

【論文】

Putin's War of Words: A Systemic Linguistic Analysis

Robert J. Ashcroft

東海大学国際文化学部

紀要 第15号 2022年

【論文】

Putin's War of Words: A Systemic Linguistic Analysis

プーチンの筆戦：体系的言語分析

Robert J. Ashcroft*

アシュクロフト ロバート ジョン

Abstract

The author applies systemic linguistic analysis to two UK online news reports, one from The Sun, and one from The Guardian. Both articles describe the UK government's diplomatic response to Moscow's failure to extradite a Russian national to face trial for a murder committed in London in 2007. The texts show both similarities and differences in meta-functional meanings. Although many of the material *Processes* in the texts are related in a general sense, The Sun tends to use words and phrases likely to predispose the reader to a UK-sympathetic view of events through its use of more emotive and polarizing language. In contrast, the article by The Guardian is more neutral. In addition, The Guardian text contains more objective information, whereas The Sun omits details in its effort to create an emotional impact. The Sun also uses present-finite structures to make the text more exciting and sensational. The Guardian in contrast, projects a greater sense of objectivity and detachment. Moreover, while The Sun thematizes personalities, The Guardian thematizes institutions, making The Sun report sound more confrontational, with The Guardian piece striking a more measured and balanced tone. The analysis reveals how these meta-functional differences in meaning create distinct differences in the communicative functionality and styles of the two articles.

Key Words: Systemic Linguistic Analysis; News Journalism; The UK; Russia

*国際コミュニケーション学科

要旨

本研究では、The Sun と The Guardian という英国の2つのニュースレポートについて体系的言語分析を行った。いずれの記事も、2007年にロンドンで起きた殺人事件の裁判にかけられているロシア国籍の被疑者を引き渡すことに、モスクワが失敗したことに対する英国政府の外交的対応に関わっている。記事で用いられているテキストには、メタ機能的な意味において、類似点と相違点がある。両者のテキストで用いられている物質的過程 (Process) の多くは一般的意味において関連付けられているが、The Sunは、事件について読者が英国に同情的になるような語やフレーズを使用している傾向がある。特に The Sunは、より感情に訴える偏向的なことばを使用している。対して、The Guardian による記事は、より中立である。加えて、The Guardianのテキストにはより客観的な情報があり、一方で、The Sunは感情的なインパクトを与えるために詳細を省略している。The Sunはまた、現在時制の定型 (finite) 構文を使用し、テキストをより刺激的でセンセーショナルなものにしている。逆にThe Guardianは、より客観的で淡々としたトーンで伝えている。さらに、The Sunが人を主題化している一方で、The Guardianは機関を主題化している。そのため、The Sunのレポートはより対立的なものとなり、The Guardianのレポートはより慎重でバランスのとれたトーンとなっている。このような意味上のメタ機能的な相違は、2つの記事のコミュニケーション上の機能とスタイルにおいて、はっきりと異なる点を生み出している。

キーワード：体系的言語分析、ニュース記事、英国、ロシア

1. INTRODUCTION

This research examines two news articles, one from The Sun, and one from The Guardian online services. The Sun is a popular British tabloid newspaper associated with sensationalism and the dramatization of events, whereas The Guardian represents the more impartial and objective reporting found in UK broadsheet newspapers. Both articles relate the expulsion of four Russian officials from London in the wake of Moscow's refusal to extradite a Russian businessman to face charges of murder in England in 2007. The principles of systemic linguistic analysis are applied to compare the style and communicative functionality of the two news reports. The two texts belong to the same register: They have similar *Tenor, Field, and Mode*; and are therefore expected to display similar lexico-grammatical patterning. However, due to the very different reporting styles associated with the two publishers, the analysis of the experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings of each text and their subsequent comparison reveals pronounced differences reflecting subtle variations in each news article's tone and approach. The following section deals with the experiential meanings of the texts.

