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**A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF ONLINE NEWS: THE UNFOLDING
OF THEMATIC STRUCTURE**

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**A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF ONLINE NEWS: THE UNFOLDING
OF THEMATIC STRUCTURE**

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ABSTRACT

As geopolitical tensions escalate with the onset of the conflict instigated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the global media's narrative unfolds in a strikingly diverse manner across different languages. This research seeks to delve into the thematic profile of online news regarding the conflict, focusing particularly on its portrayal in English and Brazilian Portuguese. The primary objectives of this research are threefold: (i) to examine the thematic construction of online news in both languages, (ii) to compare and contrast the construal of Theme in English and Brazilian Portuguese, and (iii) to delineate the Thematic behavior of the news in both languages. Leveraging Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL) as the theoretical and methodological framework, the analysis of Theme (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2004; 2014) is employed as an effective tool for comprehending how the flow of information is organized within the text. It provides insights into the linguistic manifestation of the discourse, a fact that warrants close observation for its construal. The research corpus consists of two English news articles from The New York Times and BBC, alongside two Portuguese articles from the Brazilian news websites UOL and G1. In both English newspapers, it was observed a Thematic construal pattern similar to the one observed in Brazilian Portuguese. Subtle differences emerged in how the Russia-Ukraine conflict is thematically constructed in English and Brazilian Portuguese online news articles. These differences may reflect broader cultural or journalistic trends, although further analysis is required to draw more definitive conclusions.

Keywords: Thematic construal; Online news; Russia-Ukraine conflict; English; Brazilian Portuguese.

RESUMO

À medida que as tensões geopolíticas se intensificam com o início do conflito desencadeado pela invasão da Ucrânia pela Rússia em fevereiro de 2022, a narrativa da mídia global se desenrola de forma notavelmente diversa em diferentes idiomas. Esta pesquisa busca se aprofundar no perfil temático de notícias online sobre o conflito, concentrando-se particularmente em sua representação em inglês e português brasileiro. Os objetivos principais desta pesquisa são: (i) examinar a construção temática de notícias online em ambos os idiomas; (ii) comparar e contrastar a construção de Tema em inglês e português brasileiro; e (iii) delinear o comportamento Temático das notícias em ambos os idiomas. Por meio da Linguística Sistemico-Funcional (SFL), a análise do Tema (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2004; 2014) é empregada como uma ferramenta eficaz para compreender como o fluxo de informação é organizado dentro do texto. Ele fornece insights sobre a manifestação linguística do discurso, um fato que merece observação atenta para sua construção. Os dados da pesquisa consistem em dois artigos de notícias em inglês do The New York Times e da BBC, ao lado de dois artigos em português dos sites de notícias brasileiros UOL e G1. Em ambos os jornais ingleses, foi observado um padrão de construção Temática semelhante ao observado no português brasileiro. Surgiram sutis diferenças na forma como o conflito Rússia-Ucrânia é construído tematicamente em artigos de notícias online em inglês e português brasileiro. Essas diferenças podem refletir tendências culturais ou jornalísticas mais amplas, embora seja necessária uma análise mais aprofundada para se chegar a conclusões mais definitivas.

Palavras-chave: Construção Temática; Notícias online; Conflito Rússia-Ucrânia; Inglês; Português brasileiro.

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Table 1: Unmarked Themes in Declarative Clauses

Table 2: Marked Themes in Declarative Clauses

Table 3: Unmarked Themes in Imperative Clauses

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

SFL – Systemic- Functional Linguistics

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

NYT – The New York Times

G1 – Brazilian news portal

UOL – Brazilian news portal

Conventions:

Theme – used for the function of Theme.

Rheme – used for the function of Rheme.

Subject - name of structural function (element).

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introductory Remarks

The age of digital communication has revolutionized news dissemination. The advent of the Internet, with its boundless capacity and nearly instantaneous transmission speed, has dramatically expanded the volume, velocity, and variety of news content that is generated and consumed every day. With the online news landscape, which includes online news outlets, blogs, social media platforms, and messaging apps, gone are the days when people waited for the morning or evening paper to get updated on current events. Today, news breaks at a relentless pace, updated in real time, and is readily accessible from any device with an internet connection (VOLKOVA; JANG, 2018).

The accessibility of this vast amount of information affords several advantages such as access to a diverse range of perspectives, the ability to explore subjects of interest, and almost instantaneous updates on global events. It promotes a participatory news culture where anyone can share information, express views, and engage in public discourse. However, the sheer volume of online news content also presents challenges. Distinguishing credible information from misleading or false news is increasingly difficult in this information overload, and the line between fact and opinion often blurs (TANDOC JR; LIM; LING, 2018).

