The Representation of The Russian-Ukrainian War in CNN and RT English News Channels: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

The war that erupted recently between Russia and Ukraine makes the motivation behind this research. Two news reports that are collected from the websites of CNN and RT English news channels are analysed by the use of an eclectic analysis model of Fairclough (1992) as the main model , this model has three level . Under these levels , the researcher uses other models to achieve the purposes of this study like : Searle (1979), Quirk et al. (1985), van Dijk (1991),Harris's (2013),and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014).

Certain research questions has been formed as follows :

1. What are the syntactic, lexical, and rhetorical microstructures used by English news channels concerning the Russian-Ukrainian crisis?

2. What are the intertextual and speech acts used as mesostructures to reveal the ideology of these English news channels?

3. What are the key themes that those channels in the data under study presented in terms of the macrostructures?

4. What does the information given by the micro–and mesostructures about those news channels' ideologies of the Russian–Ukrainian crises ?

The study has reached the following conclusions after the analysis:

1. CNN and RT use multiple syntactic structure like activation and passivation with activation has the high frequency , they use over wording as well as metaphor and rhetorical questions throughout their reports.

2. They use direct and indirect manifest intertextuality and the most repeated speech acts are representatives.

3. The most repeated theme in the collected data is power.

4. Anti–war and human rights are the most repeated ideological concepts that are revealed via the analysis.

   Key words : (CDA ,Russian–Ukrainian Crisis , Power , Ideology , Fairclough's model of CDA).

تمثيل الحرب الروسية الأوكرانية في قناتي السي أن أن والارتي الانجليزيتين : تحليل خطابي نقدي

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الملخص:

شكلت الحرب التي اندلعت مؤخرا بين روسيا و أوكرانيا دافعا لهذا البحث.يعتمد هذا البحث على تحليل خبرين اثنين تم جمعهم من قناتي السي ان ان الأمريكية الإخبارية والا رتي الروسية الناطقة باللغة الانكليزية. اعتمدت الدراسة أنموذجا انتقائياً يكون نموذج فيركلوف ١٩٩٢ النموذج الرئيس فيه. يتكون هذا النموذج من ثلاثة مستويات و معه عدة نماذج متمثلة بنموذج سيريل لأفعال الكلام١٩٧٩ وكويرك وآخرون ١٩٨٥ وفان دايك ١٩٩١ وهارس ٢٠١٣ وهالدي وماثيسيان ٢٠١٤.

اعتمدت الدراسة عدد من الأسئلة وكالاتي :

١.ماهي البنى النحوية واللغوية والبلاغية التي استخدمتها القناتان الانجليزيتان على المستوى الدقيق عن الأزمة الروسية الأوكرانية؟

٢.ماهي أفعال الكلام والتناص الذي استخدمته هذه القنوات على المستوى الوسطي؟

٣. ماهو ابرز المواضيع الذي استخدم في العينات موضوع الدراسة؟

٤.ماهي ابرز الإيديولوجيات التي استعملت من قبل القناتان خلال تغطيتهما الإعلامية للأزمة الروسية الأوكرانية؟

وبناءً على تحليل العينات توصلت الدراسة إلى عدة استنتاجات:

١.   استعملت قناتي السي ان ان والارتي عدة تراكيب نحوية وبلاغية ولغوية مثل المبني للمعلوم والمجهول وكان المبني للمعلوم الأكثر استعمالاً، والمبالغة في المفردات والاستعارة والأسئلة البلاغية في العينات موضوع الدراسة.

٢.   استعملت التناص الواضح المباشر والغير المباشر وكانت أفعال الكلام التوكيدية الأكثر شيوعا .

٣.   وكان موضوع القوة هو الأكثر استعمالا .

٤.   كانت الدفاع عن حقوق الإنسان ومناهضة الحروب من أكثر الأيدلوجيات استعمالاً في العينات موضوع الدراسة.

1.1 Introduction

The Russian – Ukrainian war gives the inspiration behind this research . The current war has a huge effect on Europe and the world. It causes terror and fear to people . Russia and Ukraine have strong ties since the Soviet era . Russia considers Ukraine as a part of it .

