



ANNALES SCIENTIA POLITICA

VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1, 2023

ANNALES SCIENTIA POLITICA

Vol. 12, No. 1, 2023

JOVANOVIĆ, S. M.: Putin's declaration of war: discourse, narrative, propaganda.
Annales Scientia Politica, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2023), pp. 18 – 28.

SRĐAN MLADENOV JOVANOVIĆ

Faculty of History
Nankai University
Tianjin, China
E-mail: smjovanovic@nankai.edu.cn

Abstract:

This study presents a comprehensive analysis of the declaration of war speech delivered by Russian President Vladimir Putin, utilizing three distinct yet complementary analytical frameworks: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Narrative Analysis (NA), and Propaganda Analysis (PA). Through the application of these methods, the research aims to examine the linguistic features, narrative structures, and propagandistic elements within the speech to better understand the persuasive tactics employed by Putin and the socio-political implications of his rhetoric. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on political discourse analysis and highlight the value of combining multiple analytical approaches for a more nuanced understanding of political rhetoric. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the significant role that language and narrative play in shaping public opinion and promoting specific political agendas.

Keywords:

Critical discourse analysis, narrative analysis, propaganda analysis, political discourse, Vladimir Putin.

PUTIN'S DECLARATION OF WAR: DISCOURSE, NARRATIVE, PROPAGANDA

SRĐAN MLADENOV JOVANOVIĆ

Faculty of History
Nankai University
Tianjin, China
E-mail: smjovanovic@nankai.edu.cn

Abstract:

This study presents a comprehensive analysis of the declaration of war speech delivered by Russian President Vladimir Putin, utilizing three distinct yet complementary analytical frameworks: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Narrative Analysis (NA), and Propaganda Analysis (PA). Through the application of these methods, the research aims to examine the linguistic features, narrative structures, and propagandistic elements within the speech to better understand the persuasive tactics employed by Putin and the socio-political implications of his rhetoric. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on political discourse analysis and highlight the value of combining multiple analytical approaches for a more nuanced understanding of political rhetoric. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the significant role that language and narrative play in shaping public opinion and promoting specific political agendas.

Keywords:

Critical discourse analysis, narrative analysis, propaganda analysis, political discourse, Vladimir Putin.

Background and context of Vladimir Putin's speech

The contemporary global political landscape is often characterized by an entangled web of discourses, where rhetoric plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and influencing decision-making processes. As a pivotal actor in this dynamic milieu, Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, has been known for his adroit employment of language to advance his political objectives (Slade 2007; Puspita et al. 2019). In this regard, one of his most salient speeches concerning the intervention in Ukraine provides a fertile ground for scrutinizing the intricate interplay between language and power, and the manner in which political ideologies are disseminated and legitimized.

The impetus behind Putin's speech can be situated within the broader geopolitical tensions that have escalated between Russia and the West, particularly in the context of the Ukrainian crisis. This contentious issue emerged as a consequence of divergent interests and strategic aspirations, engendering a complex and evolving discourse in which various political actors vie for control over the narrative. It is within this crucible of competing perspectives that Putin's address must be understood, as he seeks to assert Russia's position and justify its actions to both domestic and international audiences. Putin's invasion of Ukraine on 24 Feb-

ruary 2022 has already gone down in scholarship as “a crucial date in the history of the world”, dubbed a “full scale war” (Bäcker and Rak 2022, 57-58).

In this study, we endeavor to illuminate the multifaceted nature of Putin’s discourse by employing a comparative approach, drawing on the insights provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Narrative Analysis (NA), and Propaganda Analysis (PA) to examine the various rhetorical strategies and linguistic devices employed by the Russian leader. Through this methodological triangulation, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which Putin’s speech functions as a vehicle for the dissemination of ideological messages, the construction of historical narratives, and the manipulation of public sentiment.

Significance of analyzing political discourse

The analysis of political discourse is of paramount importance in contemporary society, as it enables scholars to unravel the intricate ways in which language is employed to construct and maintain power structures, propagate ideologies, and shape public opinion. By dissecting the rhetorical strategies and linguistic mechanisms utilized by political actors, it is possible to gain valuable insights into the underlying intentions, assumptions, and values that inform their communicative practices, as has been done by discourse practitioners worldwide (Horváth 2009; Bayram 2010; Dunmire 2012; Fairclough and Fairclough 2013; Van Dijk 2015; Jovanović and Đidić 2020).