Furthermore, the algorithm-driven content curation can reinforce echo chambers and polarize public opinion, creating a distorted perception of reality (WILDING, 2018). The need for real-time reporting can compromise the depth and quality of news, as the urgency to publish may overshadow the need to verify information or provide thorough analysis. That said, the abundance of information generated from online news is a double-edged sword. It offers unprecedented access to information but also presents significant challenges related to information quality, cognitive overload, echo chambers, journalistic quality, and the economic sustainability of news outlets.

Linguistics provides tools to study news articles by focusing on word usage and sentence structure. For example, the writer's point of view can be inferred from their lexical choices. Describing a crowd as "protesters" versus "rioters" shows different perspectives on the same event. In addition, the grammatical structure of sentences can reflect an intention to emphasize certain aspects of information over others. Therefore, through a linguistic lens, we can read between the lines and build informed understandings about the presented information.

In this sense, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) provides a theoretical and methodological framework for analyzing daily language use. The present research leans on the

relevant and influential work of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), Fuzer and Cabral (2014), Espindola (2013), among others. SFL perceives language as a multifaceted social semiotic system, with a keen focus on the interaction between language and its context. Under this perspective, texts are seen as social interaction foundations formed through strategic linguistic choices, as elucidated by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014).

Therefore, this study will analyze online news related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. This conflict was chosen for analysis due to its global impact and extensive media coverage, making it a range of news reports. Moreover, these news reports are not mere factual accounts but are constructed through specific linguistic choices reflecting various themes, perceptions, and narratives. By examining these linguistic choices, we can understand the various meanings a text may convey, helping us understand the Russia-Ukraine conflict's portrayal and interpretation through language.

The current research will apply SFL principles to online war journalism, specifically concerning the Ukraine-Russia conflict, to understand the complexities of news discourse. Journalistic production of news is governed by a complex system where journalists, the "narrators" in this context, make selections from their linguistic resource pool. These choices are not arbitrary but are guided by journalistic guidelines, editorial policies, and societal norms. Hence, the shaping of the news narrative is not solely an individual journalist's initiative but rather a result of a collective, structured process operating within the news organization. This systemic approach influences the reader's interpretation of events significantly.

In SFL, language functions as a semiotic network where meanings are born out of juxtapositions within the linguistic framework (MORLEY, 1985). The world of language is not a fixed construct; rather, the conscious choices made by the speaker or writer embed meaning into discourse, considering the spectrum of alternatives that the language system offers (FUZER; CABRAL, 2014).

SFL can thus provide an analytical tool for understanding and deconstructing layers of meaning in a text. When discussing a complex and volatile context like war, the language used in reporting is often loaded with multiple layers of meaning, perspectives, and implications. SFL concepts like transitivity patterns (who does what to whom), lexical density (proportion of content words to total words), modality (language's capacity to express degrees of certainty or obligation), and mood (whether a clause is declarative, interrogative, or imperative) (HALLIDAY, 1994; HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014) can provide insights into news discourse analysis.

Additionally, 'Theme' and 'Rheme' analysis, which examine information structure within a clause, can highlight how journalists structure information and guide the reader's attention. This present study will specifically focus on the thematic structure of the texts, an aspect of the textual metafunction of SFL, to illuminate how the information structure within a text guide our understanding and interpretation.

The current study intends to consider the 'context of culture', which incorporates societal norms, traditions, and cultural factors influencing language use, and the 'context of situation', referring to specific circumstances in which language is used. The 'context of situation' can be further dissected into 'field' (subject or topic under discussion), 'tenor' (relationship dynamics between the individuals involved), and 'mode' (method of communication) (SILVA; ESPINDOLA 2013). The relevance lies in the need for a deeper understanding of how war-related events are portrayed in news media and provides a clearer picture of the language used in this context.

Needless to say, many previous studies on this topic simply discuss and comment on the matter, without supplementing with a lexicogrammar analysis. Additionally, it is important to emphasize that a decontextualized analysis could lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Therefore, SFL offers a comprehensive and contextualized way of approaching such analysis, providing a three-dimensional perspective by considering the text in its context of use, observing occurrences in relation to other uses within the same register. This means comparing and contrasting the usage of certain linguistic aspects in different news reports about war-related events. This way, even subtle changes in language use across similar contexts can be noted and understood.

1.2 The Context of Research

The Ukraine-Russia conflict, which began in 2014, has multifaceted historical, political, and cultural roots. This crisis was triggered by Ukraine's decision to stop preparations for an Association Agreement with the European Union. This act catalyzed the expansive Euromaidan protests. Following this, the removal of Ukraine's pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovich, aggravated Ukraine-Russia relations and culminated in the controversial annexation of Crimea by Russia and the unceasing conflict in Eastern Ukraine (BEBIER, 2015).