1.2 The Problem

News channels express their countries ideologies and manipulate the general public by sending massages that serve its countries' national interests. Two news reports are going to be analysed in this research to uncover the manipulation and the ideologies of CNN (an American news channel) and RT (a Russian news channel).

The research addresses the following questions:

1. What are the syntactic, lexical, and rhetorical microstructures used by English news channels concerning the Russian−Ukrainian crisis?

2. What are the intertextual and speech acts used as mesostructures to reveal the ideology of these English news channels?

3. What are the key themes that those channels in the data under study presented in terms of the macrostructures?

4. What does the information given by the micro−and mesostructures about those news channels' ideologies of the Russian−Ukrainian crises ?

1.3 Procedures

To achieve the aims of the study, certain procedures are going to be followed:

1.Presenting   a   theoretical   analysis   of   CDA.
2. Establishing an eclectic analysis model based on Searle (1979), Quirk et al. (1985), van Dijk (1991), Fairclough (1992), Harris's (2013),and Halliday   and   Matthiessen   (2014).
3. Analysing data qualitatively and quantitatively. The news reports' syntax, intertextuality, and speech acts are analysed quantitatively , but their lexical, rhetorical, thematic, and ideological are analysed qualitatively.

Chapter Two

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to shed light on critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) and its prominent figures as well as its methodology.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis : An Overview

In the 1970s, a new discourse that recognized the importance of language in social power structures started to evolve. Fairclough, van Dijk and Wodak are the most prominent figures in CDA (Wodak and Meyer,2001,p.5). Kress states (1990,p. 94), CDA was " growing as a distinctive theory of language, a widely differing form of linguistics". van Dijk places an emphasis on media discourse, including not just his own commentary but also mass media (van Dijk, 1986). Fairclough illustrates the absurdity of such hypotheses and offers several examples of how the media mediates and shapes society (Fairclough,1989,p.87). Wodak seeks to define the circumstances in which those in power positions make use of language and other signification techniques to uphold their dominance (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009,p. 87-121).

Chapter Three

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the analysis methodology used in the current research.

3.2 Data collection and Selection

The corpus of this research is taken from the websites of CNN and RT news channels .CNN websites are: (http:// www. cnn. com), https://edition.cnn.com/europe/live−news/russia−ukraine−war−news−09−16−22/index.html. https://edition.cnn.com/specials/europe/ukraine. and RT website is www.RT Ukraine .com .

3.3 Models of Analysis

3.3.1 Fairclough's (1992) 'Three Dimensional Approach'

Fairclough's model include three levels in his social theory as follows:

1. "**Text analysis**" **(Micro level)**: Fairclough states that this dimension as "Text analysis can be organized under four main headings: vocabulary, 'grammar', 'cohesion', and 'text structure'" (Fairclough, 1992,p. 72). At this level ,grammar ,vocabulary and rhetorical devices are going to be analysed according to models like : Quirk et al. (1985) , Harris (2013) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014).

2. "**Discursive practice**" **(Meso level)**: Fairclough argues that "as I indicated above, involves processes of text production, distribution, and consumption, and the nature of these processes varies between different types of discourse according to social factors" (Fairclough, 1992,p.79). Speech acts and intertextuality are going to be analysed at this level, by

the use of speech acts of Searle (1979), and intertextuality of Fairclough (1992).

3."**Social practice**"(**Macro level**)**:** This level is linked to political tendencies and social practices' ideologies (1992,p. 67). Fairclough describes that "ideologies arise in societies characterized by relations of domination based on class, gender, cultural group […] and in so far as human beings are capable of transcending such societies, they are capable of transcending ideology" (1992,p.91). Themes and ideologies are going to be analysed at this level , theme of van Dijk (1991) and ideology of Fairclough (1992).

Chapter Four

Data analysis and Discussion of the Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with data analysis and discussion of the results of (2) news reports that are collected from CNN and RT news channels after the eruption of the Russian−Ukrainian war .These two news reports are analysed according to an eclectic analysis model which is explained in chapter three.

4.2 Why CNN and RT?

CNN is considered to be an American voice and opposed to Russia action in Ukraine. While RT is one of the Russian news channels that

support its own country. Making a comparison between these two channels reveals their ideology in dealing with this crisis.