2. EXPERIENTIAL MEANING

Experiential meaning is that which represents our physical world. It is expressed through the interaction of what systemics labels as *Participants*, *Processes* and *Circumstance*. These three elements represent the things, events, and contexts of our surroundings respectively. *Participants* are typically formed from nominal groups and are perceived as having a more permanent existence in the world. However, *Processes*, represented by verbal groups, are more short-term by comparison (White, 2000). *Circumstances* serve to illuminate the *Process* in some way and are found in text as a prepositional phrase, adverbial group or nominal group (Butt et al., 2003), thereby providing a context in which *Participants* and *Processes* can interact.

Field is defined as the subject matter and the long and short-term goals of the text (Butt et al., 2003). The *Field* of the texts chosen for analysis in this study are the same, namely the expulsion of four Russian officials from London and the resultant increase in diplomatic tension between Russia and the UK, with the goals of both texts being to inform and perhaps influence the reader. The *Field* and experiential meanings within a text interact and vary with each other (White, 2000) and therefore the texts will share many of the same experiential meanings. In the following sections the author examines how the two reporters have chosen to represent the same events using experiential meanings and discusses the implications of those choices.

2.1 Material Processes

Many of the *Processes* in the texts are of low lexical value, being abstract or metaphorical, with most meaning to be found in the *Goal* of the *Processes*. For example:

Table 1: Cl. C. 13 cl.3: The Sun - Clause Complex / cl. - Clause

Process	Actor	Potential Actor	Goal	Circumstance Type
Impose			restrictions [[that would affect the investment climate]]	

Table 2: Cl. C. 11 cl.2: The Guardian - Clause Complex / cl. - Clause

Process	Actor	Potential Actor	Goal	Circumstance Type
Make	(political commentators)		an "adequate response" [[^WHICH IS widely expected to include the tit-for-tat expulsion of British diplomats]]	Time

(NB: Cl. C. = Clause Complex / cl. = Clause)

However, there are many instances of lexical verbs in the texts and to aid the analysis the author

grouped semantically related *material Processes* together under the following headings: Expulsion; Search, extradition, and justice; Murder; Stopping; and Retaliation. These are dealt with in turn in the following sections.

2.1.1 *Expulsion*

Both texts contain *material Processes* relating to expulsion. The Sun article contains only one such *Process* and uses a passive structure:

Table 3: Cl. C. 3 cl.1: The Sun - Independent Clause

The officials	were booted out	over Moscow's refusal to allow the extradition of a spy suspected of killing Alexander Litvinenko.
Goal	Process: Material	Circumstances: Cause

The Guardian also contains a passive construction about the Russian diplomats' expulsion:

Table 4: Cl. C. 2 cl.2: The Guardian - Dependent Clause

After	four agents	^ WERE thrown out over	Litvinenko case
	Goal	Process: Material	Circumstances: Cause

Both verbs have an informal tone, particularly The Sun's *boot out* which additionally connotes forcefulness and moreover seems to imply that the action was justified because of wrongdoing. This is indicative of sympathy with British institutions and lack of impartiality often associated with The Sun. The use of passive in these two instances has the resultant effect that the *Actor*, in each case the British Government, is omitted from the clause. In doing so, the writer has lessened the impact of the Government's involvement in the process of expulsion. However, The Guardian relates the expulsion in its headline and later in a dependent non-finite clause. These two instances take an active structure, in the second, the *Actor* is implicit from the preceding clause:

Table 5: Cl. C. 1 cl.2 The Guardian - Dependent Clause

As	UK	Expels	Spies
	Actor	Process: Material	Goal

Table 6: Cl. C. 3 cl.2 The Guardian - Dependent Clause

After	Expelling	four Russian intelligence officers	in protest at the Kremlin's refusal to hand over the prime suspect in the polonium-210 poisoning affair
	Process: Material	Goal	Circumstances: Cause

The Guardian has used an active structure in both cases and has thereby directly implicated Britain in the process of expulsion. This reflects the newspaper's more impartial view and even-handedness of reporting.