Fast forward to 2022, the Ukrainian-Russian conflict has undergone significant transformations, interspersed with periodic violent escalations and protracted standoffs, solidifying its position as a highly unpredictable scenario on the global geopolitical stage. An

upswing in ceasefire violations and casualties throughout this year underscored the fragility of peace initiatives and the intensifying humanitarian crisis.

In early 2022, the notable accumulation of Russian military forces near the Ukrainian border ignited apprehensions of a substantial military offensive. This situation catalyzed heightened global vigilance, with international leaders and diplomats immersing themselves in fervent negotiations to avert a major escalation. Despite these concerns, a war was forestalled. Nevertheless, the scenario retained its instability, punctuated by intermittent shelling incidents and skirmishes, which incessantly disrupted the precarious peace (LIADZE, 2022).

Moreover, the contentious issue of Crimea's annexation, still devoid of international recognition, persisted as a contentious point throughout 2022. The Crimean Tatars, an ethnic minority in opposition to Russian rule, continued to encounter discrimination and repression, igniting apprehensions regarding human rights infringements in the area.

In the context of Eastern Ukraine, the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, which maintain Russian support, remained central to the conflict. The Minsk agreements, designed to curtail the hostilities in these regions, remained largely unfulfilled. A variety of conflict resolution attempts, including prisoner exchange negotiations and the establishment of new crossing points along the contact line, demonstrated some progress but insufficient to affect a substantial shift in the ground situation¹.

The year 2022 also marked the heightened prominence of cyber warfare in the conflict narrative. Ukraine and Russia each pointed fingers at the other for initiating cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, underlining how the battlefield had extended into the digital domain.

In the midst of these ongoing developments, the role of media as a crucial informant for the global populace became increasingly pronounced. However, the complexities and the fluid nature of the conflict situation presented formidable challenges to journalism. Media discourse on the war was frequent with varying narratives and perspectives shaping the public's understanding of the events, polarized narratives, misinformation, and propagandistic elements (NYGREN, 2015). This scenario made the task of understanding the situation and its global implications increasingly complex, underscoring the imperative need for a systemic and critical deconstruction of news discourse.

Using an SFL lens to examine journalistic discourse in a war context allows for a deeper understanding of how language choices, narrative structure, and contextual factors contribute to the construction of a specific perspective on war. This understanding can be instrumental in

¹ Source: <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15172.doc.htm>

promoting media literacy, encouraging a critical reading of news, and fostering a more nuanced public discourse on war and conflict.

The journalistic genre represents a rich and dynamic field of study that has been the breeding ground for a plethora of research endeavors. This multidimensional realm, teeming with diverse narratives, communicative techniques, and cultural contexts, allows for a comprehensive exploration of how media shapes and reflects societal attitudes and values.

The potency of journalistic discourse lies in its omnipresence and influence. It plays an instrumental role in creating public opinion, shaping political landscapes, and even influencing policy-making processes. Consequently, it has been scrutinized from various academic perspectives, including linguistics (BOLIVAR, 1994; ANSARY and BABAI, 2004; SHOKOUHI and AMIN, 2010; OGUNGBE, 2012; CAFFAREL-CAYRON and RECHNIEWSKI, 2014; SABAO, 2016).

This multifaceted nature of journalistic discourse lends itself to a variety of research methodologies and thematic focuses. As such, it continues to be an abundant source of exploration, promising insights that can enhance our understanding of the complexities of contemporary media communication.

The interest in researching war news originated from the researcher's involvement in two distinct but related academic groups, both of which leverage the theoretical and analytical tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and are deeply engaged with the investigation of professional discourse.

The first group, known as *CPI da LSF* (Investigative Professional Contexts of SFL), focuses on applied linguistics and SFL within professional settings. Being part of this group has allowed the researcher to be introduced to the intricate and fascinating dynamics of professional communication, offering her a broad perspective on how language functions in these environments. This, in turn, fostered her curiosity about how such mechanisms operate in high-stakes, global contexts such as war journalism.

Parallel to this, the participation in the ongoing 'metaphor project' at HEDRA² further stirred the interest in news discourse. This project in particular examines newspapers from

² HEDRA organizes research projects across a wide range of healthcare and healthcare communication topics, and in a variety of global contexts. The goal is to generate rigorous and significant research gains. In particular, to connect the developed with developing world scholars, to improve the research understanding of healthcare issues. HEDRA cooperates with private and public universities, institutions, hospitals, clinics, and other organizations, and facilitates the formation of international research partnerships. Current project themes embrace the global pandemic as an experience shared by practitioners of many kinds as well as by patients. <https://hedra.eu/projects/>

different countries, using SFL to analyze metaphors about the COVID-19 pandemic. The work with HEDRA has accentuated the powerful role language plays in shaping public perception during global crises, a theme that is closely linked with war journalism. This understanding of how metaphors can inform, distort, or even manipulate the audience's interpretation of crises was an incentive to the analysis of war news.