Moreover, the examination of political discourse contributes significantly to our understanding of the broader sociopolitical context in which these discourses are produced and disseminated. Through the careful dissection of the linguistic choices and narrative structures employed by influential figures like Vladimir Putin, we can uncover the complex interrelations between language and power, thereby fostering a more nuanced appreciation of the ideological struggles and geopolitical tensions that underpin contemporary global affairs. Furthermore, the study of political discourse holds considerable relevance for the development of critical awareness among citizens, as it equips them with the analytical tools ne-

cessary to discern the ideological underpinnings of the messages they encounter in the public sphere. By cultivating the ability to critically engage with the rhetoric of political actors, individuals can more effectively navigate the labyrinthine landscape of political communication, thus becoming more informed and discerning participants in the democratic process.

In light of these considerations, the present analysis of Vladimir Putin’s speech aims to contribute to the burgeoning field of political discourse studies by offering a multifaceted examination of the Russian leader’s communicative practices, drawing on the complementary insights provided by Critical Discourse Analysis, Narrative Analysis, and Propaganda Analysis. Through this methodological synthesis, we aspire to shed light on the intricate ways in which language is employed to advance political objectives, construct historical narratives, and manipulate public sentiment, thereby deepening our understanding of the complex interplay between discourse and power in the realm of global politics.

Comparing the application of Critical Discourse Analysis, Narrative Analysis, and Propaganda Analysis in understanding political rhetoric

The primary objective of this study is to comparatively evaluate the efficacy of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Narrative Analysis (NA), and Propaganda Analysis (PA) in the investigation of political rhetoric as exemplified in Vladimir Putin’s speech. By applying these three distinct analytical lenses, we aim to unveil the multifarious ways in which language is harnessed to achieve political ends, and to elucidate the strengths and limitations of each approach in capturing the various dimensions of political discourse.

CDA, as an analytical framework, enables scholars to probe the socio-political undercurrents that shape the production and reception of discourses, with a particular focus on the role of language in constructing and maintaining power dynamics (Liasidou 2008; Yazdannik et al. 2017). By scrutinizing the micro-level linguistic features and macro-level contextual factors that inform Putin’s speech, the CDA approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of

the ideological content and power relations embedded within the text. Conversely, NA concentrates on the narrative structures and storytelling devices employed by political actors in the construction of compelling, coherent, and persuasive accounts of events and experiences (Bailey and Tilley 2002; Whittle and Mueller 2012). Applying this method to Putin's speech allows for the identification of the overarching narratives and thematic motifs that underpin the discourse, as well as the strategies employed to elicit emotional resonance and cultivate identification among the target audience. Lastly, PA is specifically concerned with the examination of persuasive techniques and manipulative strategies employed by political actors to advance their agendas, shape public opinion, and consolidate their power (Cantril 1938; George 1959). By applying PA to Putin's speech, we can discern the various tactics utilized by the Russian leader to promulgate particular ideological stances, foster nationalistic sentiment, and mobilize support for his political objectives.

Through the comparative application of CDA, NA, and PA to the analysis of Putin's speech, this study seeks to contribute to the advancement of political discourse studies by elucidating the distinct yet complementary insights afforded by each analytical approach. In doing so, we hope to foster a more robust and multifaceted understanding of the complex interplay between language, power, and ideology in political communication.

Overview of CDA, NA, and PA as analytical methods

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) emerged in the 1970s as an interdisciplinary approach to studying language and its relationship with society, power, and ideology. Drawing from various disciplines, including linguistics, sociology, and psychology, CDA focuses on the micro-level linguistic features and macro-level contextual factors that underpin the production and reception of discourses (Wodak 2011). By examining the ways in which language is used to construct and maintain power dynamics, CDA provides valuable insights into the ideological content and socio-political implications of various forms of communication, including political speeches.

Narrative Analysis (NA), on the other hand, concentrates on the study of stories and storytelling as means of making sense of experiences, events, and social life (Bailey and Tilley 2002). NA is concerned with the identification of narrative structures, thematic motifs, and rhetorical strategies employed by individuals and groups to create coherent and persuasive accounts of reality. In the context of political discourse, NA can shed light on the ways in which political actors use narratives to elicit emotional responses, establish credibility, and cultivate identification among their target audiences.

