

The Guardian's diametrical view on Qatar's World Cup: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

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The present study focuses The Guardian media group for its insertion of diametric ideology in the editorial '*Sports-washing stains football image*'. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar approach has been adopted to study the data. The researcher has limited the study to the transitivity analysis. The design of the study is explanatory sequential mixed-method. The results of the study exhibited that material (28.2%), relational (25.6%) and verbal (20.5%) processes have been frequently used by the author to make and shape an opinion. It is recommended that other approaches of critical discourse analysis be applied to have better understanding of the underlying ideologies and linguistic strategies employed in the sample.

1. Introduction

Qatar's becoming the first Muslim country to host the FIFA World Cup, has been received with discontentment by Western media outlets. Its capabilities and deservingness to host the event has drawn criticism. The events that have unfolded over the past several years, which have accelerated in the months as the nearing of the World Cup, show the extent of Western prejudice, phony moral outrage, and, probably most importantly, egregious double standards. The rhetoric about the tournament is being attributed as racist, Islamophobic, and orientalist. The dissimulated Western criticism of Qatar is blatant because it has nothing to do with human rights. It is the ancient orientalism that has been refashioned for a contemporary audience (Dogger, 2022). The media has frequently used some of the outdated orientalist stereotypes. The European newspapers have represented Qatar football players and Arabs as terrorists and murderers in the caricatures. The host country has been despised severely for its laws of banning alcohol in the stadium and objection on LGBT community.

Media, other than providing entertainment, has tectonic part in evaluating the environment and public engagement. The media creates reality for widespread consumption. This brings up the idea of framing, where the media shapes the essence of events through formats, which constitute ideological, or value viewpoints in which the media focuses on key symbols, stories, and stereotypes (Naveh, 2002). It matters who these individuals are and what they believe because reality is created via the choices made by others. As a result, framing is significantly influenced by the editorial staff's worldview. Incidents that can be made apropos to the general public and events that could be labelled as negative will both receive better publicity.

Examination of ideology in contemporary society requires a thorough understanding of the nature and efficacy of the mass media in producing and disseminating ideology. Since the inception of critical discourse analysis, critical linguists have placed a high value on the analysis of non-literal discourse. The CDA's analytical studies include analyses of media discourse as well as other forms of mass discourse, such as official fields and commercials. Media debate has so far consistently been at the top of the list. News stories, which are a form of media discourse and a social activity, include or make clear the reporters' positions

and points of view, just like other discourse. As a result, it is impossible for media discourse to accurately reflect and report on reality and society. English-language news sources influence the global voice and even shape and direct popular perception.

The present study aims to trace ideology in The Guardian's editorial '*Sportwashing stains football's image*' through Hallidayan linguistic analysis method particularly adopting its transitivity system. To unveil the unconscious ideology concealed in language, Critical discourse analysis must be applied to news by examining the linguistic elements and understanding it from the historical and social background.

2. Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis is an approach that enables a rigorous investigation of what is intended when language is used to explain and describe things. It is a study-field that probes how text and discussion contribute to the establishment, maintenance, and justification of oppression, injustice, and inequality in society. The word 'discourse' is a complex and mammoth-like interpretation (Hamuddin, 2012).

According to Halliday's grammar, language constructs global demonstrations, detects social interaction, and jumbles these representations and relationships into text and communicative events concurrently. This is in line with the goal of critical discourse analysis, which takes into account both the linguistic systems utilised to produce and disseminate ideologically distinct representations from around the globe.

Critical discourse Analysis expends considerable attention to lexis and grammar in the analysis and it is for this property that distinguishes it from other linguistic techniques (Fairclough 1992). It examines sentence transitivity patterns, clause syntactic transformations, such as nominalization and passive transformation, which result in the deletion of an agent, and lexical structure, highlighting the potential for vocabulary categorization to replicate ideology, modalities, and speech acts. The crucial claim made by critical discourse analysts is that the link between content and form is not always there. Discourse meaning is derived from context in addition to linguistic structures.

