizes there is no hope for this quartet, and the mere invitation of Iran to the negotiation table has rendered it a failure, since Tehran is one of the main obstacles in Syria so how can it be part of the solution? (Written By : Tariq Alhomayed on : Thursday, 20 Sep, 2012).

**20) Cause of crisis:** Syrian forces bombarded districts of Homs city on Saturday in a campaign to crush a revolt against President Bashar al-Assad, whose ally Russia said it would not support an Arab peace plan circulating at the United Nations (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Saturday, 11 Feb, 2012 ).

In sentences 14 to 20, the writers of *Asharq Al-Awsat* portray Russia and Iran as the obstacles to ending the crisis. Iran and Russia are shown as the caterers of ammunition to Bashar Assad's regime and his forces. Assad's allies are condemned for their illegal actions towards the rebels. In fact, Assad is shown as a tyrant who never gives to his people their right of freedom; he uses his allies' influence to suppress opposite movements against his actions and decisions. According to this newspaper, the civil war is because of the Syrian revolution and the people's desire to gain their freedom from the tyrant, and if there is any external factor that causes the crisis it is Iran and Russia, the backers of Bashar Assad. If Iran and Russia do not interfere with Syria's internal problems and civil war, the crisis can come to an end and people can gain their desired freedom.

In this part, 4 sentences (below) of the Arabian newspaper were analyzed from Halliday's functional grammar's point of view, with focus on passivization and topicalization. In sentence number 1, (*Syrian forces bombarded districts of Homs city*), "Syrian forces" has been topicalized and is used in active form to show Syrian forces as the instigators of the crisis and make their role more prominent by using topicalization. In sentences 3 and 4, the process of topicalization and active form has been used to make Syrian forces' act more prominent than it is. In these three sentences the role of the rebels in war, i.e. bombarding people, has not been shown. In sentence 4, the writer has referred to a reporter's death in the clash between the rebels and Syrian forces, but has used passive form to lessen the role of the rebels in the reporter's death and downgraded the role of the doer of the action by putting it at the end of the sentence. In this section, like *Tehran-Times*, 50 sentences were extracted from *Asharq Al-Awsat* related to Syrian forces (Assad's forces) and the rebels. The data revealed that 36 and 14 sentences were related to the role of Syrian forces and rebels, respectively. This newspaper used "Syrian regime" to refer to Assad's forces and "People" to refer to the other party who fights against Assad's government.

**1) Syrian forces bombarded districts of Homs city on Saturday in a campaign to crush a revolt against President Bashar al-Assad, whose ally Russia said it would not support an Arab peace**

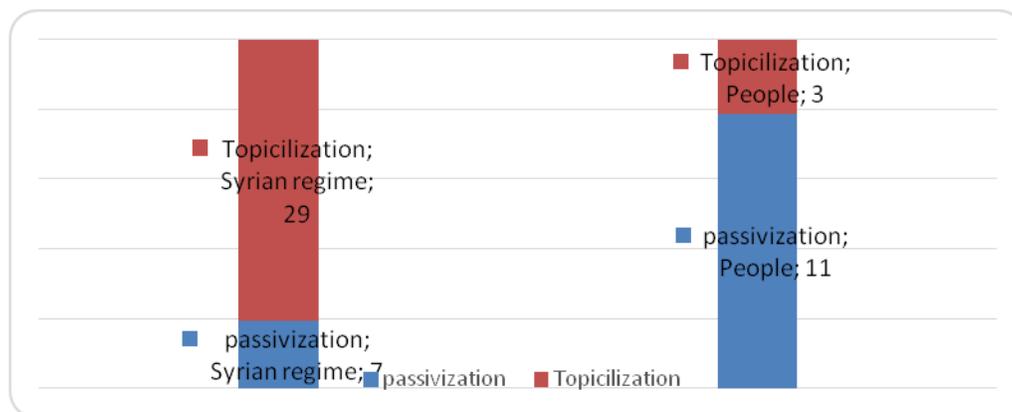
*plan circulating at the United Nations* (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Saturday, 11 Feb, 2012 ).