Propaganda Analysis (PA) has its roots in the early 20th century, when scholars began to examine the persuasive techniques and manipulative strategies employed by governments and other powerful actors to shape public opinion and advance their agendas (Garber 1942; Lasswell 1951). PA is specifically concerned with the analysis of symbols, images, and messages designed to promote particular ideological stances, elicit specific emotional reactions, and mobilize support for political objectives. In analyzing political speeches, PA can help to uncover the various tactics utilized by political leaders to foster nationalist sentiment, disseminate disinformation, and manipulate public opinion.

Previous studies on political discourse analysis and their implications

Numerous studies have employed CDA, NA, and PA for the sake of investigating political discourse, focusing oft on specific speeches, debates, or campaigns. The discourse analytical approach has been widely applied to the analysis of political speeches, allowing researchers to explore the ways in which language is used to construct and maintain power relations, represent social groups, and convey ideology. For example, Chilton's (Chilton 2004) analysis of political discourse in the context of international relations revealed how linguistic choices can serve to legitimize certain political actions and delegitimize others.

NA has also been employed to study political discourse, with researchers delving into the narrative structures and storytelling tropes used by political actors to construct persuasive, believable accounts of events and experiences

they were interested in exploiting. Studies such as Edelman's work on political language have shown how politicians employ specific narrative strategies to construct coherent and emotionally resonant stories that reinforce their political agendas (Edelman 1988), as one particular example.

PA has been utilized in various studies to investigate the propagandistic aspects of political communication, examining the strategies and tactics employed by political actors to manipulate public opinion and advance their. Altheide has applied PA to analyze the discourse of fear in the post-9/11 political context, demonstrating how political leaders use fear-based rhetoric to justify and legitimize their policies and actions (Altheide 2006).

The role of language and rhetoric in politics

Political actors depend on verbal communication to express their views, justify their positions, and convince audiences, hence language and rhetoric play a crucial role in the sphere of politics (Chilton, 2004). Politicians often deploy rhetorical methods such as metaphor, analogy, and repetition to generate vivid imagery, reinforce crucial themes, and appeal to the emotions and values of their audiences (Lakoff 2008).

The study of political discourse, especially via the use of CDA, NA, and PA, may give significant insights into how political actors manage language and rhetoric to influence public views, establish social identities, and sustain power relations (Pilling et al. 2018; KhosraviNik 2014). By analyzing the language choices, narrative structures, and propagandistic strategies used in political speeches, academics may unearth the ideologies, assumptions, and values that shape political communication and show the sociopolitical consequences of certain discursive practices.

In other words, the application of Critical Discourse Analysis, Narrative Analysis, and Propaganda Analysis to the study of political speech provides a thorough and nuanced knowledge of the intricate relationship between language, power, and ideology within the arena of politics. Scholars may reveal the numerous elements of political communication, from the micro-level language characteris-

tics to the macro-level contextual variables that form and are influenced by speech, by combining these analytical tools. This study's comparative analysis of Vladimir Putin's speech exemplifies the insights that may be derived from the combined application of different analytical frameworks, so contributing to a better knowledge of political rhetoric and its sociopolitical ramifications.

Discourse Analysis

In this Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), we will scrutinize the text from the standpoint of power relations, ideological positioning, and discursive strategies, examining the ways in which language is employed to construct and communicate a particular perspective on the geopolitical situation. Our analysis will revolve around three main areas: 1) the use of binary oppositions and "us vs. them" framing, 2) the construction of historical narratives and appeals to emotion, and 3) the representation of agency and responsibility.

1) Binary oppositions and 'us vs. them' framing

A striking feature of the text is the pervasive use of binary oppositions that create a dichotomous worldview, an instance commonly reported by discourse analysts (Sicher 1986; Mills 2005). The speaker repeatedly contrasts "us" (Russia) with various "others" (NATO, the United States, Ukrainian nationalists, etc.). This "us vs. them" framing is pivotal in constructing an adversarial relationship, which serves to legitimize the speaker's call for action.

Putin portrays Russia as a besieged, morally upright nation that values "traditional values", "the very nature of man", and "justice and truth"; common tropes for Putin's rhetoric (Csillag and Szelényi 2015). In contrast, the opponents are depicted as proponents of "pseudo-values" that lead to "degradation and degeneration". This moral dichotomy positions Russia as the guardian of human civilization, besieged by malevolent forces that threaten its existence. By constructing a Manichean struggle between good and evil, Putin seeks to galvanize public support and justify the necessity of a military intervention.