4.3 The analysis of News report

(1) News report (no.1)

"CNN: The enemy is always looking for us': Hidden in the forest, Ukraine's drone operators are crucial to the eastern battle"

The analysis of news report (no.1) is going to be on Micro, Meso and Macro levels in compliance with the eclectic analysis model. This report was broadcast by CNN in January, 30, 2023 after the war.

4.3.1.1 Micro Level

At this level, grammar , vocabulary and rhetorical devices are to be analysed.

4.3.1.1.1 Grammar

Active and passive , transitivity and modality are going to be examined.

4.3.1.1.1.1 Active and Passive Voice : Table (4.1) shows the occurrences of passive and active voice in the news report (no.1).

No.	Type	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Active	52	85.24%
2.	Passive	9	14.75%
Total :		61	100%

4.3.1.1.1.2 Transitivity

4.3.1.1.1.2.1 Processes : Table (4.2) explains the occurrences of transitivity processes in the news report (no.1).

No.	Process	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Material	44	45.83%
2.	Mental	2	2.08%
3.	Verbal	10	10.41%
4.	Relational	40	41.66%
Total		96	99.99%

4.3.1.1.1.2.2 Participants : Table (4.3) illustrates the occurrences of the participants in the news report (no.1).

No.	Process	Participants	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Material	Actor	20	24.09%
		Goal	25	30.12%

No.	Type	Meaning	Frequency	Percentage
2.	Mental	Sensor	1	1.20%
		Phenomenon	1	1.20%
3.	Verbal	Sayer	9	10.84%
		Target	7	8.43%
4.	Relational	Carrier	5	6.02%
		Attribute	5	6.02%
		Token	5	6.02%
		Value	5	6.02%
Total :			83	99.99%

4.3.1.1.3 Modality :Table (4.4) shows the occurrences of the modality in the news report (no.1).

No.	Type of Modality	Meaning of Modals	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Extrinsic	Ability	8	57.14%

2.	Intrinsic	Necessity	1	7.14%
3.	Extrinsic	Prediction	5	35.71%
Total:			14	99.99%

4.3.1.1.2 Vocabulary

This section is concerned with the analysis of over wording .

4.3.1.1.2.1 Over wording

1." pine trees , a thin canopy of pine trees , pine forest ,"

2. "Russian lines , Russian supply routes".

3."drone operators, reconnaissance drone, a drone operator, Ukraine's drone operators".

4. "artillery battle ,Ukrainian artillery, artillery shells , artillery ammunition , artillery ammunition, shells , rockets, free −fall munitions ".

4.3.1.1.3 Rhetorical Devices

This section analyses the metaphor and rhetorical questions.

4.3.1.1.3.1 Rhetorical Questions

"Does the West's decision to arm Ukraine with tanks bring it closer to war with Russia? ".CNN asks this question rhetorically to send a message to Russia and the world that Ukraine is armed and strong and supported by the West.

4.3.1.1.3.2 Metaphor

1."Artillery shells launched from a nearby Ukrainian emplacement make a deafening roar", CNN portrays the image of violence by comparing the sound of the battle to the sound of the lion.

2. "You can freeze to death", the effect of the war causes death and terror.

4.3.1.2 Meso Level

At this level , intertextuality and speech acts are going to be analysed.

4.3.1.2.1 Intertextuality :Table (4.5) illustrates the occurrences of intertextuality in the news report (no.1).

No.	Types of Intertextuality		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Manifest	Direct	13	81.25%

		Indirect	3	18.75%
Total:			16	100%

4.3.2.2 Speech Acts :Table (4.6) explains the occurrences of speech acts in the news report (no.1).

No.	Types of Speech Acts	Frequency	Percentages
1.	Representatives	22	81.48%
2.	Directives	2	7.40%
3.	Expressives	2	7.40%
4.	Commissives	1	3.70%
Total:		27	99.99%

4.3.1.3 Macro Level

Theme and ideology are going to be analysed.

4.3.1.3.1Theme

1. Violence

This theme is repeated throughout the report and expressed by Ukrainians like in "We have high rate of casualties among the pilots, the enemy is always looking for us." "you can freeze to death there". "We have high rate of casualties among the pilots, the enemy is always looking for us."

2. Loyalty

"I stand for Ukraine, I was born here, my ancestors are from here, I always was pro-Ukraine and always will be". The sense of belonging is obvious in this report. Ukrainians in spite of the war being loyal to their country .