Hence, the commitment to both *CPI da LSF* and HEDRA has organically guided the researcher towards investigating war news. From the intricate dynamics of professional discourse to the subtle power of metaphors in shaping public understanding during crises, the skills and insights gained from these two projects have contributed with the necessary tools to undertake this research.

1.3 The purpose of the study

Within the realm of professional discourse, the present study finds its locus in the journalistic discourse, analyzed through the prism of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). A fundamental part of this analysis is the concept of 'Theme', a central element of the textual metafunction in SFL. This approach provides a method for examining the structure and arrangement of journalistic messages.

In light of the above, the main objective of this research is to *investigate the thematic construal of online news concerning the Russia-Ukraine conflict in both English and Brazilian Portuguese*³. By zooming in on this specific geopolitical conflict, the study seeks to offer a contextual analysis of how this international crisis reporting is thematically structured in these two languages.

To guide the investigation and achieve these objectives, the following research questions are proposed:

- How are Themes related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict constructed in online news articles in English and Brazilian Portuguese?
- What are the similarities and differences in the thematic construction of online news articles in these two languages when covering the Russia-Ukraine conflict?

³ The choice to specify the "Brazilian Portuguese" variant in this research, as opposed to simply "Portuguese," stems from the significant linguistic and cultural differences between Brazilian Portuguese and European Portuguese. These differences can influence the thematic construal of news and the perspectives presented. On the other hand, while there are indeed variants of English (e.g., American, British, Australian), for the purpose of this research, the distinctions between them in the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict were not deemed as influential or significant as the distinction between Portuguese variants. Hence, a general reference to "English" was considered sufficient. It's essential to note that this decision was made to ensure clarity and precision in the research context and not to undermine the importance or nuances of any language variant.

- Are there any distinctive features of thematic behavior in the news about the Russia-Ukraine conflict in English and Brazilian Portuguese?

Translating this research questions, it is possible to present the following specific objectives that guide the present research:

1. Observe the thematic Construction of Online News in the Two Languages: This objective involves an examination of how Themes, specifically related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, are established and advanced in online news articles across both languages.
2. Compare and Contrast the Theme construal in the Two Languages: By contrasting the thematic constructions in English and Brazilian Portuguese, this objective aims to uncover any cultural, social, or journalistic nuances unique to each language in the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
3. Describe the thematic Behavior of the News in English and Brazilian Portuguese: This objective is to depict the thematic behavior in online news coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in both languages.

1.4 Organization of the Research

After this introductory chapter, which has established the context, objectives, and motivation for the research, this thesis further unfolds into other four chapters.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

In the second chapter, a theoretical framework is established, providing the necessary background to comprehend and describe the phenomena under study. It will thoroughly discuss the principles of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), along with an exploration of professional and journalistic discourses. The goal of this chapter is to substantiate the research within the realms of established theories, equipping the study with a solid theoretical foundation.

Chapter 3: Analytical Procedures

The third chapter lays out the specific procedures employed in this research. It systematically outlines the data collection methods, the justifications behind the choice of thematic analysis, the selection of online news articles in English and Brazilian Portuguese, and the focus on the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Chapter 4: Analysis: Unfolding of thematic structure.

The fourth chapter delves into the analysis of the data collected, applying the theoretical and methodological framework established in the previous chapters. This section provides an examination of the thematic construction within the chosen online news articles, leading to an understanding of how the Russia-Ukraine conflict is represented thematically in both languages.

Chapter 5: Concluding Remarks: What Themes tell us for online news?

In the concluding chapter, the research is drawn to a close by summarizing the main findings and reflecting upon the research objectives. This chapter not only underscores the broader implications of the findings of the study, but also acknowledges the limitations faced during the research process, thus paving the way for future scholarly inquiries.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical ground that underlies this research opening with a succinct review of Applied Linguistics, moving towards journalistic discourse, and wrapping up with a panorama of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

In this sense, Section 2.1 sets the stage by defining professional discourse within Applied Linguistics. This sets the groundwork for an exploration of journalistic discourse to be discussed in Section 2.2, which unravels journalistic discourse, its characteristics, its distinctive attributes, types, along with its role and significance in shaping public opinion.

Concluding with Section 2.3, the focus shifts towards the perspectives undertaken by this study within the theoretical framework of SFL. It illuminates a set of concepts that underlie the analysis of thematic structures in online news coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, in both English and Brazilian Portuguese. Moreover, it discusses the metafunctions of language and concludes with a review on the thematic structure in English and Portuguese languages.