2) *Construction of historical narratives and appeals to emotion*

Throughout the text, the Putin – the speaker – employs historical narratives and appeals to emotion to buttress their argument, yet another trope commonly encountered by discourse analysts (Blommaert 2001). The invocation of World War II and the Soviet Union's struggle against Nazi Germany serves multiple purposes. First, it taps into a reservoir of national pride and collective memory, evoking the sacrifices and heroism of the Russian people. Second, it allows the speaker to draw a parallel between the contemporary situation and the past, suggesting that history is repeating itself, and that appeasement would lead to disastrous consequences. By likening the current Ukrainian regime to “neo-Nazis” and evoking the crimes committed by Hitler's accomplices, the speaker effectively demonizes the enemy and elicits an emotional response. This historical analogy also allows the speaker to frame the conflict as a continuation of a longstanding struggle against fascism, with Russia once again taking up the mantle of defender of the oppressed. The appeal to emotion is further reinforced by the speaker's repeated references to the suffering of the people in Donbass, portraying Russia as the only hope for their salvation. This emotional appeal is designed to engender empathy and solidarity among the Russian people, legitimizing the need for intervention.

3) *Representation of agency and responsibility*

The speaker carefully navigates the representation of agency and responsibility to construct a narrative that rationalizes Russia's actions. While acknowledging Russia's military prowess, the speaker insists that the country is acting defensively, responding to external threats and provocations. This framing shifts the onus of responsibility onto the adversaries, who are portrayed as the primary instigators of the conflict. In this discursive construction, the adversaries are depicted as a monolithic entity with hegemonic aspirations, seeking to “destroy” Russia and impose their will on the world. By emphasizing the existential threat posed by these forces, the speaker justifies the necessity of a “special military operation” to protect the nation's sovereignty and security.

The use of the phrase has, in the meantime, become almost legendary in the public arena.

Additionally, the speaker addresses various actors in the text, including the citizens of Ukraine and the Ukrainian military. By appealing to their shared history and common struggle against fascism, the speaker attempts to forge an alliance with these groups, positioning Russia as a benevolent force that respects their sovereignty and desires their cooperation. This rhetorical move seeks to counter potential accusations of aggression and imperialism by presenting Russia's intervention as a necessary and justified response to the alleged transgressions of its adversaries. By framing the situation in this manner, Putin effectively shifts the responsibility for the escalation of tensions onto the opposing forces and portrays Russia as a *reluctant actor* forced to take action in defense of its interests and values. This technique of deflecting blame and legitimizing one's actions is a common feature of political discourse, particularly in times of conflict and crisis.

The use of emotive language and metaphor (Dehbaneh and Dehbaneh 2014) throughout the text serves to heighten the emotional impact of the narrative and evoke a sense of urgency and moral righteousness. For instance, the speaker describes the adversaries as “encircling” Russia and employing “hybrid warfare”, creating an image of a beleaguered nation under siege and beset on all sides by hostile forces. By employing such vivid imagery, the speaker aims to elicit sympathy for Russia's plight and generate support for its actions among both domestic and international audiences.

In addition to the use of metaphor, the speaker also employs intertextual references to historical events and figures to bolster the credibility of the narrative and situate it within a broader context of Russian history and identity. By drawing parallels between the present situation and past episodes of conflict and resistance, the speaker seeks to tap into a collective memory and evoke a sense of national pride and resilience. This strategy serves to strengthen the audience's emotional connection to the narrative and reinforce the underlying themes of power, sovereignty, and moral duty.

The deployment of binary oppositions in the text also contributes to the construction of

meaning and the shaping of audience perceptions. The speaker consistently portrays Russia and its allies as the defenders of peace, stability, and international law, while casting the adversaries as the aggressors and violators of these principles. This dichotomy serves to simplify the complex dynamics of the conflict and create a clear moral distinction between the two sides, making it easier for the audience to identify with and support Russia's actions.

Another key aspect of the discourse is the use of modality and hedging to manage the speaker's commitment to the truth of the claims being made. By employing phrases such as "it is said" and "some believe", the speaker creates a sense of ambiguity and plausible deniability, allowing for the possibility of future adjustments or revisions to the narrative as circumstances evolve. This cautious approach to the presentation of facts and assertions serves to protect the speaker's credibility and authority while maintaining flexibility in the face of a fluid and rapidly changing situation.