Ideology is a difficult term to define because there are so many different definitions. The two conceptions of ideology that Thompson (1990) supports are: neutral conceptions and critical conceptions. Critical conceptions, as opposed to neutral conceptions, typically view ideological phenomena as misleading, open to criticism, and serving the interests of a specific group. Neutral conceptions, on the other hand, perceive ideology as a system of ideas and belief existing in any social or political action without suggesting that ideological phenomena are biased or deceptive.

The socio-cognitive approach of Van Dijk (1995) includes a perspective of ideology that considers it to be both a mental property, encompassing ideas, beliefs, values, and judgement, as well as something that members of a social group share and is connected to the social, economic, and political goals of that group. Ideology structures group members' attitudes and knowledge, which has an effect on their social behaviors. It is incorporated into and made manifest through these practices' forms and meanings, including discourse. Mental models, also known as representations of personal experiences of particular actions, situations, and situations, perform the role of the mediator between social representations and their manifestation in the practises of group members. Mental models are influenced by social group opinions even though they are primarily subjective and context-dependent.

Halliday's Systematic Functional Grammar

Halliday's Functional Grammar System assigns language three fundamental purposes: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. One or more sets of language's grammatical systems are able to materialize each of them. The ideational function, according to Halliday, is concerned with how people conceptualize their surroundings and themselves through language. Events such as happening, doing, meaning, being, and being are included in those goings-on. Language participation is how Halliday (2007) defines interpersonal meta-function. This function, which enables the expression of opinions and attitudes, is realized through mood and modality. Relation setup expressions involving consumer and producer of text are authorized by interpersonal meta-function.

According to Halliday's (2007) theory, textual function actualizes interpersonal meanings and ideation. cohesion, structure and information are actualized in the textual meta-function of language. The term "context of situation" is presented by Halliday (1985: 11) and refers to the relationship between the social environment and the functional organization of language.

Clause is crucial to the representation process because it reflects a fundamental idea from modelling experience—namely, that reality is composed of Processes. According to Halliday, the transitivity system is a collection of grammatical constructions that organizes the universe of experience into a comprehensible set of process forms (Halliday, 1994). In the transitivity system, there are six primary process types: material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal, and existential. The transitivity system's process categories aid in the recognition and encoding of human experiences and real-world occurrences.

Previous Studies under Transitivity Framework

Azhar et al (2020) analyzed a press release and a news conference given by the elite forces using Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and grammar. The analysis of press releases has concentrated on the meta-function of transitivity processes, the usage of nominalization, and passivisation, whereas the analysis of press conferences has just included transitivity analysis. The results demonstrate that nominalization and passivisation were utilised in the press release to appear impersonal and objective in the criticism. Discursively, relational processes had been applied to influence listeners' ideologies. Listeners' attitudes have been influenced via mental processes. The listeners' knowledge of the speaker's institution is raised through verbal procedures.

Al-Haq et al (2015) conducted a research on linguistic strategies used in the speeches of King Abdullah II. In order to collect data for his study, the researcher chose three speeches. The findings explained that the King exhibited his version of truth through linguistic techniques. He persuaded American listeners through the device of intertextuality, and emphasized issues through circumlocution.

Nurfaeni et al (2017) assayed Zakir Naik's 'Five Questions and an Appeal' qualitatively to identify open letter ideology. The researcher operated transitivity analysis and Fairclough's 3D model to analyse the data. The findings of the study revealed that material and relational processes were the most frequently used in the discourse. The researcher came to the conclusion that Zakir Naik's case involves self-defense against a plot by the Indian government and Indian media.

Qasim et al (2021) employed the transitivity analysis to study Iqbal's Mukalma Jibra'il-o-Iblis. Specifically, focusing the ideological manifestation and meaning making in the poem through the transitivity processes. The researcher had used mixed-method design for the study. It was found that Allama Iqbal has used the verbal process (47%) most among other processes.

Al-Badri et al (2022) examined Prime Minister Boris' speech on COVID-19 to identify the ideologies that were being utilized to influence people's opinions and behavior. It also sought interpersonal and ideational meta-functions in the chosen figure's chosen speeches by declaring their frequencies, and then investigated how these traits reveal the ideological tactics employed to influence everyone. The researcher concludes that the most overt techniques used by Boris to promote his speech ideology include material process, indicative mood, modality, authority, counterfactuals, elucidation, openness, honesty comparison, evidentially, generalization, and number game.