2.1 Applied Linguistics: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Language Use

Applied Linguistics, an interdisciplinary field of study, stands as the bridge between linguistic theory and real-life phenomena, incorporating insights from a multiplicity of disciplines, such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, computer science, among others. Its central goal lies in addressing language-related concerns in diverse domains such as education, health, law, technology, and business, transforming abstract theoretical knowledge into practical solutions (TRAPPES-LOMAX, 2004).

One significant application of Applied Linguistics finds itself within professional discourse – the language used in professional contexts. Each professional field features a unique discourse with its distinctive linguistic structures, vocabularies, and styles of communication. Understanding the nuances of professional discourse is important to promote clear communication and to create a supportive work setting.

Gunnarson (1997) defines professional discourse as an academic field that branched out from applied linguistics and applied discourse analysis. It nests within the broader framework of languages for specific purposes (ESP) or specialized languages.

This field emerged in synchrony with similar areas such as organizational discourse, workplace discourse, institutional discourse, and more recently, corporate discourse. Each of these specialized discourses pertains to unique communication forms within their respective professional settings. Such is the interdisciplinary nature of professional discourse research that

it draws upon multiple academic disciplines like sociology, psychology, anthropology, and linguistics. Each can lend valuable insights into human behavior within specialized contexts, as Irimiea (2017) points out.

Consider, for instance, journalism, where professional discourse involves particular linguistic constructs and conventions to present information. Understanding these norms equips journalists to craft more impactful news reports or articles, ultimately fostering a deeper connection with the audience. As such, the next subsection extends this understanding of Applied Linguistics to other significant fields, broadening the scope of its practical implications.

2.2 The Journalistic discourse

In the realm of journalistic discourse, an array of writing and reporting techniques is employed to effectively deliver information to the audience. This specific type of communication, characterized by its unique language, style, and structure, forms the language used by journalists to convey news to their readership or viewers. This discourse is distinguished by its adherence to specific standards and guidelines, which can vary based on the media platform and the language used.

Journalistic communication, while aiming to transcend the mere relay of events, often grapples with the complexities and challenges inherent in its foundational principles. It is characterized by a unique linguistic framework, evident in the deliberate selection of vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric. This mode of communication purports to be anchored in principles like objectivity, balance, and clarity (STAVITSKY; DVORKIN, 2008).

These principles, in theory, aim to deliver information that is accurate, unbiased, and easily understood by a global readership. Objectivity, often hailed as the cornerstone of journalistic discourse, emphasizes the imperative for reporting that consistently upholds impartiality and fairness (MARAS, 2013). However, one must critically question: Can true objectivity ever be achieved? Every journalist, being human, carries inherent biases, perspectives, and backgrounds that can subtly influence their reporting. While the ideal of impartiality suggests news should be presented without favoring any side, the reality is that complete detachment is challenging. Similarly, fairness, though a noble goal, can sometimes be compromised, intentionally or not, by external pressures such as editorial policies, advertiser influence, or political agendas.

Balance, another fundamental element, accentuates the importance of presenting a well-rounded report by incorporating multiple perspectives. Yet, this very notion of balance can sometimes lead to "false equivalency," where two opposing views are presented as equally valid even if one lacks substantial evidence or credibility.

Moreover, while multiple viewpoints can enrich a report, they don't guarantee a comprehensive understanding of the topic. It's possible for certain nuances or aspects to remain unexplored, even with diverse inputs, leading to a potential superficiality in coverage.

Beyond these principles, clarity and brevity, though fundamental to impactful journalism, can sometimes oversimplify complex issues. In the quest for succinctness, crucial details might be omitted, potentially skewing the narrative. Journalists, in their bid to convey intricate concepts lucidly, might inadvertently dilute the essence of a story, especially when avoiding jargon or technical terms.

Journalistic discourse employs a myriad of techniques to engage the audience and enhance the quality of news reporting. These include compelling headlines and leads, direct quotations to bolster credibility, and, due to the new technologies, the use of multimedia elements.

The structure of journalistic texts is an essential aspect that influences how the information is presented and perceived by readers. Some key structural aspects in journalism are:

- a. **Inverted Pyramid:** This is the most commonly used structure in journalistic writing. The inverted pyramid arranges information in descending order of importance. The most vital facts are presented first (the broad base of the pyramid), followed by supporting details, and finally any background or less important information (the pointed tip of the pyramid). This structure is beneficial in quickly conveying the most crucial information and retaining readers' attention in an era of short attention spans. It also allows editors to trim articles from the bottom up if space is limited without losing the main points (HERAVI, 2022).
- b. **Hourglass Structure:** Another structure utilized in journalism is the hourglass structure, which combines elements of the inverted pyramid and the narrative form. The story begins with a summary lead, delivering the most important information upfront, like the inverted pyramid. Then, it transitions into a chronological narrative that offers a detailed account of the events. This transition point, often marked by a phrase such as "but then," is termed as the "turn." The hourglass structure is often used for crime or

disaster reports, where the outcome is stated first, followed by a step-by-step account of what happened (HERAVI, 2022).

