A Critical Analysis of Political-Economical Discourse: The Case of Iran's Post-Nuclear

Deal Economic Development

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Abstract

CDA is an approach to the analysis of language use that, based on the claims of van Dijk (1995), has a social and ideological approach to discourse. Critical discourse analysis gains significance particularly with the analysis of political texts considering their role in establishing force, identity, and political ideology. This study took an initiative critical perspective towards the rather under-research area of political and economical discourse analysis. The issue of Iran's economic changes after the nuclear deal attracted considerable attention from news media. This study intended to examine the news editorials from four world-known newspapers: Tehran Times, New York Times, China Daily and Moscow Times. Twenty editorial were selected from each newspaperand were subjected to content analysis through the application of Fairclough's (2003) critical discourse analysis model. The obtained frequency data were analyzed through a series of Chi-square tests. The findings revealed significant differences among these newspapers showing a putative disparity between political and real world framings of the economical changes identified in this research. The points of departure and their significant implications are further discussed.

Key words: Critical discourse analysis, political-economical texts, news editorials

1. Introduction

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a general approach to the examination of text and speech, appearing from critical linguistics, critical semiotics and most commonly from socio-political methods of analyzing language, discourse and communication (van Dijk, 1995). CDA is mainly concerned with the oppositional investigation of the linguistic features and techniques of obtaining discourse and their cognitive and social circumstances and results together with the discourse of opposition to power and domination (Anderson, Diabah, & Mensa, 2011; Bhatia, 2006). CDA has been applied to the analysis of different texts from both the micro linguistic structure and macro socio-political characteristics. More commonly, social phenomena, advertisement texts, economic and political texts are considered as targets of CDA. The integration of economic and political perspectives as targets of CDA, however, has received little attention particularly in the context of Iran. Recent developments following the Iranian nuclear negotiations have led to an emerging body of research attempting to investigate the texts particularly news media in this respect. In order to fill the existing lacunas in the critical analysis of political-economical discourse, the present study intended to apply a CDA approach to shed light on the nature of texts with regard to Iran's economic changes.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis encompasses a number of approaches towards the analysis of discourse in terms of both linguistic and social features (Fairclough&Wodak 1997;Wodak& Meyer 2001) that are distinct in terms of theory, method, and the categories of research concepts to which they signify. CDA follows the purpose of recognizing language use as social activity. The language users are not perceived as segregated contributors; rather, they are viewed as a network of cultural, social and psychological frameworks (Sriwimon&Zilli, 2017; van Dijk, 2004). CDA embraces the social context and investigates the relation between textual features and considers the social context examining the connections between linguisticfeatures and their operation in communication within the society(e.g., Barnes &Larrivee, 2011; O'Gragy, 2011). Such an examination is deemed as a sophisticated, multi-functionalanalysis considering the absence of a direct correspondence between text structures and social functions. Particularly,this is the case when the purpose is to create and sustainvariations in power relations. The integration of the complicatedfunction of discursive activity and their social function is consistently and intentionally left vague, particularly when there is a demand to develop and maintain differences in power relations.

Applying a critical discourse analysis approach, Joye (2010) intended to analyze the news representation of the 2003 global SARS outbreak. This study employed a case-based methodology and investigated two Belgian media inreflecting the international outbreak of SARS. Four selected discursive moments were analyzed and the results pinpointed the

underlying discourses of power, hierarchy and compassion. The findings further determined the fundamental role of proximity in international news reporting and backed up the position that Western news media majorly develops a Euro-American centered world order. Joye states that news coverage of international cataclysm such as SARS builds and mirrors the socio-cultural contrast between 'us' and 'them' along with producing global power and a share of the world regarding poverty and prosperity, peril and security.

Adhering to the critical discourse analysis paradigm too, Stamou (2001) conducted an analysis of the protest discourse examining the news reflection of non-protesters as well as the protesters in a protest that happened in Greece. The analysis of the data showed that the way non-protesters were depicted led the readers to opt for a negative position towards the protest, and that protesters' representation was quite consistent with the prevailing discourse of protest. Stamou concluded that the stigmatization of protesters was inclined to efficiency when individuals who might exert a potential effect on the readers are also included in the process.