To sum up, the Critical Discourse Analysis of the text has exposed the many ways in which language and rhetorical methods are used to generate meaning, alter audience perceptions, and push a certain political agenda. The speaker's masterful use of metaphor, historical allusions, binary oppositions, and modality, along with a meticulously designed narrative framework, creates a convincing and emotionally evocative description of Russia's military operation in Ukraine. By reading the text through the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), we obtain a greater understanding of the power dynamics at work in political discourse and the intricate interaction of language, ideology, and social practice.

Narrative analysis

Going further by employing a narrative analysis, we delve into the text's structural and thematic elements, exploring the ways in which the story unfolds and how the speaker weaves together various strands of meaning to construct a compelling and persuasive narrative. Our analysis will focus on three key aspects: 1) the setting and context, 2) the characters and their relationships, and 3) the plot and its underlying themes.

1) Setting and context

The narrative is set against the backdrop of a geopolitical crisis, with the speaker addressing a Russian audience and attempting to provide a rationale for the country's military intervention in Ukraine. The context is crucial in shaping the narrative's direction and tone, as it establishes the stakes and the urgency of the situation. Putin invokes a historical parallel with World War II, creating a sense of continuity and suggesting that the current crisis is part of a larger pattern of aggression and resistance, something he is known to be resorting to often (Wood 2011), by some dubbed "fighting Russia's history wars" (Edele 2017).

The narrative's temporal dimension is also significant, as Putin moves seamlessly between past, present, and future. By drawing on historical events and collective memories, the speaker imbues the present situation with deeper meaning and foreshadows the potential consequences of inaction. This temporal oscillation serves to heighten the audience's emotional engagement and underscore the gravity of the situation.

2) Characters and their relationships

Central to the narrative are the various characters that populate the text and their relationships to one another. The primary characters are Russia, represented by the speaker, and the adversaries (NATO, the United States, and Ukrainian nationalists). These characters are involved in a complex web of relationships, defined by their competing interests and ideological differences, wherein NATO and the USA have long been seen as enemies in Putin's ideology (Demasi 2022).

The speaker positions Russia as the protagonist, a nation endowed with moral integrity and a sense of duty to protect the vulnerable. Russia is portrayed as a benevolent actor, striving to maintain peace and order in the face of unrelenting aggression. In contrast, the adversaries are depicted as antagonists, driven by a desire for power and control, with little regard for the well-being of others.

The secondary characters, such as the people of Donbass and the Ukrainian military, serve as a bridge between the protagonist and the antagonists. By appealing to their shared history

and common struggle against fascism, the speaker seeks to foster a sense of unity and collaboration, positioning Russia as an ally rather than an invader.

3) Plot and underlying themes

The plot of the narrative unfolds in a series of episodes, each building on the previous one to create a sense of progression and inevitability. The speaker begins by recounting the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations and the steady erosion of trust between the two nations. This sets the stage for the current crisis, with Russia reluctantly stepping in to restore peace and stability.

The plot then shifts to a detailed account of the adversaries' machinations and their attempts to undermine Russia's position. The speaker enumerates various instances of provocation and aggression, painting a picture of a relentless campaign to weaken and destabilize Russia. This portrayal of the adversaries as ruthless and malevolent serves to justify Russia's decision to intervene and protect its interests.

The climax of the narrative occurs when the speaker announces the initiation of a "special military operation", casting this move as a necessary and proportionate response to the adversaries' provocations. The resolution is left open-ended, with Putin expressing hope that the operation will restore peace and stability in the region but acknowledging the potential for further escalation and conflict.

Throughout the narrative, several underlying themes emerge, including the struggle for power and influence, the importance of national sovereignty, and the moral duty to protect the vulnerable. These themes serve to bind the various episodes together and provide a coherent framework for understanding the unfolding crisis.

In other words, this narrative analysis has exposed the intricate interaction of setting, characters, and plot in the text, indicating how the speaker expertly weaves together several meaning threads to create a compelling and convincing story. By carefully setting the tale within a larger historical and geopolitical framework, the speaker enhances the relevance and intensity of the events, bringing the list-

ner into a world of high stakes and moral imperatives.