- c. **Kabob Structure:** Also known as the circle or sandwich structure, the kabob starts with an anecdote about a specific person or event, then broadens to discuss the general issues or trends, and finally circles back to the initial anecdote at the end. This structure is usually employed in feature stories or human-interest articles, where the goal is to link individual experiences to larger societal issues or trends (HARROWER, 2010).
- d. **The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) Formula:** This structure is commonly used in feature writing and is similar to the kabob structure. It begins with an anecdote, followed by the generalization or nut graph (which explains the relevance of the story), then provides supporting evidence or body, and concludes with a recapitulation or kicker (which often links back to the opening anecdote) (HARROWER, 2010).
- e. **Lead-body-conclusion structure:** This straightforward structure begins with a lead that captures the reader's attention, followed by the body of the text that provides more details and background information, and ends with a conclusion that summarizes the story or offers a takeaway. This structure can be employed across different forms of journalism, including news reports and feature stories.

The choice of structure depends on the type of news story, the intended audience, and the medium of publication. Techniques such as compelling headlines and leads, direct quotations, and multimedia elements are used to enhance the quality of news reporting. News reports, either written or spoken, provide an account of newsworthy events, and are designed to inform audiences about recent happenings. They constitute the backbone of journalism, offering the public crucial information about current events, issues, and individuals.

Typically, news reports adhere to the inverted pyramid structure, presenting the most critical information first, followed by supporting details and background information (POTTKER, 2003). This structure accommodates readers' limited attention spans, allowing them to quickly grasp the key points of the story and decide whether to go into deeper into the details.

News reporting and chronicling are two types of presenting news. Both are integral to the field of journalism, complementing each other to provide a comprehensive overview of events. News reporting provide a concise, timely summary of recent events, often employing the inverted pyramid structure. involves the process of collecting, verifying, and presenting information about events, issues, or people. The central objective of reporting is to inform the audience about newsworthy events in a timely, accurate, and impartial manner. A standard

report follows a structure that includes a headline, a lead, the main body, and often, a concluding summary. The headline is designed to capture reader's attention and summarize the main point of the article. The lead provides the essential details of the story, while the main body expands on these details and provides context. The conclusion may offer a summary or reiterate the most important points.

Matthiessen, Teruya and Lam (2010) define chronicling as a meticulous, factual, and sequential documentation of events. In the sphere of news media, it functions as a historical archive, offering readers an exhaustive portrayal of past occurrences. The format of chronicles often adheres to a chronological arrangement, emphasizing significant happenings and timeframes. The account stays faithful to the truth, underscoring precision, and particularities.

Contrary to the objective of reporting—which is to deliver a succinct and immediate interpretation of events—chronicling aims to present a thorough and lasting record for future use. This process involves the narration of events and can incorporate discussions that encourage such narrations, including media conversations and law enforcement questioning. Such narratives can encapsulate a brief duration, a person's life (biographical and autobiographical accounts), or even extended durations (historical accounts). The organization of chronicle texts heavily relies on temporal relationships, often using time as a contextual boundary for narratives.

An interesting outlier within the chronicling genre is the news report. Despite its roots in narrative recounts, the news report has transformed to focus on a central or significant event, exploring it extensively from multiple angles.

In conclusion, journalistic discourse is a complex yet effective system for conveying news and information to audiences worldwide. Its adherence to the principles of objectivity, balance, clarity, and brevity tries to ensure that news reporting remains accurate, impartial, and accessible. With a blend of various reporting techniques and writing styles, it not only informs but also engages the audience, underscoring the vital role of journalism in society.

2.3 Systemic-Functional Linguistics: A prism for analysis

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), introduced by Michael Halliday, regards language as a comprehensive social semiotic system. Halliday's model is rooted in the relationship between language and context, viewing text as a strategic collection of linguistic choices that realize social interaction (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014).

At its core, SFL proposes that language is a semiotic system where meanings emerge from contrasts within the linguistic structure. It emphasizes the speaker's or writer's deliberate choices as crucial for embedding meaning into discourse (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014). This viewpoint introduces the concept of 'instantiation' as what defines the nexus between the text and the system - the relationship between the comprehensive systemic potential of language and the individual text. The text (instance) and the system (potential) are two sides of the same linguistic coin, with instantiation forming the seamless bridge between them (BYRNES; THOMPSON, 2019).