Politics is considered as a challenge for power in an attempt to change the political, economic and social concepts into practice (Kilman, 2011; van Dijk, 2004). In the political contexts, language assumes a significant role due to the fact that each political action is arranged, supplemented, affected and played by language. Considering the considerable local and international essence of the articulated economic talks in times of post-nuclear negotiations, it is essential to figure out ideological traits in different world newspapers that address this. Furthermore, despite the significance of newspaper investigation from a critical perspective being established, much is yet to be understood about how political and social events are presented within news media discourses. Constructing on newspaper editorials from a critical perspective, the current study applied critical discourse analysis to investigate the issue of Iran's economy after nuclear negotiations in a total of 40 newspaper editorials from Iran, China, Russia and the U.S.

2.2. CDA and News Editorials

Critical discourse analysts Fairclough (2003), van Dijk (2004), and Wodak (1996) argue that in an attempt to evaluate the suitability of rewriting and adjustment of content to suit a new readership, examination of the content of media writings would be advantaged from a more purposeful spotlight on its discursive properties, and specifically on its investigation of discourses which are destructed by power and ideology (Wodak, 1996). With respect to CDA, basic messages, belief systems and affirmations of power are deliberately or accidentally covered up in news writings, and such profile elements may have impacts on readers, or on the more extensive societies in which they have a place.

As discourse constitutes society and culture, it shapes national, political and social characters and as a result presents ideology. In such manner, Wodak (1996) declares that ideologies are specific methods of showing and developing society which reproduces unequal relations of force, relations of domination and exploitation, accordingly power relations are likewise discursive. They are communicated absolutely, one that can bring about such elements as negative stereotyping, which has the potential impact of depicting or concealing overwhelming ideologies.

Fowler (1991) suggested editorials can be studied within a critical framework in terms of three discourse participants; the source, the addressee and the referent which is the 'I',

'you', 'he/she/they'. Moreover, Homayounzadeh and Mehrpour (2013) used the definition of the concept of ideology from a socio-cognitive point of view, as advanced by a leading scholar in ideological studies. van Dijk (2004) believes that the editorials and the "op-ed" articles in the mass media are opinions and ideologies that are inundated by mental representations. vanDijk's proposed model is an endeavor to integrate the language use, together with the analysis of discourse. His theoretical stance consists of three substantial components of social functions, discursive expressions and cognitive structures. In sharp opposition to Fowler's focus on semantic processes of beliefs and qualities, van Dijk (2004) underscored the creation and comprehension of writings. In his theory, belief system is given a more important place.

In a more recent research, Katajamaki and Koskela (2006) applied van Dijk's concept of rhetorical structure to analyze editorials in three business newspapers in English, Finnish, and Swedish. They found three most occurring rhetorical moves in the editorials that they investigated including the introduction section, the intermediate section and the coda. Additionally, the obtained results pinpointed the different nature of the stages involved in each section.Connor (1996) analyzed the examination of editorials in Finnish, English and German newspapers to find out the strength and the location of the main claim in the editorial news, undertaken by Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (2004). Connor's (1996) observation referred to the fact that the Finnish editorial authors did not present a viewpoint but ratherprovided information. He also observed that, the German authorsin almost all occasionsposited the main argument at the start more often than the English newspaper did, while Finish newspapers' editorials had no argument statement.

3. The Present Study

The purpose of the current study is to analyze foreign and Iranian newspaper editorials and find out how they have covered Iran's economic developments after nuclear negotiations with world powers and to what extent these newspapers have used biases in their interpretations. In this way, it can be revealed how texts try to persuade readers and convince them to support leaders and media owners which ultimately lead to the revelation of ideologies and inequalities affiliated to media owners and those in power.

While a specialized speaker addressing a similarly specialized audience may have a reasonable degree of certainty that her/his audience will understand the material being presented in scientific language using scientific concepts, the news media do not enjoy such certainties. Their audiences have distinct preferences, live in diverse social environments, and determine and share a number of social world discourses. For this analysis, it was hypothesized that because the news media are necessarily attentive to the interests of their audiences, differences between different countries with regard to news media information preferences would reveal news media assumptions about the discourses which circulated contemporaneously among their audiences.

In this study, the following research questions were proposed:

1. How is the issue of Iran's economy after nuclear negotiations referred to in Iranian, Chinese, Russian, and American newspaper editorials?

2. What are the lexical options employed by Iranian, Chinese, Russian, and American newspapers to reflect the economic issues?