3. Power

CNN reports the power of the ground and air force of Ukraine that fight and can challenge and may win the war upon Russia. "one of the most important elements of this war – both for us and the enemy. Nothing can be executed without drones."

4.3.1.3.2 Ideology

CNN visualizes the image of violence and terror that are spread everywhere because of the war. The precise description of the Ukraine military forces and especially the drone to send the message to the world that Ukraine has power that Russia should be aware of. CNN also describes the artillery force of Russia in the same report "Artillery shells launched from a nearby Ukrainian emplacement make a deafening roar. The crump of Russian shelling echoes in the distance". The journey of CNN reporters with the Ukraine artillery force in the forest also as indication of the terror that Ukrainians live in during this war. Then, another scene with the civilian who describes their urgent situation, "now it is too cold in the basement, you can freeze to death there," she says". Ukrainian soldiers are convinced with victory of this war and they should fight till the end. Ukrainian soldiers request the military support from USA . Those soldiers express their loyalty and sense of belonging to their country and that is obvious in this report, " I always was pro-Ukraine and always will be."

2.News report (no.2)

"RT :Key Donbass city faces encirclements-Official"

The analysis of news report (no.2) is going to be on Macro, Meso and Micro levels in compliance with the eclectic analysis model that is

explained in chapter three . This report was broadcast by RT in February, 1, 2023 after the war.

4.3.2.1 Micro Level

At this level , grammar , vocabulary and rhetorical devices are to be examined.

4.3.2.1.1 Grammar

In this section, active and passive , transitivity and modality are going to be analysed.

4.3.2.1.1.1 Active and Passive Voice : Table (4.7) illustrates the occurrences of active and passive voice in the news report (no.2).

No.	Type	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Active	11	78.57%
2.	Passive	3	21.42%
Total:		14	99.99%

4.3.2.1.1.2 Transitivity

4.3.2.1.1.2.1 Processes :Table (4.8) explains the occurrences of transitivity processes in the news report (no.2).

No.	Process	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Material	20	50%
2.	Mental	1	2.5%
3.	Verbal	5	12.5%
4.	Relational	14	35%
Total:		40	100%

4.3.2.1.1.2.2 Participants :Table (4.9) shows the occurrences of the participants in the news report (no.2).

No.	Process	Participants	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Material	Actor	5	23.80%
		Goal	5	23.80%
2.	Verbal	Sayer	3	14.28%
		Target	4	17.04%
3.	Mental	Sensor	1	4.76%

		Phenomenon	1	4.76%
4.	Relational	Carrier	1	4.76%
		Attribute	1	4.76%
		Token	0	%
		Value	0	%
Total:			21	99.99%

4.3.2.1.3 Modality : Table (4.10) shows the occurrences of modality in the news report (no.2).

No.	Type of Modality	Meaning of Modality	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Extrinsic	Ability	2	50%
2.		Prediction	2	50%
Total :			4	100%

4.3.2.1.2 Vocabulary

This section is restricted to the analysis of over wording.

4.3.2.1.2.1 Over wording

1."strategic importance , the importance ".

2. "strategic value, symbolic value".

3. "its capture , captured ,the capture of the city".

4.3.2.2 Meso Level

At this level , intertextuality and speech acts are to be studied.

4.3.2.2.1 Intertextuality :Table (no.11) explains the occurrences of intertextuality in the news report (no.2).

No.	Types of Intertextuality		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Manifest	Direct	4	44.44%
		Indirect	5	55.55%
Total:			9	99.99%

4.3.2.2.2 Speech Acts: Table (4.12) shows the occurrences of speech acts in the news report (no.2).

No.	Types of Speech Acts	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Representatives (Assertives)	8	88.88%
2.	Directives	1	11.11%

Total:		9	99.99%

4.3.2.3 Macro Level

Theme and ideology are to be examined, at this level.

4.3.1.3.1 Theme (Power)

Russia power is obvious here in this report," he said it was a matter of time before the road is "fully controlled," paving the way for the capture of the city, which he described as being " in an operative encirclement."