2) *The Syrian regime's escalation of its military operations and its bloody confrontation with its own people cannot be understood outside of the context of the Russian-Chinese veto in the Security Council. It seems Bashar al-Assad has now consciously chosen not to leave the country unless a civil war there is ensured* (Written By : Abdullah Al-Otaibi on : Wednesday, 29 Feb, 2012 ).

3) *Syrian forces bombarded opposition-held neighbourhoods of the city of Homs with rocket and mortar fire on Thursday, activists said, as divided world powers struggled to find a way to end the violence* (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Thursday, 9 Feb, 2012).

4) *New York Times correspondent Anthony Shadid, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner who strove to capture untold stories in Middle East conflicts from Libya to Iraq, died Thursday in eastern Syria after slipping into the country to report on the uprising against its president* (Written By : Asharq Al-Awsat on : Friday, 17 Feb, 2012).

The following figure depicts the categorization of passivization and topicalization by *Asharq Al-Awsat*:



**Figure 2.** Distribution of Passivization and Topicalization in Asharq Al-Awsat

### Discussion and Conclusion

In this study X-phemis and function of language as a social practice were implemented and analyzed in two newspapers (*Tehran Times and Ashar Al-Awsat*) from two countries, Iran and Saudi Arabia, with dichotomous ideological and political positions towards Syrian civil war. Manipulating X-phemism in a slanted fashion can have positive or negative perception via discourse. Thus, the study investigated Syria's war news and manner of manipulation of facts in order to see how they change according to different ideologies. The results obtained from the analysis of selected material revealed that writers of the newspapers have tried to show different dimensions of the news with resort to different language sources and strategies. In fact, varieties of language sources have been implemented to compel the readers to accept the writers' positive or negative attitudes towards a fact.

The results actually showed that implementation of discursive strategies can change, reproduce, produce, reverse and reinforce the existing realities. Using language as a protection/shield, as was found in this study, means utilizing language as a tool to overstate the

positive side and understate the negative side of the event. Comparison of the context-bound newspapers, especially regarding the Syrian war, shows different word and syntax selection for conveying realities in order to affect the readership. In the present study, the researchers also tried to analyze the selected texts in terms of the function of language as social practice in newspapers and written media. The selected newspapers were also analyzed by considering Halliday's transitivity system. In this respect, the major concern of the study was identifying the role of involved participants. The analyzed data showed that the newspapers under study, with different ideologies, used different kinds of language sources to represent facts and phenomena in order to affect their readers. The transitivity analysis also indicated that agencies and doers of negative actions were downgraded to make what they did less prominent. Also, it was observed that *Asharq Al-Awsat* put Syria's force at the beginning and *Tehran Times* put rebels at the beginning of the sentences to show their negative actions more prominent.

The results of the study suggest the need for academic, systematic analysis of the political dependency of printed media. As Fairclough (1989, p. 4) puts it, "a contribution to the general raising of consciousness of exploitative social relation, through focusing upon language". Furthermore, the implications of studies like this can be applied in language teaching classes to enhance learners' capability for judging the world's events. As a matter of fact, language practitioners and teachers can take advantage of critical discourse analysis to increase language learners' capability of thinking critically.

As for pedagogical perspective, applied studies like this can contribute to the development of language teachers' and learners' ability to increase their awareness of using varieties of linguistic sources to communicate decently. Furthermore, syllabus designers and material developers can incorporate ideologically laden structures in textbooks and direct language learners attention to the target features through different pedagogical tasks. Language teachers can cater dialogical pedagogy in their classes to interact and discuss mutually the potential use of language sources in various communicational contexts.

The theoretical framework used in the present study can be implemented in different contexts, e.g. verbal media like television and radio news concerning their selection of language sources in order to represent their ideologies. Finally, further studies are needed to employ the trends of this study and focus on the use of different lexical sources by printed media in conveying their underlying ideologies to their readers.

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