3. What are the syntactic options employed by Iranian, Chinese, Russian, and American newspapers to reflect the economic issues?

3.1. Editorials

Websites related to Tehran Times, New York Times, China Daily and Moscow Times were visited and articles published on Iran's economy after nuclear agreement were selected purposefully from the archives. In order to heed the homogeneity of texts in terms of quantity, the researcher analyzed the texts with up to 1000 words and 100 lines. For the purpose of consistency, 20 editorials from each newspaper were selected and analyzed. The texts were processed in terms of attitude, lexical choices, and syntactic structures (see below for analysis details). Interpretive text analysis was used to compare structural points and attitude with information selection from the four newspapers.

3.2. Data Analysis

It needs to be noted that Fairclough's CDA model was adopted as a general category for the identification of specific instances of structural classes. In other words, the selection of 'lexical choice' and 'syntactic structure' were based on Fairclough's ideas; whereas, each specific sub-categories within these general categories were based on Huckin's (2002) and Long et al's (2005) suggestions as presented in the following sections.

The analysis of lexical choices was performed by considering the following categories assumed to be significant elements of discourse variation (Huckin, 2002):

1. Classification is related to the naming and classification of subjects which places the author as favoring one side in the debate. E.g., "Defending his performance before the parliament, Zarif said the nuclear deal was not the result of Tehran's trust in Washington, but rather every single part of it showed Tehran's *serious distrust*" of Washington.
2. Connotation refers to the connections of meaning which are beyond a word's dictionary description. E.g., "He highlighted the need to harmonize the country's politics and economy within the Foreign Ministry in the pursuit of national *interests*".
3. Metaphor is usually applied with the purpose of delivering opinions in political discourse. E.g., "Zarif was in parliament to throw light on the Foreign Ministry's achievements during his first four-year term and also elaborate on his plans for a second term provided that he gets the go-ahead by the parliament".
4. Presuppositions are employed at word level and presume the accuracy of the statementwhere they are used. E.g., "The roughly $780 million agreement to produce as many as 150,000 additional cars a year is the largest foreign auto deal in Iran's history."
5. Modality is about the application of modal verbs to formulate a particular authorial voice or attitude: "The Iranian president also said that his administration would seek peace in the region through cooperation in political, economic, cultural, and security areas."
6. Register is the linguistic form of a discourse which connects it to a specific activity or group. E.g., "The government is resolute to bring about more structural reforms in its second four-year term, Rouhani said in his two-hour long speech".

Huckin (2002) proposes the following criteria for the examination of a discourse with respect to its syntactic structure:

1. Transitivity refers to the agent-patient link in a sentence or the ways that the main purpose of the sentence is understood.E.g., "As of January 2016, Iran has resumed its exports of carpet to the U.S. under the implementation of nuclear deal with the six world powers".
2. Deletion refers to the purposeful removal of information from a sentence. E.g., "Officials of the Treasury Department, where the Office of Foreign Assets Control oversees the sanctions imposed on Iran, declined to comment".
3. Topicalizationis emphasizing a sentence element by putting it at the beginning of the sentence. E.g., "Its economy has limped along, surviving mainly on oil sales in recent years".
4. Register is assumed to be both a word level elementand a syntactic element. The usual register changes in advertisements, for example, aredue to syntactic distinctions than lexical ones. E.g., "The country's imports from Iran in 2016 stood at $86 million showing an intense rise from $10.8 million in 2015".
5. Presupposition: e.g., "Of course, we should not exaggerate the importance of this deal, as we know that Iran deserves much more than this and the foreigners should vie for presence and investment in Iran," he added".
6. Insinuation is used for manipulative aims. E.g., "When Total ignores any risk of investment in Iran it could be a model for the other international companies, as they see that the door is open and the way is paved", Zamaninia said in an interview with Persian language Etemad newspaper."
7. Intertextuality refers to the borrowing of terms. E.g., "Our priority is development of the joint fields and companies make no difference for us."