4.3.1.3.2 Ideology

RT ideology is clear in this report to send a message that Russia is the winner of this war and the Russian army progress is continuous till the fully control of the cities. "joined" , RT uses this verb to describe the occupation of Russia of the cities of eastern Ukraine (as CNN calls the Russian operations in Ukraine). "We've seen this story about a small town …. That was touted as invincible. Plenty of Ukrainian soldiers got grinded there because they didn't spare any," he said, this quotation is stated here in this report to symbolize the superiority and dominance of Russia and in the same time the false allegations of Ukraine . To RT ,Ukraine misleads its people and the world by sending false massage of its strength but the reality says another thing. Ukraine sends its soldiers to death "got grinded"

, by the Russian army. Ukraine is losing this war and it is a matter of time till the full control, says RT.

4.4 Discussion of the Results

4.4.1 Micro level

4.4.1.1 Active and Passive Voice

The analysis reveals that the journalists of RT and CNN use active and passive voice with active has the highest percentages , because they want to focus on the doer not on the action.

4.4.1.2 Transitivity

4.4.1.2.1 Processes

The analysis shows that the journalists of CNN and RT use the material process at the most, in the collected data . They focus on the physical action and what happen in the world.

4.4.1.2.2 Participants

After analysing the data, it is obvious that the actor and the goal have the highest percentages. Since this research analyses war , the focus is on the actor and the goal that are affected by this war.

4.4.1.3 Modality

The news channels journalists of RT and CNN use a small number of modals to prove their objectivity.

4.4.1.4 Vocabulary

CNN and RT use over wording throughout the report and the language of violence and terror are utilized mostly in their reports.

4.4.1.5 Rhetorical Devices

Both channels use metaphors and rhetorical questions to express themselves cleary and to be close to their audience .

3.4.2 Meso Level

3.4.2.1 Intertextuality

Both channels utilize the direct and indirect intertextuality to prove its credibility.

3.4.2.2 Speech Acts

CNN and RT use the representatives (assertive) mostly throughout the reports.   ### 3.4.3 Macro Level

3.4.3.1 Theme

They use multiple themes in their news reports like (dominance, power and violence).

3.4.3.2 Ideology

CNN and RT express their ideologies which are their countries ideologies according the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. Through using language as a tool to influence their audience and manipulate their people and the world.

Chapter Five

Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the conclusions that are reached after the analysis of the collected data.

5.2 Conclusions

After analysing the data, the researcher has reached the following conclusion:

1. CNN and RT use multiple syntactic structure like activation and passivation with activation has the high frequency , they use over wording as well as metaphor and rhetorical questions throughout their reports.

2. They use direct and indirect manifest intertextuality and the most repeated speech acts are representatives.

3. The most repeated theme in the collected data is power.

4. Anti-war and human rights are the most repeated ideological concepts that are revealed via the analysis.

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Appendix

(1)   News Report (no.1)

https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/30/europe/ukraine-drone-operators-forest-kreminna-intl-cmd/index.html

'The enemy is always looking for us': Hidden in the forest, Ukraine's drone operators are crucial to the eastern battle

By Tim Lister, Frederik Pleitgen and Konstantin Hak, CNN

Published 6:43 PM EST, Mon January 30, 2023

Near Kreminna, UkraineCNN —

The pine forests near the city of Kreminna have become one of the hottest combat zones in the war in eastern Ukraine. Almost every weapon seems to be at work here, artillery, howitzers, tanks and

mortars. But perhaps the most important is the smallest: The reconnaissance drone.Ukrainian and Russian forces have been fighting here for nearly two months. If the Ukrainians can break through Russian lines and reach Kreminna, they can disrupt Russian supply routes.But it's a much tougher proposition than it was at the end of last year. Russia's defensive lines have been reinforced with heavy weapons and long-range artillery.CNN accompanied two Ukrainian drone operators from the Dnipro-1 battalion deep into the forest to see how they operate. The journey was along tracks of soft sand amid a thin canopy of pine trees, through an eerie landscape dotted with streams and bogs.