2.1.2 *Search, Extradition and Justice*

Due to the subject matter of the texts, some of the *material Processes* fall into the loosely related semantic category of searching, extradition and facing justice. The Sun text contains four such *Processes*, whereas The Guardian has only one. It is significant that The Sun again chooses a passive when relating the search for the suspected murderer, thus omitting the potential *Actor*, namely the UK authorities. This choice underplays British active involvement and so reinforces the notion that Britain is the more innocent party, falling foul of Russian misdeeds. Also, in expressing the extradition process, The Guardian's *refuse to extradite* (Cl. C. 18 cl.1) contrasts with The Sun's *refuse to hand over* (Cl. C. 5 cl.1). Although both *Processes* carry similar semantic properties, *extradite* undoubtedly has a more neutral tone. As a result, the Goal of this Process might expect to be treated more fairly. In contrast, in The Sun, *hand over* carries with it connotations of presumed guilt and that therefore the Russians are protecting a known criminal. This choice reflects The Sun's preference for dramatic reporting and polarization of sentiment.

2.1.3 *Murder*

Poisoning only occurs as a *Process* once. It is found in The Sun article as an agentless passive (Cl. C. 4 cl.2), probably expressed as such because the identity of the *Actor* is still uncertain. The *material Process*, *kill*, features in The Sun text (Cl. C. 3 cl.1), but is relegated to an embedded clause in the nominal group of the *Circumstance* of cause which has *boot out* as the *Process*, reflecting the main thrust of the article which is the expulsion of the agents from London rather than the murder itself.

2.1.4 *Stopping*

Both articles mention additional retaliatory measures imposed by London. The Sun uses the *Process* *suspend* whereas The Guardian chooses *cease* in indirect reported speech. The former sounds more temporary than the latter which has connotations of finality. The Sun uses a passive structure whereas The Guardian clause is active, the *Actor* being the pronoun *it* recoverable from the previous projecting clause as *the Foreign Office*. Once again, The Sun article under-emphasizes the UK authorities' role in matters of retaliation. The Goals of each clause are also significant. While The Sun simply uses *visa arrangements*, The Guardian has *cooperation* as the head noun which is then qualified with various prepositional phrases and embedded clauses. This post-modification serves to provide a good deal of information about the nature and scope of the *Process*. This in turn reflects the tendency of The Guardian to report informatively whereas The Sun has glossed over the details of the issue, as seen below.

Table 7: Cl. C. 8 cl.1 The Sun - Independent Clause

Visa arrangements	were suspended
Goal	Process: Material

Table 8: Cl. C. 4 cl.2 The Guardian - Dependent Clause Projected from Cl. C. 4 cl.1

It	was ceasing	cooperation [with Moscow on a range of issues [[starting with the imposition [of restrictions on visas [[issued to Russian officials [[seeking to visit the UK]]]]]]]
Actor	Process: Material	Goal

2. 1. 5 *Retaliation*

Although the subject of both articles is about retaliation by Britain, it is interesting that only one *Process* of retaliation can be found in either of the texts (Cl. C. 11 cl.2) in The Sun. This is indicative of sympathy with British interests since both articles are written from a UK standpoint. More noticeable is that the said *Process* is found in a clause with the Kremlin as the *Actor* and British business interests as the *Goal*. This transformation from retaliator to victim of retaliation is consistent with The Sun's use of experiential meanings throughout the text and indicates strong sympathy with the British position.

Table 8: Cl. C. 11 cl.2 The Sun - Dependent Clause

whether	the Kremlin	<u>might</u>	also	<u>hit back</u>	at British business interests	in Russia.
	Actor				Goal	Circumstance: Location
		Process: Material				

2. 2 *Mental Processes*

Mental Processes are expressed using verbs of affection, cognition, volition, and perception. They always require an object because there is always someone who senses (*Senser*) and something that is sensed (*Phenomenon*). The following chart shows a summary of *Mental Processes* arranged by Article and *Senser*:

Table 9: Summary of *Mental Processes*

The Sun		The Guardian	
Mental Process	Phenomenon	Mental Process	Phenomenon
Senser: UK Government			
let		want	a constructive relationship
		believe	
		hope	
		need	an appropriate response
Senser: Russian Government			
think			
make sense	it		
see	any reason to review our approach to foreign investments		

As can be seen, both news stories relate *mental Processes* with the UK government as the *Senser*. Both word choice and the lack of Russian *Sensors* in The Guardian text are worthy of note. Regarding word choice, *expect* and *fear* seem somewhat more semantically powerful than The Guardian's *want believe hope* and *need* which seem to signal a righteous tone, one of the *Senser* taking the moral high ground. The Sun's word choice illustrates a more dramatic style of reporting. Also worthy of note, there are no Russian *Sensors* of *mental Processes* in The Guardian text, while there are three in The Sun article. Again, in line with The Sun's dramatic reporting style, relating Russian sentiments through the *mental Processes* personifies the Russian position and therefore sets up a more confrontational situation.