According to SFL, language is functional, grounded in how it is used and structured for that purpose. Hence, SFL prioritizes the analysis of texts over examining isolated clauses, prioritizing usage over mere grammaticality (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014). This approach demonstrates a stratified system: the extralinguistic context of culture and context of situation; and the linguistic elements of semantics, lexicogrammar, and phonology/graphology (SILVA; ESPINDOLA, 2013). Language, as envisioned by systemic-functional linguists, operates on several interconnected levels. At the helm is the semantic level, which signifies the meanings being communicated, a direct outcome of the choices a journalist, as a language user, makes in crafting the report.

Succeeding this level is the lexicogrammar stratum. This involves the selection of specific words and the deployment of grammatical structures that serve as the conduits for expressing these meanings. Lastly, there's the phonology level, or in the case of written text, the graphology level. This concerns the physical manifestation of the language - the sounds in spoken discourse or the written symbols in written text that comprise the final presentation of the message.

The categories at lower levels actualize those at higher levels, resulting in an interconnected network. Each layer within this model highlights how language functions in a given situation, with the context of culture and situation providing the backdrop against which the news event unfolds (OLIONI, 2010).

The semiotic system, context, is represented by an outer layer - the context of culture - and an inner layer - the context of situation. The former encompasses "sets of beliefs, social practices, values, social relations, and other cultural aspects that may influence how we make meanings" (OLIONI, 2010). The latter, on the other hand, examines the specific situation pertinent to any given text, focusing on studying the circumstances in which words are spoken. It is within these situations that words derive their meaning, placing emphasis on what is being said, who is saying it, and who it is being said to (listener/reader). In the context of situation

there is the concept of 'register', illustrating variations in language use based on situational context. It ties closely with 'field', 'tenor', and 'mode', indicating the social action, participant roles and relationships, and communication channel, respectively.

Building on this, Halliday (1985, p.53) proposed three primary metafunctions of language: the ideational, interpersonal, and textual.

[...] a clause is the product of three simultaneous semantic processes. It is at one and the same time a representation of experience, an interactive exchange, and a message. At this point, however, we need to introduce more general functional concepts to which we can relate these three aspects of the meaning of the clause. These are the three kinds of meaning that are embodied in human language as a whole, forming the basis of the semantic organization of all natural languages. We shall refer to these as 'metafunctions', and use for them the terms ideational, interpersonal, and textual. (HALLIDAY, 1985, p.53)

These metafunctions reflect the diverse purposes that language serves, representing experiences, engaging with others, and organizing messages. This multifunctional perspective of language presents a comprehensive framework for understanding and analyzing language use and the dynamic process of meaning-making. Each metafunction influences the choices made in constructing a text, and all three are simultaneously present in every language use instance. Thus, by examining a text through these metafunctions, we can gain a deeper understanding of how meaning is made in a specific context.

The ideational metafunction is concerned with representing experiences and articulating the logical relationships among them. Through the lens of the ideational function, language serves as a tool for constructing our comprehension and interpretation of reality. This scope encompasses experiences of the external world, our introspective thoughts and feelings, and the creations of our imagination. The ideational metafunction is further bifurcated into experiential and logical segments. The experiential function grapples with the representation of events, processes, and participants, while the logical function revolves around the intricate interrelationships and connections among these elements, similar to a chain of logical relationships.

Following the ideational metafunction is the interpersonal one, which orchestrates the interactions between the speaker or writer and the listener or reader. This function allows language to express social relations, engage with others, and articulate personal attitudes and judgments. It signifies and reflects our roles, attitudes, beliefs, and emotions, while also mapping out power dynamics in the dialogue. Furthermore, it covers a broad spectrum of

aspects such as our emotional state or mood, the mode or modality of our expression, and the types of speech acts we use, thereby serving as a multi-dimensional representation of our interaction (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014).

Lastly, the textual metafunction focuses on the organization of messages in a manner that is cohesive and aligns with the context. It governs the arrangement of linguistic elements to denote the flow of information within a text and its interaction with the broader context. This function facilitates the creation of a text that logically coheres and can be easily understood by a reader or listener. It employs mechanisms like Theme and Rheme, cohesion, and other textual structuring devices. The Theme is essentially the starting point or subject of a message - it forms the foundation upon which a clause or sentence is built. It sets the scene, steering the direction of subsequent sentence development.

Conversely, Rheme is the segment of the message that expands, refines, or supplements the Theme. It frequently introduces fresh details or extends an explanation, expansion, or reaction to the concept established in the Theme. In unison, the Theme and Rheme weave a coherent and meaningful narrative, assisting readers or listeners in tracing the communicator's line of thought.

These metafunctions collaboratively influence the choices a speaker or writer makes while constructing a text. They are invariably present in every instance of language use (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014). By investigating a text through the metafunctions, it is possible to investigate the process of meaning creation in a given context.