Ukraine is relying on Soviet-era tanks to hold the line until Western reinforcements arrive

A year ago, one of the drone operators, who gave his name only as Ruslan, was a snowboard and kayak instructor. Now he's watching the movement of Russian armor along the forest tracks, expertly skimming his drone across the treetops.Arriving at a foxhole, the drone operators' vehicles are carefully maneuvered under tree cover. The Russians have reconnaissance drones too, and Ukrainian drone operators are regarded as high-value targets.Ruslan points to the east and north: the Russians were 7 kilometers (4 miles) away in one direction and 3 kilometers in the other.A Mavic-3 drone – the workhorse of Ukrainian reconnaissance, even if it weighs less than a kilogram and has a

span of just 35 centimeters (14 inches) – ascends with a whir from a nearby clearing. It can remain aloft for about 45 minutes and travel up to 30 kilometers in total, feeding high-definition video back to the operators.Their job is to provide real-time intelligence on Russian positions and movements, and also to help Ukrainian artillery fix targets. Hidden among the woods are emplacements of 120mm and 82mm artillery, and somewhere nearby a massive Krab 155 mm howitzer, one of about 50 donated by Poland. The Ukrainians like the Krab for its accuracy and power, but it is demanding to maintain.

"This is artillery battle all day," Ruslan says.

He's not exaggerating. There are few moments of silence during the hour CNN is with Ruslan and his colleague. Artillery shells launched from a nearby Ukrainian emplacement make a deafening roar. The crump of Russian shelling echoes in the distance."The last month, the Russian army are here more and more," Ruslan says. "The overall line is static but all the time the positions change. Sometimes the Russians go (forward) and sometimes our army goes."That means firefights in the thick of the forest. But it also means that Ukraine is getting through its artillery munitions fast. Trucks rumble through the nearby village of Yampil with fresh supplies, but Ruslan says Ukraine needs much more artillery ammunition here.In the nearby village of Zarichne, just beyond the forest fringe, Russian artillery targets a rickety bridge every day.

There is not much of the village left standing: Those remaining here are mainly the elderly and the destitute. They either can't or won't leave.One of them – a 69-year-old who gives her name as Valentina – tells CNN the Russians shell the village all the time."It is dangerous but what can we do? We endure. Sometimes we hide. But now it is too cold in the basement, you can freeze to death there," she says."Look at my windows, there is no glass remaining. Just wood and plastic we used to cover them. And it's cold."She looks down the street wistfully, as if remembering better times.Valentina's daughter is far away in Dnipro, central Ukraine, but she won't quit her home to join her. After all, she has planted potatoes. "I won't abandon them," she says with a tired smile.Zarichne – like large swathes of this region – was occupied by the Russians for much of last year before being liberated by Ukrainian forces in the fall. But liberation came in name only. The slopes and forests beyond echo to the impact of rockets and shells. Ukrainian units are dug in among the pines and sand nearby, where unexploded ordnance litters the forest floor.

A woman wheels a bicycle through the devastated village of Zarichne, eastern Ukraine.

Matthias Somm/CNNA few miles away, the Dnipro-1 battalion has its own drone workshop, where NATO-issue grenades are carefully sawn in half to be reconstituted as small, free-fall munitions. Under a table sits a slab of C-4 plastic explosive. It's a painstaking and

demanding process, churning out one a handmade munition every 20 minutes.Some of the unit's drone munitions are essentially fragment grenades dropped on infantry – and especially fighters from the Russian private military contractor Wagner fighters around Bakhmut. Heavier versions can damage or disable a tank.Does the West's decision to arm Ukraine with tanks bring it closer to war with Russia?

The commander of Dnipro-1's drone unit goes by the name of Graf. He says that drones have become "one of the most important elements of this war – both for us and the enemy. Nothing can be executed without drones."And that makes his men targets. "At the moment the drone operator is one of the most dangerous jobs. The enemy knows we are the eyes of our army. As soon as they locate a drone operator, they use all kinds of weaponry: barrel artillery, MLRS, tanks," Graf says."We have high rate of casualties among the pilots, the enemy is always looking for us." Graf says.No Ukrainian soldier on this front is under the illusion that this conflict will be won soon. Across the eastern Donbas region, brutal, attritional battles are unfolding: Gains and losses are measured in hundreds of meters.Graf echoes what every Ukrainian soldier says seems to say. "Now we are receiving tanks – so we need more tanks. And we need aviation and long-range missiles. We have to destroy the enemy on its approach to Ukraine. That's the only way to win."And for his unit, Graf dreams of getting US Predator attack

drones. That's not under consideration in Washington, DC.In the meantime, Ruslan and hiscolleagues hold the line – and in Zarichne, Valentina prays for them."God damn those Russians coming to other people's land!" she says. "I stand for Ukraine, I was born here, my ancestors are from here, I always was pro-Ukraine and always will be."