2.3 Verbal Processes

Because of the political subject matter, most *Processes* in the texts are *verbal Processes*. Indeed, sixteen and fourteen clauses with *verbal Processes* can be found in The Guardian and The Sun texts respectively. In the following table, relatively neutral *verbal Processes* (*promise to respond, announce, tell, say, describe, make, and add*) have been excluded in order to focus on the reports' use of the more connotational *verbal Processes*. In addition, *blame* has been omitted because it occurs in a directly quoted dependent clause expressing a hypothetical situation (The Sun Cl. C. 21 cl.3)

Table 10: Summary of Connotational Verbal Processes

	Blast	threaten	Vow	warn	denounce	accuse	
The Sun							Total
Sayer: Russia	1	1					2
Sayer: UK	1						1
The Guardian							Total
	Blast	threaten	Vow	warn	denounce	accuse	
Sayer: Russia			2	1	1	1	5
Sayer: UK							0

As can be seen, despite the high number of *verbal Processes* in each text, there is only one instance of a connotational *verbal Process* used to report the UK government's sentiment. The other seven occurrences are used to report what Russian authorities said. This in turn depicts Russian officials in a somewhat hysterical light, perhaps allowing emotions to influence their actions in this matter. In contrast, the neutral *verbal Processes* used to relate what the British authorities have to say gives the reader an impression of levelheaded control and perhaps again, of occupying the moral high ground. Here then, both texts appear to be rather biased in their reporting. The Guardian in particular uses five highly connotational reporting verbs for Russian statements, but none for British. As already noted, The Sun seems to emphasize the confrontational nature of the situation. This is also seen in the following two clauses using *blast as the Process*.

Table 11: Cl. C. 1 cl.1 The Sun - Independent Clause

Brown	blasts	President Putin
Sayer	Process:	verbal Receiver

Table 12: Cl. C. 21 cl.1 The Sun - Independent Clause

Mr. Lugovoy who denies the murder	blasted	Mr. Miliband
Sayer	Process:	verbal Receiver

Blast is semantically loaded with connotations of threat or criticism. The first clause, coming at the beginning of the text, immediately sets up a confrontation between the British and Russian governments. Indeed, the confrontation is further dramatized by the personalization of the disagreeing parties, namely Gordon Brown as the *Sayer* and Vladimir Putin as the Receiver. The confrontational theme is then reinforced at the end of the article, this time it is Russia's turn to *blast* the UK.

3. INTERPERSONAL MEANING

As well as representing reality, texts also function as a way of establishing personal relationships

by socially positioning the speaker and listener. For example, when a speaker makes a statement, certain assumptions are made about the speaker / listener relationship. For instance, that the information is of interest to the listener and that the listener does not already have the information. Language is used to give or ask for either information or goods / services (Thompson 2004). These four speech roles are realized by statements, questions, offers, and commands and are represented graphically in the following table:

Table 13: The Four Categories of Interpersonal Meaning

	Information	Goods/services
Supply	Statement	Offer
Demand	Question	Command

3.1 Mood Blocks

Language is used interpersonally to agree / argue, to demand / comply, to negotiate, and numerous other interactions. The arguability of a clause is found in the Mood block, which is composed of the *Subject*, the *Finite*, and an element of polarity (White 2000). The *Finite* can indicate the location in time or pass judgment using modality, for example on the probability of the clause. The proposition of a clause is open to acceptance or rejection by the listener in terms of the location of the event in time, the polarity of the event (either positive or negative) and whether the clause is correct, all elements of which are in the *Mood Block* (Thompson 2004). The two texts in this study consist of statements since the purpose of news reporting text is to impart information. Indeed, all the *Finite* clauses in the two texts use the declarative *Mood*, usually made up of Subject and *Finite*, followed by the Residue. However, the analysis of interpersonal structures reveals some noteworthy differences of interpersonal meanings between the two texts, revealing a different reader / writer relationship. Naturally, many of the *Finites* in the texts indicate that events took place in the past, as in the following example from The Guardian:

Table 14: Cl. C. 12 cl.1 The Guardian - Independent Clause

The Russian foreign ministry	Denounced		the British move	as "immoral and provocative"
Subject	Finite: past+	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
Mood Block		Residue		

However, some clauses contain *Mood Blocks* with present, future, or modal *Finites*. For example, in The Sun headline, the *Finite* present is used despite the *Process* in question undoubtedly occurring in the past. This technique is frequently employed in news headlines as it conveys an up-to-date feel to the message.

Table 15: Cl. C. 1 cl.1 The Sun - Independent Clause

Brown	blasts		President Putin
Subject	Finite: present+	Predicator	Complement
Mood Block		Residue	

Present *Finite* is also be observed in the second clause of the Guardian headline:

Table 16: Cl. C. 1 cl.2 The Guardian - Dependent Clause

As	UK	expels	spies	
	Subject	Finite: present+	Predicator	Complement
	Mood Block		Residue	

And again, in the second clause complex of The Guardian text:

Table 17: Cl. C. 2 cl.1 The Guardian - Independent Clause

Moscow	vows		retaliation
Subject	Finite: present+	Predicator	Complement
Mood Block		Residue	

There is a significant difference in the use of present *Finites* between the two texts. Excluding the two headlines and *Mood Blocks* found in directly reported speech, The Guardian text contains only three other clauses with present *Finites*. In contrast, The Sun's text uses present *Finites* in nine other clauses highlighting the ongoing nature of events and the fact that this story appears set to continue to develop. By connecting *Processes* to the present, the current situation is open to change in the future. The reader is thereby brought closer to events. This is demonstrated in the following example:

Table 18: Cl. C. 5 cl.1 The Sun - Independent Clause

but	Russian president Putin	refuses to hand over		Lugovoy [[like Litvinenko, an ex-KGB agent]]	to face trial	here.
	Subject	Finite: present+	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct	Adjunct
	Mood Block		Residue			

This contrasts sharply with The Guardian text, where the equivalent information is relegated to an *Adjunct* in a non-finite dependent clause (Cl. C. 3 cl.2). In The Sun text, a future *Finite* is used to relate possible future events (Cl. C. 10 cl.2), and in the following example, a modal *Finite* to speculate what

might happen next.

Table 19: Cl. C. 11 cl.2: The Guardian - Dependent Clause

whether	the Kremlin	might	Also	hit back	at British business interests	in Russia
	Subject	Finite: Modal+		Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
	Mood Block		Residue			

No such instances are to be found in The Guardian text. Indeed, by using mainly past *Finites* to report events, The Guardian maintains distance between the reader and the story, reflecting The Guardian's more objective approach. The Sun, however, predictably prefers a more dramatic tone, often reporting events in the present. The Sun and The Guardian also use present *Finites* to draw attention to the fact that the details of events are of only secondary importance to the state of diplomatic relations between Russia and Britain. In the following two examples from each text, the conflated present *Finite* indicates a situation of permanence, and therefore a cause for concern.

Cl. C. 18 cl.2 The Sun - Independent clause

and	it	marks		the biggest chill in relations since the end of the Cold War.
	Subject	Finite: present +	Predicator	Complement
	Mood block		Residue	

Table 19: Cl. C. 1 cl.1 The Guardian - Independent Clause

Cold War diplomacy	is		back.
Subject	Finite: present +	Predicator	Complement
Mood block		Residue	

3.2 Appraisal

Appraisal is an important interpersonal tool for writers. Butt et al. (2203) state that, "The resource of Appraisal is one of the ways speakers position their audience" whereby the "choice of lexico-grammatical patterns influences the audience's personal reaction to the meaning in a text." (2003:120). Lexical choices can be used to impose the writer's view on the reader. A significant occurrence of appraisal is to be found in Cl. C. 2 cl. 1 of The Sun text. Here the writer chooses the phrasal verb *stand up to* and thus indicates that Gordon Brown is right to defend himself. The choice of word also casts Vladimir Putin as a *bully* who has perhaps been pushing Britain around for too long and needs to be put in his place. The clause comes at the beginning of the text, setting up the confrontational tone which is

then maintained throughout.