As mentioned in previous sections, critical discourse analysis consists of the integrated analysis of text, discursive practice and wider social concerns. At the broader levels of analysis, however, more extensive concepts are considered. The following classes are adopted from Huckin (2002) to explore the way Iran's economic condition after the nuclear deal were reflected in the news discourse:

1. Hegemony is organizing principles through which elite groups impose cultural and political direction attempting to gain agreement for their interests from subordinate groups (Boggs, 1976; Hall, 1977). E.g., "The European Union has always considered Iran an "*important and powerful partner*" and seeks to revive relations with the Islamic Republic in various areas, she stated in a separate meeting with Iran's parliament Speaker Ali Larijani".
2. Ideology is conceptualized as opinions, values, and perspectives that provide the cornerstone in a social formation, and that must be viewed as being 'structural' and 'epistemological' (Hall, 1977, pp. 333–334). In other words, from a CDA perspective, ideology refers to an 'accurate expression' of a group's 'material interests' (Hawkes, 2003, p. 114).E.g., "we move relying on our own investment and knowledge. It is an honor for us but now that the sanctions are lifted we should work with double effort."
3. Interest describes "social and cultural histories; present social context; including assessment by the sign-maker about the communicational environment" (Kress, Leite-Garcia, & Van Leeuwen, 1997, p. 269).Interest, according to Kress, Leite-Garcia, and Van Leeuwen (1997), means that text producers select apt forms to express meanings and the relation between the text form and meaning is not arbitrary but motivated.

E.g., "we know that Iran deserves much more than this and the foreigners should vie for presence and investment in Iran".

4. Argumentation follows the purpose of convincing the readers. E.g., "When Total ignores any risk of investment in Iran it could be a model for the other international companies, as they see that the door is open and the way is paved", Zamaninia said in an interview with Persian language Etemad newspaper".

5. Results

The results of Chi-Square test are displayed in this section for the first research question. First, the results of analysis for the attitudes towards Iran's economy in each nation's editorials are presented.

Table 1.

Frequency Results for Attitude towards Iran's Economy

			attitude				Total
			hegemony	ideology	interest	argumentation	
Editorial	New York Times	Count	241	65	75	103	484
		% within editorial	49.8%	13.4%	15.5%	21.3%	100.0%
		% within attitude	43.8%	18.2%	20.9%	23.7%	28.5%
		% of Total	14.2%	3.8%	4.4%	6.1%	28.5%
	Tehran Times	Count	103	70	129	142	444
		% within editorial	23.2%	15.8%	29.1%	32.0%	100.0%
		% within attitude	18.7%	19.6%	36.0%	32.7%	26.1%
		% of Total	6.1%	4.1%	7.6%	8.4%	26.1%
	China Daily	Count	113	103	69	79	364
		% within editorial	31.0%	28.3%	19.0%	21.7%	100.0%
		% within attitude	20.5%	28.8%	19.3%	18.2%	21.4%
		% of Total	6.6%	6.1%	4.1%	4.6%	21.4%
	Moscow Times	Count	93	120	85	110	408
		% within editorial	22.8%	29.4%	20.8%	27.0%	100.0%
		% within attitude	16.9%	33.5%	23.7%	25.3%	24.0%
		% of Total	5.5%	7.1%	5.0%	6.5%	24.0%
Total		Count	550	358	358	434	1700
		% within editorial	32.4%	21.1%	21.1%	25.5%	100.0%
		% within attitude	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	32.4%	21.1%	21.1%	25.5%	100.0%

As Table 1 exhibits, the frequency results refer to the hegemonic representation of American texts (49.8%) compared to Iranian (23.2%), Chinese (31.0%) and Russian (22.8%) editorials. The percentages for the ideology category were higher for Russian (29.4%) and Chinese (28.3%) groups were higher compared to other groups. Interest and argumentation were both higher in Iranian (29.1%, 32.0%) and Russian (20.8%, 27.0%) newspapers. The results of Chi-square test are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.
Chi-Square Test for Attitude towards Iran's Economy

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.450E2[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	140.387	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	15.950	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1700		