3. Methodology

The study employed sequential explanatory mixed method as mode of inquiry. It is a research design in which the qualitative data is used to understand and further explain the findings of the quantitative data analysis. The data is collected from the The Guardian newspaper website. The data collected is the editorial '*Sportwashing stains football's image*' published on 13th Nov, 2022. The data is first analysed quantitatively by determining the frequency of transitivity processes through Bungin's statistical approach (2001).

$$N = f(x) / n \times 100$$

$$N = \text{percentage}$$

$$f(x) = \text{number of clauses expressing specific process}$$

$$n = \text{total number clauses of processes}$$

For the qualitative analysis, critical discourse analysis method is applied. Critical discourse analysis is a research technique for examining spoken or written language in relation to its social context. It seeks to comprehend how language is worked-in in actual life contexts to transmit ideas, values, and beliefs.

The unit of analysis is clause. The researcher has used purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling procedures where units are chosen because they have the qualities you require in your sample. In other words, purposive sampling involves the on purpose selection of units.

3.1 Theoretical Framework:

The researcher has followed Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar Theory (1985) as theoretical framework. The evolution of grammatical analysis from a sentence-based approach to a more discourse-based perspective is what is known as systemic functional grammar theory. The creation of this theory, according to some linguists, is required since the conventional explanations of grammar fail to effectively account for grammatical choice in longer, real-world texts.

It preserves a viewpoint on language that is based on the ways in which humans actually employ language to create reality and carry out social interactions. According to this theory, language serves a purpose. Functional implies that language is a systematic resource for creating and exchanging meaning, much like other semiotic systems. Three primary functional elements, or "metafunctions," that make up a semantic system are namely 'ideational, interpersonal, and textual' (Halliday & Webster, 2009).

Language has an ideational function that is utilized to represent human experiences. Logical and experiential sub-functions make up the ideational function. The sentence complexity system realizes the logical function of language, which sees language as a representation of natural logic, whereas the transitivity system realises the experiential function of language, which sees language as a representation of human experiences. Human relationships are maintained via the interpersonal function, which is accomplished by the mood system. Through the employment of a theme system, the textual function organises human experiences in the text.

3.1.1 Transitivity:

The transitivity system is related to experiential meta-function of language. The experiential meta-function focuses on the clause part, where the clause is seen as a reflection of the reality of human experience through specific processes. The activities of doing, happening, experiencing, or being can be represented by the processes. Therefore, in this circumstance, the clause is the most important subunit.

There are three main elements in a transitivity process: participant (attend the circumstances and perform the process), process (viewed as varied activities), and circumstances (represent time, place, accompaniment, cause, matter, manner and role). These three elements are present in every transitivity process.

Halliday has introduced six types of transitivity processes:

1. Material Process

This process expresses 'doing' in a clause. It simply tells what an entity does or is doing to another entity. There are two participants in this process: Actor and Goal. Actor is the entity that does something while Goal refers to the entity that undergoes the process. The Actor is always required whereas the Goal is optional in the clause.

2. Mental Process

Verbs denoting perception, understanding, affection, and desire are referred to as mental processes. It gives language users the ability to articulate ideas, opinions, and preferences that help define their conceptions of reality. When expressing this transitivity process, verbs like "think," "know," "feel," "smell," "hear," "see," "desire," "like," "hate," "please," "repel," "admire," "enjoy," and "fear" are frequently used.

3. Relational Process

Through identification, attribution, and possession, the relational process constructs being and relation among entities. According to Halliday (1994), there are two types of relational processes: identifying relational processes and attributive relational processes.

Something is given an identity in the identifying mode. It denotes the use of one thing to define the identity of another, as in 'y' is identified by 'a' or 'a' helps to define the identity of 'y' (Halliday, 1994). In terms of structure, the a-element is labelled as identifier, which serves as an identity, while the x-element is labelled as identified, which is to be identified.

Processes that attribute qualities are called attributional relational processes. 'b' is a quality of 'x'. In other words, in this modality, a characteristic is assigned to or attributed to an entity (Halliday, 1994).