Table 20: Cl. C. 2 cl.1: The Sun - Independent Clause

Furious Gordon Brown	last night	stood up		to Vladimir Putin
Subject	Adjunct	Finite: past +	Predicator	Compliment
Mood	Residue	Block	Residue	

There is no comparable instance to be found in The Guardian text, giving further support to the conclusion of greater impartiality in The Guardian article.

4. TEXTUAL MEANING

Textual meanings are used to ensure a text is both coherent and cohesive. In other words, what is currently being said can somehow be related to what has come before and what is yet to follow (White, 2000). Using certain linguistic resources, a writer can indicate what the text is about and what will be the point of departure. In other words, textual meaning presents to the reader information as either given or newsworthy. Textual meanings are conveyed by the Theme. The Theme is found at the beginning of a clause. The Theme includes everything in the clause up to and including the first experiential element, be it *Participant*, *Process* or *Circumstance*. The first experiential element is known as the *Topical Theme*. Any interpersonal elements which come before the topical theme are called the *Interpersonal Theme* (erg. modal Adjuncts), and any textual element is labeled the *Textual Theme* (erg. Conjunctions). *Simple Themes* consist of only a *Topical Theme*, whereas *Complex Themes* can contain *Textual* and/or *Interpersonal Theme* elements (White, 2000). Just as the *Theme* of a clause can be found by looking at its *Theme*, the *Theme* of a paragraph can be gleaned from the first clause or clause complex of that paragraph. Moreover, the *Theme* for a whole text can be found in the first paragraph which introduces the main thrust of what is to follow (Butt et al., 2003). The following two tables show a Thematic analysis for the first sentence of the first paragraphs of both articles.

Table 21: Cl. C. 3 cl.1: The Guardian - Independent Clause

The British Government	was	last night	bracing	itself	for an inevitable diplomatic backlash.
Topical	Rheme				
Theme					

Table 22: Cl. C. 2 cl.1: The Sun - Independent Clause

FURIOUS Gordon Brown	last night	stood up	to Vladimir Putin.
Topical	Rheme		
Theme			

Although the Themes at the beginning of the first paragraphs are somewhat similar, it is significant that The Sun's Theme is personified (*Gordon Brown*). This enables the head noun to be pre-modified using an adjective denoting emotion (*furious*). In contrast, The Guardian has *the British Government* as the theme and the absence of any emotional connotations. *Furious Gordon Brown* sets the tone for The Sun's personalization and dramatization of the confrontation which runs throughout the article, whereas *The British Government* reflects The Guardian's less dramatic and more detached tone.

Both texts demonstrate cohesion by the interchange of *Theme* with *Rheme*. In The Sun text, for example, in Cl. C. 2 cl.1, President Putin is part of the *Rheme* but becomes the *Theme* in Cl. C. 5 cl.1. Also, in Cl. C. 2 cl.2, *four Russian Diplomats* are in the *Rheme* of the clause, but cross over into the *Theme* of Cl. C. 3 cl.1, the subsequent clause. The Guardian also maintains cohesion in the same way. For example, *expelled officers* appear in the *Rheme* of Cl. C. 1 cl.2, then later cross over as *Theme* in Cl. C. 2 cl.2, and again back into *Rheme* in Cl. C. 3 cl.2.

When the *Topical Theme* differs from the *Subject*, the Theme is said to be marked, in other words different from the normal pattern. The Guardian text contains two important examples:

Table 23: Cl. C. 4 cl.1: The Guardian - Independent Clause

In an attempt [[to underline the government's anger and alarm [over the murder [of Alexander Litvinenko]]]]	the Foreign Office	<u>Announced</u>
Topical	Rheme	
Marked Theme		

Here the *Circumstances* are the *Theme* of the clause rather than the *the Foreign Office Subject*. This emphasizes the reasons for the announcements and in doing so, goes some way towards justifying the government's actions.