The results of Chi-square test, $\chi(9) = 1.45$, *p* = .000, clearly show that there is a statistically significant association between attitude toward Iran's economy and nationality; that is, different nationality editorials have distinct attitudes as also reflected in Table 1 in terms of percentages. Furthermore, Cramer's V (.16) value indicates a weak strength of association between the variables.
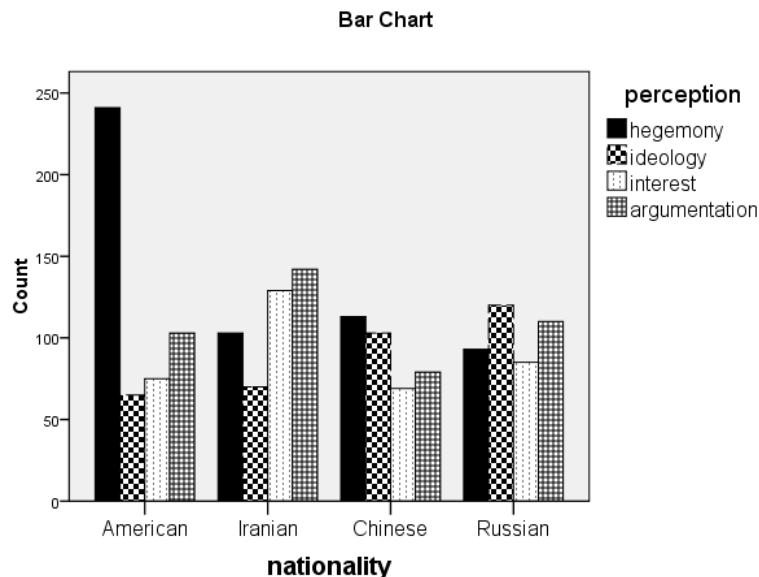
Figure 1. Attitude towards Iran's economy by different editorials

In order to provide an answer to the second research question, the following Chi-square analysis were carried out illuminating the results of lexical categories employed by different newspapers.

Table 3.
Percentage Results for Lexical Use

			Lexical						Total
			classifica tion	connota tion	metap hor	presuppos ition	modal ity	regis ter	
Editori als	New York Times	Count	102	123	77	87	51	58	498
		% withi n editor ial	20.5%	24.7%	15.5%	17.5%	10.2%	11.6 %	100. 0%
		% withi n lexica l	20.4%	28.6%	19.9%	14.7%	13.9%	23.7 %	19.8 %
		% of Total	4.0%	4.9%	3.1%	3.5%	2.0%	2.3%	19.8 %
	Tehra	Count	136	106	128	206	44	32	652

n Times	% within editorial	20.9%	16.3%	19.6%	31.6%	6.7%	4.9%	100.0%
	% within lexical	27.2%	24.7%	33.1%	34.9%	12.0%	13.1%	25.9%
	% of Total	5.4%	4.2%	5.1%	8.2%	1.7%	1.3%	25.9%
China Daily	Count	130	116	96	195	122	68	727
	% within editorial	17.9%	16.0%	13.2%	26.8%	16.8%	9.4%	100.0%
	% within lexical	26.0%	27.0%	24.8%	33.0%	33.2%	27.8%	28.8%
	% of Total	5.2%	4.6%	3.8%	7.7%	4.8%	2.7%	28.8%
Moscow Times	Count	132	85	86	103	150	87	643
	% within editorial	20.5%	13.2%	13.4%	16.0%	23.3%	13.5%	100.0%
	% within lexical	26.4%	19.8%	22.2%	17.4%	40.9%	35.5%	25.5%
	% of Total	5.2%	3.4%	3.4%	4.1%	6.0%	3.5%	25.5%
Total	Count	500	430	387	591	367	245	2520
	% within editorial	19.8%	17.1%	15.4%	23.5%	14.6%	9.7%	100.0%
	% withi	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

n lexical							
% of Total	19.8%	17.1%	15.4%	23.5%	14.6%	9.7%	100.0%

The results of percentages indicate the nations made use of the classification category in similar rates of 17.0% to at most 20.0%. As the above table shows, the American group manifests a way far higher percentage (24.7%) for the use of connotation compared to Iranian (16.3%), Chinese (16.0%) and Russian (13.2%) counterparts. The percentage results for metaphor indicate a similar percentage of around 15.0% for all the groups. The percentages for presupposition refer to a high rate for Iranian (31.6%) and Chinese (26.8%) groups in comparison to the American (17.5%) and Russian (16.0%) editorials. The results also show the superiority of Russia (23.3%) and China (16.8%) to other groups. Finally, for register analysis, American (11.6%) and Russian (13.5%) groups gain the highest percentage among others.

The results of Chi-square test are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Chi-Square Test for Lexical Use

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.789E2[a]	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	182.109	15	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	31.053	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	2520		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 48.42.