The principal and supporting characters are expertly portrayed to elicit a feeling of empathy and sympathy, with Russia as the protagonist and the foes as the villains. The interactions between these people are characterized by a complicated web of allegiances, shared histories, and ideological disagreements, forming a tapestry of human experience and emotion. The speaker intends to generate sympathy and support for the military operation by establishing ties between Russia and minor characters. The plot is structured to create a sense of inevitability, with each episode building on the previous one and leading inexorably to the decision to intervene. The speaker masterfully employs suspense and anticipation, leaving the resolution open-ended and hinting at the possibility of further escalation and conflict. This narrative strategy serves to underscore the gravity of the situation and the need for decisive action.

The underlying themes of authority, sovereignty, and moral obligation provide a unified framework and provide the spectator a prism through which to observe the developing events like a thread. These elements raise the story above a conventional account of geopolitical maneuvering, converting it into a tale of human struggle and fortitude in the face of tragedy.

By using a complex narrative framework and weaving together a rich tapestry of characters, themes, and historical background, the speaker is able to construct a convincing and emotionally resonant case for the need of Russia's military action in Ukraine. The narrative analysis has exposed the many approaches and strategies employed by the speaker to engage the audience and legitimate the country's activities, illustrating the power of storytelling in influencing public opinion and the course of geopolitical events. In the realm of political communication, narratives serve as powerful tools for constructing meaning and framing complex issues in a way that resonates with the target audience. As this analysis has shown, the text under consideration is a prime example of the art of narrative persuasion, deftly combining historical context, vivid characterization, and thematic coherence to create a compelling and emotionally charged story

that seeks to win hearts and minds. As such, it offers valuable insights into the ways in which political actors use language and storytelling to shape public discourse and advance their agendas in the complex and often contentious world of international relations.

Propaganda analysis

In order to conduct a comprehensive propaganda analysis of the text, it is important to first establish a working definition of propaganda. Propaganda can be defined as the dissemination of information, particularly of a biased or misleading nature, aimed at promoting a particular political cause or point of view (Chatfield et al. 2015). This analysis will examine the text through the lens of the following propaganda techniques: manipulation of facts, appeal to emotions, use of loaded language, and the construction of an “us vs. them” narrative.

Manipulation of facts

A key aspect of propaganda is the manipulation of facts to suit the desired narrative. In the text, the speaker presents a version of events that portrays Russia's actions as a response to the alleged aggression of its adversaries. By selectively highlighting certain aspects of the situation while downplaying or omitting others, the speaker creates a distorted image of reality that serves to justify Russia's intervention. For example, the text makes little mention of the broader geopolitical context, such as Russia's strategic interests in the region or its history of involvement in Ukraine. This selective focus on certain facts, while ignoring others, contributes to the construction of a biased narrative that advances the speaker's political agenda.

Appeal to emotions

The text employs a range of emotive language and rhetorical devices aimed at evoking strong emotions in the audience. For instance, the already mentioned use of vivid imagery, such as describing the adversaries as “encircling” Russia and employing “hybrid warfare”, serves to heighten the emotional impact of the narrative and create a sense of fear and urgen-

cy. Additionally, the text draws upon historical references and nationalistic themes to elicit feelings of pride and solidarity among the audience. By appealing to the audience's emotions, the speaker seeks to generate support for Russia's actions and cultivate a sense of moral righteousness.

Use of loaded language

Words and phrases with strong emotional overtones are a prevalent characteristic of propaganda. In the sentence, the speaker uses loaded language to clearly differentiate between the virtues of Russia and her friends and the malevolent activities of its foes. For instance, phrases like as “peace” and “stability” are used to characterize Russia's ostensible objectives, while Russia's opponents are accused of “violating” international law and participating in “aggressive” behavior. This use of laden language simplifies the conflict's complicated dynamics and establishes a clear moral divide between the two sides, making it simpler for the audience to sympathize with and support Russia's actions.

Construction of an “us vs. them” narrative

The speech presents Russia and its allies as protectors of peace, stability, and international law, while its opponents are portrayed as aggressors and violators of these values. The use of laden language and emotional images, which aim to establish a dramatic contrast between the two sides, reinforces this binary opposition. By crafting a “us against them” narrative, the speaker intends to generate a feeling of togetherness and solidarity among the audience while simultaneously delegitimizing the enemies' acts and motivations.