Table 24: Cl. C. 7 cl.1: The Guardian - Independent Clause

Last night	Gordon Brown, arriving for talks in Germany,	<u>Said</u>
Topical	Rheme	
Marked Theme		

In this example the *Theme* is the time of Mr. Brown's comment rather than the Prime Minister

himself. This serves to place the emphasis on the reporting of facts rather than concentrating on the personalities involved, in contrast to The Sun's reporting style.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis reveals both similarities and differences in the metafunctional meanings in the two texts. Firstly, in terms of the experiential meanings, although many of the *material Processes* are related in a general sense, individual word choice is shown to lend subtle nuances of meaning to the *Processes* involved. The Sun chooses connotational words and phrases which predisposes the reader to a UK-sympathetic viewpoint. In addition, language is often used to polarize the UK government and Russian positions, thus creating a more distinct sense of right and wrong whereby the reader becomes more likely to take sides with the British. The Guardian, on the other hand, tries to remain relatively neutral in its wording, although undertones are occasionally perceptible. For example, both texts demonstrate a tendency to report Russian *verbal Processes* with verbs which reflect greater emotional involvement, which in turn could imply a lack of objectivity on the part of the Russian authorities. Also, The Guardian understates British involvement in events using the passive. In contrast to this, The Sun chooses active structures to emphasize confrontation. A confrontational stance is further achieved by The Sun's preference for the personification of *Participants*. Another important difference between the texts can be seen in terms of information content. The Guardian text is rich with details which are frequently inserted into the *Circumstance* function using head nouns with embedded clauses and other post-modifying mechanisms. In contrast, The Sun glosses over details in its aim for maximum impact. In terms of the interpersonal function, the declarative *Mood* is prevalent in both texts. However, The Sun has a much greater frequency of present *Finities* which gives the text a more exciting and sensational feel. The Guardian, however, has few such clauses and this projects a more objective, detached tone. Finally, on a Thematic note, The Sun tends to thematize personalities whereas The Guardian does so with institutions. Again, reinforcing the confrontational color running through The Sun report contrasting with the more even tone of The Guardian text.

Although the two texts share the same subject matter, belong to the same genre, and have the same *Field*, *Tenor* and *Mode*, this study shows that there are differences to be observed in the metafunctional meanings of each. These differences combine to create subtle and yet distinct differences in communicative functionality and style. As this analysis reveals, through their lexico-grammatical choices, writers can wield a powerful tool with which to influence the unsuspecting news website reader.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Butt, D., Fahey, R., Spinks, S., Feez, S. and Yallop, (2003). *Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide*. Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University.
- Harding, L. Cold war diplomacy is back as UK expels spies. *The Guardian Unlimited*, (17.07.07). *The Guardian*. Retrieved 18.07.07
< <http://www.guardian.co.uk/frontpage/story/0,,2128131,00.html>
- Thompson, G., (2004). *Introducing Functional Grammar*. London: Arnold.
- White, P.R.R., (2000). *Functional Grammar*. Centre for English Language Studies. The University of Birmingham.
- White, P.R.R., (2000). *Functional Grammar*. Centre for English Language Studies. The University of Birmingham.
- Unknown Author. Brown blasts President Putin. *The Sun Online*, (17.07.07). *The Sun*. Retrieved 18.07.07
< <http://www.thesun.co.uk/article/0,,2-2007320991,00.html>

APPENDIX A - "Brown Blasts President Putin" - The Sun Online

Brown Blasts President Putin

By The Sun's Online Reporters
JULY 17, 2007, The Sun Online

FURIOUS Gordon Brown last night stood up to Vladimir Putin - saying he had no apologies for expelling four Russian diplomats.

The officials were booted out over Moscow's refusal to allow the extradition of a spy suspected of killing Alexander Litvinenko. Andrei Lugovoy is being sought after Mr. Litvinenko, 43, was poisoned with a lethal dose of Polonium-210 in London last November. But Russian president Putin refuses to hand over Lugovoy - like Litvinenko, an ex-KGB agent - to face trial here. Mr. Brown, on a visit to Germany, said he wouldn't let "lawlessness" take a grip in London.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has described London's actions as "immoral" and "provocative" and promised to respond appropriately.