The results of Chi-square test, $\chi(15) = 1.78$, $p = .000$, clearly show that there is a statistically significant association between lexical use and editorials; that is, different nationality editorials have applied the lexical choices in different rates in their editorials. This result is also reflected in Table 3 in terms of percentages. Furthermore, Cramer's V (.15) value indicates a weak strength of association between the variables.
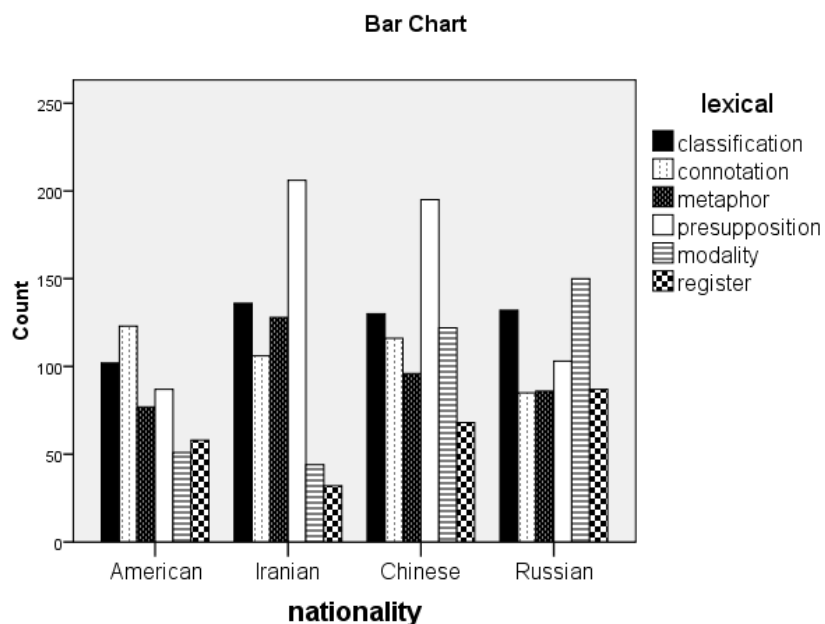
Figure 2. Lexical use by different editorials

In order to compare the use of syntactic choices in different editorials, a Chi-square test was run. Table 5 below shows the results of the percentage analysis for the syntactic category.

Table 5.
Percentage Results for Syntactic Use

			syntax							Total
			transitivity	deletion	topicalization	register	presupposition	insinuation	intertextuality	
Editorials	New York Times	Count	56	77	43	31	97	87	127	518
		% within editorial	10.8%	14.9%	8.3%	6.0%	18.7%	16.8%	24.5%	100.0%
		% within syntax	17.5%	19.6%	15.9%	13.4%	24.0%	27.7%	28.6%	21.8%
		% of Total	2.4%	3.2%	1.8%	1.3%	4.1%	3.7%	5.3%	21.8%
	Tehran Times	Count	52	103	22	47	116	92	86	518
		% within editorial	10.0%	19.9%	4.2%	9.1%	22.4%	17.8%	16.6%	100.0%
		% within syntax	16.2%	26.2%	8.1%	20.3%	28.7%	29.3%	19.4%	21.8%
		% of	2.2	4.3%	.9%	2.0	4.9%	3.9%	3.6%	21.8

	Total	%			%				%
China Daily	Count	81	113	91	69	79	79	117	629
	% within editorial	12.9%	18.0%	14.5%	11.0%	12.6%	12.6%	18.6%	100.0%
	% within syntax	25.3%	28.8%	33.7%	29.7%	19.6%	25.2%	26.4%	26.5%
	% of Total	3.4%	4.8%	3.8%	2.9%	3.3%	3.3%	4.9%	26.5%
Moscow Times	Count	131	100	114	85	112	56	114	712
	% within editorial	18.4%	14.0%	16.0%	11.9%	15.7%	7.9%	16.0%	100.0%
	% within syntax	40.9%	25.4%	42.2%	36.6%	27.7%	17.8%	25.7%	30.0%
	% of Total	5.5%	4.2%	4.8%	3.6%	4.7%	2.4%	4.8%	30.0%
Total	Count	320	393	270	232	404	314	444	2377
	% within editorial	13.5%	16.5%	11.4%	9.8%	17.0%	13.2%	18.7%	100.0%
	% within syntax	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	13.5%	16.5%	11.4%	9.8%	17.0%	13.2%	18.7%	100.0%