4. *Behavioural Process*

Physiological and psychological behaviours such as breathing, dreaming, snoring, grinning, hiccupping, staring, observing, listening, and reflecting are examples of behavioural processes. They are the minimally distinct of the six functional units since they lack specific traits of their own and resemble both the material and the mental processes in different ways. In such processes there is only one person who is "behaving", who typically a conscious being a 'human'.

5. *Verbal Process*

The process of saying is known as verbal process. Sayer (the speaker), Receiver (the person to whom the verbalization is directed), and Verbiage are the participants in this process (a name for the verbalization itself). Another form of verbal process uses verbs like insult, praise, slander, abuse, and flattery and involves the Sayer verbally acting on another direct participant. The Target is the name given to this additional participant.

6. *Existential Process*

The processes of existence are existential processes. These serve as evidence that something occurs or exists. A phrase that asserts an entity as existing on its own terms is known as an existential process. This process has only one participant. Existential processes are typically discernible with locating the word 'there'. The word "there" is used as the subject but serves no further experiential purpose.

4. Results and Discussion

The data was collected from the website and then the clauses expressing processes were extracted and tabulated. After the categorization of clauses, the frequencies of each process were calculated.

	Processes	Number	Frequency
1	Material	11	28.2%
2	Mental	7	17.9%
3	Relational	10	25.6%
4	Behavioural	0	0%
5	Verbal	8	20.5%
6	Existential	2	5.12%
	Total	39	97.32

Table.1 Processes of Transitivity

The above table shows that out of the six processes, the most frequently used are material and relational processes. Since the editorial is about apprehensions of the British news agency The Guardian about FiFa's selection of Qatar as a host to football World Cup 2022, it is for this reason that that material processes will be highest to focus the 'happenings' and the relational process to correlate subject to its description. The second frequently used process is that of verbal process. Following is the detailed analysis of the three frequently occurring processes in the editorial.

4.1 *Analysis of Material Processes*

Table.2 Material Processes

	Actor/ agent	Action
1	Sports-washing	<u>stains</u> football image.
2	Time	<u>is</u> running out to effect....
3	The 2014 Winter Olympics and 2018 World Cup	<u>did</u> not bring rights improvement.....
4	Regimes	Seeking kudos have gained the assistance..
5	Its (Qatar's)	<u>spot-lighting</u> anti-gay laws has steadily mounted.
6	The tournament	<u>has</u> also further exposed its (Qatar's) human right abuses.
7	The drama and tension	<u>will</u> end up overwhelming many people's qualms.
8	They (international governing bodies)	<u>show</u> little sign of taking that on board.
9	Sixteen members of <u>Fifa</u> executive committee	<u>have</u> been since implicated in or investigated over alleged corruption.....
10	National captains	<u>will</u> wear rainbow armbands
11	Its (<u>Fifa</u>) job	<u>is</u> not handing out moral lessons

Out of the eleven processes, three processes (6, 10, 11) are directly related to Fifa as Actor. These mention Fifa members being corrupt; the happenings because of Fifa's selection of Qatar that is 'human right abuses' and Fifa's defending itself against criticism. Two of the processes (4, 5) are about Qatar's anti-gay laws and its acquiring praise by sports stars and transnational sports organizations. The first process is the title of the editorial which refers to using of sports to ameliorate a country's reputation in the world and this practice has tarnished the football game. One of the processes (10) tells us about doings of national captains who will protest against anti-gay laws by wearing rainbow arm-bands. The material process no.3 refers to 2014 Winter Olympics, 2018 football World Cup held in Russia and its failure in improving rights. One of the processes (8) refers to international governing bodies not taking the matter of 'sports-washing' into consideration.

4.2 Analysis of Relation Processes:

Table.3 Relational Processes

	Carrier / Identified	Attributive or Identifier
1.	The shock decision to award Qatar	<u>was</u> controversial even in 2010.
2.	It (<u>sportswashing</u>)	<u>now</u> appears standard for major international events.
3.	This (World Cup)	<u>looks</u> more like grubby hymn of money and power....
4.	Qatar	<u>was</u> a bad choice as a host.
5.	The World Cup	<u>seems</u> to have done more to stain the image of football than improve Qatar's.
6.	The years between the 2008 summer Games and this year's Winter Olympics	<u>saw</u> increasing repression in China.
7.	Saudi Arabia	is determined to win an Olympics
8.	That (arguments of <u>Fifa</u>)	<u>got</u> short shrift.
9.	Human rights	<u>are</u> universal and apply everywhere.
10.	Allegations of corruption	have long dogged the International Olympic Committee