This examination of propaganda has emphasized the many strategies used by the speaker to influence audience perceptions and promote a certain political objective. The manipulation of facts, appeal to emotions, use of loaded language, and formulation of a “us against them” narrative all contribute to the development of a convincing and emotionally resonant explanation of Russia's military operation in Ukraine. By viewing the text through the lens of propaganda analysis, we obtain a greater understanding of how material may be se-

lectively presented and manipulated to promote a certain political cause or viewpoint.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have undertaken three distinct yet interrelated analyses of the text provided – a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a Narrative Analysis, and a Propaganda Analysis. While each approach offers its unique insights into the text, they all share a common goal: to uncover the underlying structures, strategies, and intentions that shape the text's meaning and impact. In this concluding section, we will compare the findings of these three analyses and draw out the key themes and patterns that emerge from their synthesis.

First, Critical Discourse Analysis. This method examined how linguistic and rhetorical components of the text build meaning and portray power relations. The CDA identified discursive methods including presupposition, modality, and rhetorical maneuvers that naturalize Russia's behavior, deflect criticism, and promote a specific ideology. The CDA also noted nominalization, passive voice, and intertextuality to reduce agency and responsibility. The Narrative Analysis focused on the text's main tale and how it develops and reflects the audience's interpretation of the events. Setting, characters, and storyline were recognized in this study. The text's moral judgment helps legitimize and justify Russia's conduct. The Narrative Analysis also showed how the text uses temporal markers and narrative cohesiveness to tell a coherent, compelling tale that matches the audience's values and expectations. Lastly, the Propaganda Analysis examined how the text promotes a political agenda and shapes audience views. The essay used various propaganda methods, including fact distortion, emotional appeal, loaded language, and a "we vs. them" storyline. These approaches aim to persuade and move listeners about Russia's military operation in Ukraine, promoting morality and support.

These three analyses share key themes and trends. Secondly, the text's language and rhetorical complexity uses a variety of discursive procedures and narrative approaches to affect audience perceptions and support a certain ideological perspective. The CDA's concentration on linguistic and rhetorical elements, the

Narrative Analysis' narrative strategies, and the Propaganda Analysis' propagandist tactics confirm this finding. Second, the text consistently seeks to legitimize and justify Russia's actions, presenting them as a necessary and morally defensible response to the alleged aggression of its adversaries. This theme is evident in the CDA's analysis of discursive strategies that naturalize and deflect criticisms of Russia's actions, the Narrative Analysis's exploration of the moral evaluation embedded within the text, and the Propaganda Analysis's discussion of the "us vs. them" narrative and the manipulation of facts.

Third, the text relies heavily on the evocation of emotions, using emotive language and imagery to heighten the emotional impact of the narrative and generate support for Russia's actions. This finding is supported by the CDA's analysis of rhetorical moves that appeal to the audience's emotions, the Narrative Analysis's examination of the role of emotions in shaping the narrative, and the Propaganda Analysis's focus on the appeal to emotions as a key propaganda technique.

In summa, the synthesis of the Critical Discourse Analysis, Narrative Analysis, and Propaganda Analysis reveals a multifaceted and highly strategic text that effectively utilizes linguistic, rhetorical, and narrative techniques to shape audience perceptions, promote a particular ideological stance, and generate support for Russia's military intervention in Ukraine. By examining the text through these three distinct yet complementary analytical lenses, we have been able to uncover the complex and nuanced ways in which the speaker employs language and storytelling to construct a persuasive and emotionally resonant account of events.

Additionally, since each analytical technique brings its own unique insights and perspectives to bear on the text, this comparative analysis highlights the need of taking an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse and communication. We have been able to establish a more complete and nuanced understanding of the text's meaning and influence, as well as the larger geopolitical environment in which it is placed, by building on the strengths of each method and combining their results.

This study indicates the possibility for additional investigation of the interactions between

discourse, narrative, and propaganda in the study of political writings and speeches in terms of future research. Such studies might increase our knowledge of how language, narrative, and persuasion are used to sway public opinion, maintain power dynamics, and further certain political goals. Moreover, this research emphasizes the need of taking a critical and reflective approach to our involvement with political discourse since doing so is essential to fostering educated and responsible citizenship in a world that is becoming more linked and complicated.