The results revealed a high amount of transitivity applied by Russian editorials (18.4%) compared to others with a percentage of 10.0%. The percentages for the deletion category pinpoint a similar rate of use by American (14.9%), Iranian (19.9%), Chinese (18.0%) and Russian (14.0%) editorials. The results for topicalization indicate a higher percentage of use by Chinese (14.5%) and Russian (16.0%) groups in comparison to the American group (8.3%) and Iranian (4.2%) group. The results for register percentages show the superiority of Russia (11.9%) and China (11.0%) to other groups. Presupposition has a higher percentage of use in Iranian (22.4%) editorials whereas insinuation and textuality have a similar rate of use among different nation editorials. The results of Chi-square test are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.
Chi-square Results for Syntactic Use

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.464E2[a]	18	.000
Likelihood Ratio	153.109	18	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	44.911	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	2377		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 50.56.

The results of Chi-square test, $\chi(18) = 1.46$, $p = .000$, clearly show that there is a statistically significant association between syntactic choices and nationality; that is, different nationality editorials have distinct uses of syntactic choices as reflected in Table 5 in terms of percentages. Furthermore, Cramer's V (.14) value indicates a weak strength of association between the variables. Results are exhibited in Figure 3 below.
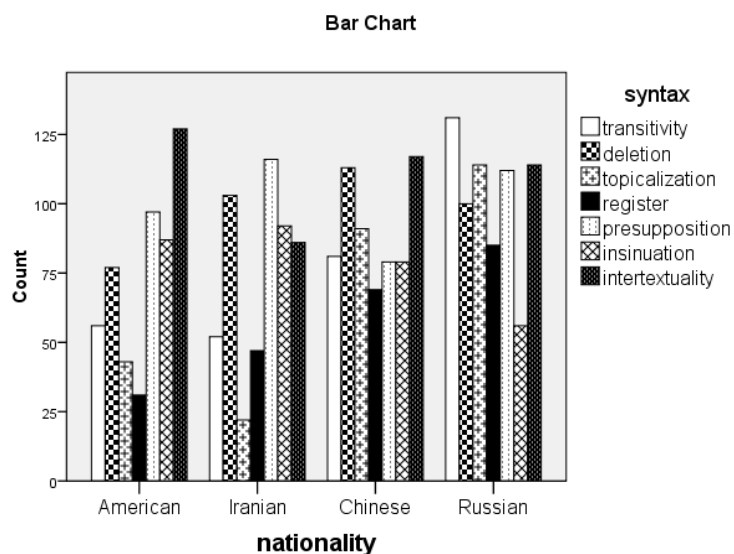

Figure 3. Syntactic use by different editorials

5. Discussion

The present study adopted Fairclough's (1989) CDA model as a general category for the identification of specific instances of structural classes. Put differently, the selection of 'lexical choice', 'syntactic structure', and 'attitude' were based on Fairclough's ideas; whereas, each specific sub-categories within these general categories were based on Huckin's (2002) and Long et al's (2005) suggestions. A collection of newspaper editorials were extracted from The New York Times, China Daily, Moscow Times and Tehran Times. The results of analysis for the first research question demonstrated the disparities between various newspapers in identifying the way the economic growth of Iran after the nuclear deal was reflected. The results referred to the 'ideology' and 'argumentation' distinctionsin which the formerreflected a powerful image by Russia and China of Iranian economic development and for the latter Iran and Russia established a greater degree of convincing stance towards the growth of the trades. It needs to be highlighted that the other classes of reflection were found non-significant among the different editorialcompositions.

The second research question attempted to investigate the differences with regard to the lexical choices. The results of statistical analysis pointed to significant main effects for 'connotation', 'presupposition', 'modality', and 'register'. For the 'connotation' aspect, results showed a significantly higher percentage for American discourse which indicates that these newspapers tended to play with words and connote to words having a meaning beyond

their realistic significance. For 'presupposition', 'modality' and 'register', the Iranian, Chinese and Russian newspapers gained higher percentage, highlighting the reality of conditions, putting forward positive attitudes and connecting the events to the context. These findings obviously refer to the differences among the political discourse of these newspapers.