There were in total ten relational processes found. Eight out the ten processes are author's description while two they are quotes by former Fifa head and football associations quoted by the author in the editorial. All the clauses and quotations represent the author's judgement. The clauses show unfavourable opinion of the author's towards the choice of Qatar which can be observed in the selection of lexical items such as 'controversial, grubby hymn, stain'. Moreover, the comment quoted 'Qatar was bad choice' by a former Fifa official further solidifies and gives credibility to the negative opinion. The author also reprehends another Eastern country 'China' for being selected as host for sports in the preceding years. In the same line, Saudi Arabia is also critiqued for its being adamant about hosting Olympics in future. The author seems to qualify the idea that Eastern countries are incapable of hosting sports events. However, there is one relational process pertaining to International Olympic Committee that describes it being continuously trailed by allegations of corrupt. This process conveys that it is because of the corruption of organizations that these countries are being selected for sports event.

4.3 Analysis of Verbal Processes

Table.4 Verbal Processes

	Sayer	Verbal Process	Receiver	Verbiage
1.	Diehard fans and human rights campaigners	have complained	Readers of the editorial	That this looks like grubby hymn.....
2.	A Qatar World Cup ambassador	described	Readers of the editorial	Homosexuality as 'damage in the mind'.
3.	Sepp Blatter	said	Readers of the editorial	Qatar was a bad choice as host
4.	Defenders of the decision	say	Readers of the editorial	that high-profile events can be.....
5.	Fifa	has told	National teams	that its job is not "handing....
6.	Ten European football associations	replied	Fifa	that "human rights are.....
7.	They (European football associations)	urged	Fifa	to deliver on two as-yet.....
8.	This World Cup	suggests	People/ Readers of the editorial	that at last some national associations.....

There were in total 8 verbal processes used in the editorial. In these eight processes seven process refer to authorities, fans, organizations disapproving comments on Fifa and Qatar. The author mentions in the very first paragraph of the editorial that fans and human rights have protested about the current world cup as filthy encomium of money and power. The author generalizes and takes the authority to speak for all the fans around the world and the human rights campaigners. It can be deduced that generalization is another strategy to back a stance and regulate opinions.

Homosexuality is a subject about which people of East and West have opposing views. The author presumably knowing the sensitivity of people of west towards the matter highlights the comments of Qatari ambassador on it. This verbal process (2) can shape readers opinion of Muslims and particularly Qatari's as intolerant. Verbal processes (6, 7) show reaction of football associations who have articulated their standpoint against Fifa for remaining neutral on the alleged human rights abuses related to migrant workers and unacceptance of homosexuality in Qatar. In other words, all these illustrations and quoting references put forwards authors rebuttal of selection of Qatar for the 22nd world cup. It is also evident in the verbal process (8) where the authors hopes 'this World Cup suggests that at last some national associations may be starting to think differently'.

5. Conclusion

The undertaken research aimed to critically analyze the editorial '*Sports-washing stains football*' produced by The Guardian on its website. The transitivity analysis findings showed that out of the six processes, material process; relational process and verbal process were most frequently used by the writer. Simpson argues that selection of vocabulary in material processes are as potent indicators of relevant political positions in newspapers. A significant number of the expressions/ lexical items used have

affective meanings, and the majority of these carry conventionally unfavorable evaluations of the behavior to which they allude. The actors involved in the processes usually receive negative evaluations (cited in Matu, 2008).

The three process material, relational and verbal processes uncovered the media group's negative opinion of Fifa and its selection of Qatar as host country for world cup. The writer directly and indirectly through quoted comments of authorities and influential personas legitimized its opinion. The writer used the tool of generalization, allegations, words with negative connotations and a conflicting topic 'homosexuality' to persuade and shape the opinion of the readers.

The present study is limited to Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar approach to analyze the discourse; other critical discourse analysis frameworks can be applied on the discourse to describe the underlying ideologies and strategies that have been put to work in it.

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