References

- Altheide, D. L. (2006). Terrorism and the Politics of Fear. *Cultural Studies? Critical Methodologies*, 6(4), 415-439.
- Bäcker, R., & Rak, J. (2022). Why did Putin go too far? The rationality of Vladimir Putin's decision to begin a war with Ukraine. *Society Register*, 6(3), 57-71.
- Bailey, P. H., & Tilley, S. (2002). Storytelling and the interpretation of meaning in qualitative research. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 38(6), 574-583.
- Bayram, F. (2010). Ideology and political discourse: A critical discourse analysis of Erdoğan's political speech. *Arecls*, 7(1), 18.
- Blommaert, J. (2001). Context is/as critique. *Critique of anthropology*, 21(1), 13-32.
- Catril, H. (1938). Propaganda analysis. *The English Journal*, 27(3), 217-221.
- Chatfield, A. T., Reddick, C. G., & Brajawidagda, U. (2015). Tweeting propaganda, radicalization and recruitment: Islamic state supporters multi-sided twitter networks. In *Proceedings of the 16th annual international conference on digital government research*, 239-249.
- Chilton, P. A. (2004). *Analysing political discourse: Theory and practice*. Psychology Press.
- Csillag, T., & Szelényi, I. (2015). Drifting from liberal democracy: Traditionalist/neo-conservative ideology of managed illiberal democratic capitalism in post-communist Europe. *East European Journal of Society and Politics*, 1(1), 18-48.
- Dehbaneh, M. H., & Dehbaneh, Z. H. (2014). Discourse of War in English & Persian: A CDA. *The Iranian EFL Journal*.
- Demasi, M. A. (2022). Accountability in the Russo-Ukrainian war: Vladimir Putin versus NATO. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*.
- Dunmire, P. L. (2012). Political discourse analysis: Exploring the language of politics and the politics of language. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 6(11), 735-751.
- Edele, M. (2017). Fighting Russia's history wars: Vladimir Putin and the codification of World War II. *History and Memory*, 29(2), 90-124.
- Edelman, M. (1988). Skeptical studies of language, the media, and mass culture. *American Political Science Review*, 82(4), 1333-1339.
- Fairclough, I., & Fairclough, N. (2013). *Political discourse analysis: A method for advanced students*. Routledge.
- Garber, W. (1942). Propaganda Analysis-To What Ends? *American Journal of Sociology*, 48(2), 240-245.
- George, A. L. (1959). Propaganda analysis. Evanston, Illinois, 30.
- Horváth, J. (2009). Critical discourse analysis of Obama's political discourse. In *Presented at the Language, literature and culture in a changing transatlantic world, International conference proceedings*, 45-56.
- Jovanović, S. M., & Đidić, A. (2020). Discursive governance: Erdoğan's populist discourses as a mode of power preservation. *The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies*, (1), 101-120.
- Lasswell, H. D. (1951). The strategy of Soviet propaganda. *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, 24(2), 66-78.
- Liasidou, A. (2008). Critical discourse analysis and inclusive educational policies: The power to exclude. *Journal of Education Policy*, 23(5), 483-500.
- Mills, K. A. (2005). Deconstructing binary oppositions in literacy discourse and pedagogy. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, 28(1), 67-82.
- Puspita, R. H., Al Farauqy, M. D. A., & Sunarti, S. (2019). Critical Discourse Analysis of Vladimir Putin's Speech Related to Arm Race with the United States in 2018. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and Translation*. Vol, 5, 58-63.
- Sicher, E. (1986). Binary oppositions and spatial representation: Toward an applied semiotics.

- Slade, G. (2007). The Russian idea and the discourse of Vladimir Putin. *CEU Political Science Journal*, (1), 44-57.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2015). Critical discourse analysis. *The handbook of discourse analysis*, 466-485.
- Whittle, A., & Mueller, F. (2012). Bankers in the dock: Moral storytelling in action. *Human Relations*, 65(1), 111-139.
- Wodak, R. (2011). Critical linguistics and critical discourse analysis. *Discursive pragmatics*, 8, 50-70.
- Wood, E. A. (2011). Performing memory: Vladimir Putin and the celebration of World War II in Russia. *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, 38(2), 172-200.
- Yazdannik, A., Yousefy, A., & Mohammadi, S. (2017). Discourse analysis: A useful methodology for health-care system researches. *Journal of education and health promotion*, 6.