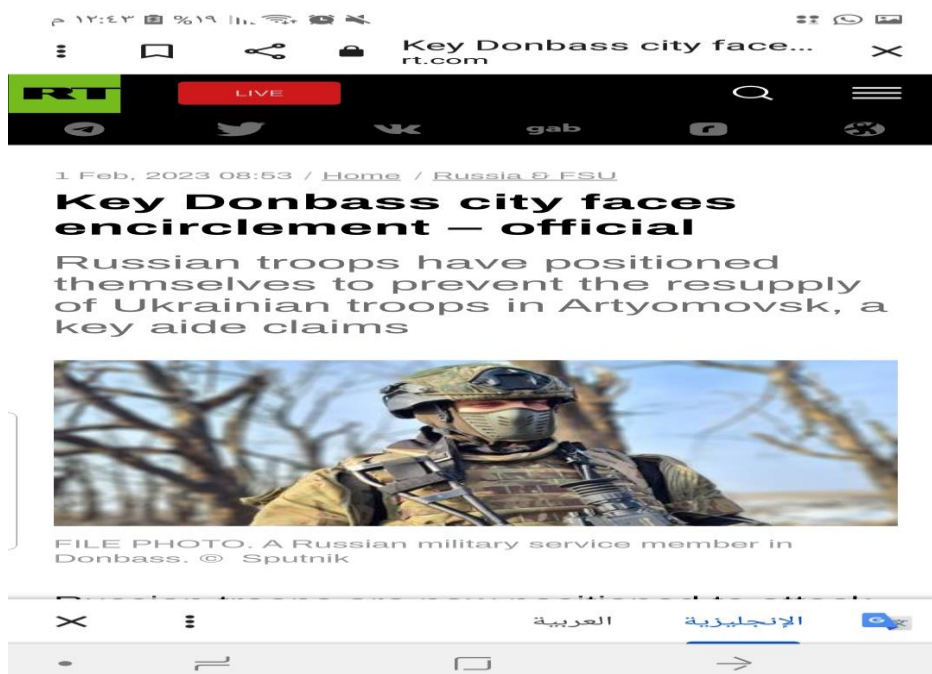### (2)   News Report (2)

RT

1 Feb 2023

Key Donbass city faces encirclements-Official

Russian troops have positioned themselves to prevent the resupply of Ukrainian troops in Artyomovsk, a key aide claims.

Russian troops are now positioned to attack the only road that Kiev can use to resupply troops in Artyomovsk, a gubernatorial aide has claimed.

The city that Ukraine calls Bakhmut is of strategic importance as part of Ukrainian defense lines in Donbass.Yan Gagin, a military expert who serves as an advisor to Denis Pushiln, the acting head of the Donetsk People's Republic , said Russia has already hit the enemy supply convoys near Artyomovsk.Speaking on Russian television on Wednesday, he said it was a matter of time before the road is "fully controlled," paving the way for the capture of the city, which he described as being " in an operative encirclement."

Artyomovsk is part of a 70 km Ukrainian defense line created since Kiev initiated the fighting in Donbass in 2014. Russia claims sovereignty over the city along with the rest of the Donebass people's Republic .The province joined Russia in October after a referendum , which Kiev rejected as a " sham".There have been reports of Russian

advancement near Artyomovsk in recent weeks. After intensive fighting in mid−January , Russian troops captured the town of Soledar, located just northeast of the city.Pushilin warned the media against overhyping the importance of Artyomovsk or any other particular settlement for the outcome of the military operation. The Ukrainian side attached symbolic value to it, as they previously did with Soledar , he argued in an interview on Tuesday."We've seen this story about a small town …. That was touted as invincible. Plenty of Ukrainian soldiers got grinded there because they didn't spare any," he said.Artyomovsk has strategic value because its capture would allow further advancement , Pushilin acknowledged .But losing other towns and cities would do damage of similar scale, he said.