Visa arrangements were suspended as Mr. Putin threatened retaliation. An official is expected to make a statement this afternoon.

Experts fear Moscow will mirror London's actions with its own expulsions or another political step.

But the big question is whether the Kremlin might also hit back at British business interests in Russia.

But Russia's powerful natural resources minister, Yuri Trutnev, said there were no such plans. "I don't think it makes sense to impose restrictions that would affect the investment climate, because that would be very expensive, including for Britain," Russian agencies quoted him as saying. "We will continue working as usual and don't see any reason to review our approach to foreign investments on the back of recent events," Trutnev added.

On his visit to Germany, the PM earlier said: "I have no apology to make for this action. When a murder has been committed on British soil, and hundreds of innocent civilians' lives have been put at risk, we expect authorities in other parts of the world to bring that person to justice.

Failure to recognize that has led to this action. "It is the first time in 11 years that Russian officials have been thrown out of Britain and it marks the biggest chill in relations since the end of the Cold War.

Foreign Secretary David Miliband told MPs: "The heinous crime of murder requires justice." Mr. Litvinenko's widow Marina said she was "very grateful" for the expulsions - adding she was "proud to be a UK citizen". Mr. Lugovoy, who denies the murder, blasted Mr. Miliband, saying: "If they blame me directly, I will take that minister to court."

APPENDIX B

“Cold war diplomacy is back as UK expels spies” - The Guardian Unlimited Online

Cold War Diplomacy is back as UK Expels Spies

Moscow vows retaliation after four agents thrown out over Litvinenko case

Luke Harding in Moscow, Ian Cobain and Julian Borger
Tuesday July 17, 2007
The Guardian Online

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT was last night bracing itself for an inevitable diplomatic backlash after expelling four Russian intelligence officers in protest at the Kremlin's refusal to hand over the prime suspect in the polonium-210 poisoning affair.

In an attempt to underline the government's anger and alarm over the murder of Alexander Litvinenko, the Foreign Office announced it was ceasing cooperation with Moscow on a range of issues, starting with the imposition of restrictions on visas issued to Russian officials seeking to visit the UK.

All four individuals being expelled are officers with one of the successor organizations to the KGB, a clear signal that British authorities strongly suspect that Russian intelligence agencies had a hand in the murder. David Miliband, the foreign secretary, told the Commons yesterday: "This response is proportional and it is clear at whom it is aimed."

Last night Gordon Brown, arriving for talks in Germany, said Britain wanted a constructive relationship with Russia, but added: "When a murder is committed on British soil, action has to be taken."

"We believe there should be cooperation from the Russian authorities in this. We are sad that cooperation is not forthcoming. We have therefore had to take the action we have taken and we hope we can have a resolution of this matter shortly."

The Kremlin immediately vowed to make an "adequate response" - widely expected to include the tit-for-tat expulsion of British diplomats today. The Russian foreign ministry denounced the British move as "immoral and provocative", with a spokesman warning it would have "the most serious consequences" for relations between the two countries. It said: "The decision taken by London confirms a flare-up in Russo phobic sentiments in British society and political circles, which have recently spread to its foreign policy. Given this situation, Miliband's statement that the UK would like to see Russia as a partner on the international scene looks naive."

One Kremlin adviser, Sergey Markov, told The Guardian the mood within the Russian government was "cold and angry", and accused the British of behaving in a high-handed and "imperial" manner.

Mr. Miliband told MPs that the impasse was one that Britain had "not sought and does not welcome". However, Mr. Litvinenko, who had taken British citizenship, had "suffered a horrifying and lingering death", and his murder had "put hundreds of others, residents and visitors, at risk of radiation contamination".

In refusing to extradite Andrei Lugovoi, the Russian businessman suspected of persuading Mr. Litvinenko to sip a poisoned cup of tea at a London hotel, Moscow had failed to acknowledge the seriousness of the crime or the British government's concern, Mr. Miliband said. He added that it was necessary to send a "clear and proportionate signal" to Russia about the seriousness with which Britain regarded the matter. "Given the importance of this issue, and Russia's failure to cooperate to find a solution, we need an appropriate response. The heinous crime of murder does require justice."