The third research question intended to examine the written discourse samples with respect to the use of syntactic categories. The results of analysis revealed significant differences for 'topicalization', 'register', and 'presupposition'. For the 'topicalization' the Chinese and Russian texts placed more emphasis at the beginning of the sentences compared to American and Iranian journalists. This implies the clarity of discourse with respect to the theme of the texts in Russian and Chinese newspapers compared to the other two. Syntactic 'register' and 'presupposition' were used frequently by Russian and Chinese journalists.

The scholarly literature in the fields of discourse analysis, journalism studies and communication shows that while politicians are the primary definers of information about political issues, it is the news media who are the primary definers of political information for the wider non-expert social world (Joye, 2010; Stamou, 2001; Sriwimon&Zilli, 2017; Teo, 2001). This research therefore focused on the transfer of information between politicians and the news media. The scholarly literature examining the sources of political information which appears in the popular media has found that while people get most of their information about politics from television, firstly, and then from the Internet, most of the original sources of information for other popular media remain the news media and, usually, the 'prestige-press' 'quality' print news media. Therefore, the reflection of information without having particular unrealistic attitudes towards the topics need to be ensured in these media as trustable sources for non-experts. The analysis of linguisticand ideological features of these four newspapers indicated the extremeness of information in *The New York Times*. In other words, the politically-motivated 'skeptical' perspective of *The New York Times* is in contrary with the news ethics of balance and there is the value assigned to conflict to gain equal or greater news media attention.

The literature highly recommends that journalists are demanded to present information which attracts their audiences' attention; otherwise, their news product would be far from fame and would have a slim chance of popularity in the marketplace (Brossard & Shanahan, 2006; Suleski& Ibaraki, 2009). The literature shows that audiences actively engage with media texts, but only if their attention is engaged in the first place. It also shows that familiarity and relevance attract their attention. Consequently, when information may directly affect the social world, journalists attempt to establish its relevance to their audiences by establishing connections between developments in the real world and the lived world of their non-expert audiences. Information is selected according to its news values, which detail reasons why audiences might pay attention to that information in the first place.

6. Conclusion

This research adds to the existing literature which examines how different prestigious news papers dealt with political information about Iran's post-nuclear deal economic developments. The disparity between political and real world framings of the issue identified in this research arose in part from a conflict between realistic values of careful scrutiny of political processes and journalistic values of selecting new information which preferably relates to the political and the conflictual matters and themes.

Furthermore, since news media realizes the writers asauthorities in political and economic issues, they presume that they have the right and responsibility to deliver information to their readerson different discursive developments in these realms. When applied to the economic developments taking place in Iran after the negotiations with 5+1, this ideologydiverted journalistic adoption of specialized information about the evident happeningin the real world. Analysis of the information streammakes it clear that commentators, journalists and policy makers all possessdistinctiveperspectives with respect to their discourse production: commentators are not interested ingetting involved with non-experts' first-hand sources of information; policy makers turn their attentionto international agreementtalksleaving the real world needs and realization of their own individuals behind; and journalists overlookhazards to their audiences. Kitzinger's (1999) conclusion that news presenterswere inclined towards the presentation of information relevant to the domesticcircumstances or contexts, integrated with the fondness for immediacy, is advocated by the present study. This type of information is perceived by news presentersas a reflection of 'sensational' information.

Political discourse is one of the few social sciences that as of yet has attracted few research attempts targeting the study of text and talk. It is suggested that writing teachers and textbook developers need to take into account the useof discourse approaches in political discourse, making a distinction between political discourse and discourse in other societal domains (such as education, business, etc), enabling the readers and discourse analysts to differentiate the sub-genres of political text and talk.

Consequently, the results of this study have implication regarding the significant role of close and critical examination of textual details. Information selection is determined mostly by the individual's writing the text of any news story based on the textual appeals to discourses assumed to be circulating in the worlds of that writer's imagined audiences. One technique for journalists and writers attempting to report on a complex issue is to take a 'mosaic' approach, writing stories on a variety of aspects of the issue, and reporting them over a period of days, weeks or even years.

In an attempt to bring about modifications for students and teachers, however, educators need to preliminary consider current practices, assumptions, and curriculum choices; admitting that an individual's accepted ways of perceiving and functioning within institutional and global contexts might demand rethinking and re-evaluation (Hooks, 1994). This type of teacher self-reflection includes the critical examination of how language, ideology, and power are constructed in texts.

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