In sum, SFL, as this layered model helps illuminate the way language operates in a specific situation, such as the reporting of the Ukraine-Russia conflict in online news. Here, the context of culture might include the overall geopolitical situation, historical relations between the two nations, and societal norms around conflict and warfare. The context of situation would involve the immediate circumstances of the conflict, the specific events being reported, and the intended audience for the news report.

Moving forward, the next section will look into the textual metafunction, with a special emphasis on elements like the 'Theme' and 'thematic structure'.

2.3.1 Textual Metafunction

This research is centered on an examination of the textual metafunction, with a particular emphasis on how Themes are instantiated as the message unfolds. As proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2009), the textual metafunction encompasses the arrangement of

grammatical elements, linking them to the situational context or register, and to the variable of mode of communication.

Through the textual metafunction, meanings are constructed and conveyed in a cohesive and understandable way. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2009), effective communication occurs when these meanings are presented as information shared and comprehended by both the speaker and the listener.

The importance of this metafunction becomes evident when analyzing a text as a semantic, multifunctional unit, realized in clauses. Each clause contributes to the overall function of the text, playing its own role in the transmission of complex meanings within a situated context (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2009, p. 53-54) as will be discussed next.

2.1.2 Thematic Structure

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), in describing the thematic structure, introduce the concepts of Theme and Rheme as the two parts that constitute a clause. The Theme is understood as the first constituent of the clause and is defined as "the element that serves as the starting point of the message, and which positions and guides the clause within a context" (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014, p.64). On the other hand, the Rheme refers to the rest of the clause. Consequently, the Rheme conveys the ideas introduced by the Theme. Regarding this Theme-Rheme organization, Ventura and Lima-Lopes (2002) emphasize that the organization of a clause into Theme-Rheme typically occurs in the following manner: in the part corresponding to the Theme, information is placed whose function is to create a link between the clause being constructed and the clauses that precede it in the text; or alternatively, to establish a context for understanding what follows, that is, the Rheme.

This Theme-Rheme organization, according to Ventura and Lima-Lopes (2002), pertains to the thematic structure of the clause. Turning the focus to the structure of information, one encounters the Given-New relationship. The Given is deemed as the shared knowledge element between the participants, referring to archived, retrievable or inferable information. It comprises what is predictable by context but can also be retrieved in the text and situation. The New, or new information, as highlighted by Fuzer and Cabral (2014), "consists not only in what is unknown to the listener/reader, what is unpredictable (that which the speaker/writer wants their interlocutor to become aware of), but also what is non-retrievable from the preceding discourse" (p. 128). The perception of what is Given or New can vary depending on the participants and their degree of knowledge about the topic. Therefore, in considering

information as new or given, it is pertinent to observe the context of culture and the context of situation in addition to what is expressed by lexicogrammar elements (OLIONI, 2010).

While the structure of information is dictated by the choices of new and given data presented in the text, the thematic structure is realized by the lexicogrammar choices that hold the initial position in the clause. As articulated by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), the Theme could be a nominal, adverbial, or prepositional group. The general rule implies that everything appearing at the beginning of the clause ending up to the first experiential element (participant, process, or circumstance) is considered as the Theme.

However, Ventura and Lima-Lopes (2002, p. 03) claim that occupying the initial position in a clause does not define the Theme. Instead, it is the means by which the function of the Theme is accomplished. According to the authors, there are four primary hypotheses regarding the role played by the Theme within a text, which are also associated with the guiding role for the reader (p.13). These are: (i) the types of meanings placed in the thematic position vary depending on the writer's purpose; (ii) the reader or listener's reactions to texts can be manipulated by altering the content of the Themes in the texts; (iii) different patterns of thematic progression correlate with different genres; and, (iv) the content of the Theme correlates with the method of development of a text or a segment, a method perceived by the reader of the text (VENTURA; LIMA-LOPES, 2002, p. 13). Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) introduce thematic systems and categorize Theme based on its status as marked and unmarked and its composition, namely, simple, or multiple Themes.

The concept of "markedness" in writing often happens when the author aims to evoke a sense of contrast in the reader. For instance, an unexpected topic or element might be given prominence to cause surprise or grab the viewer's attention. This can happen through thematic position, i.e., placing an unexpected element at the start of the clause to disrupt the usual flow.

When speakers or writers (including news writers) select the most commonly used Theme structure, this is called "unmarked", as it follows conventional expectation. For example, in the clause, "COVID-19 cases are on the rise in urban areas," the Subject "COVID-19 cases" is an unmarked choice. This is a common, predictable structure where the Subject is the starting point or Theme of the clause.

However, if the writer chooses an element other than the Subject to start the clause, it is called a "marked" Theme. This approach can bring an unexpected twist, evoking curiosity and setting the stage for a different perspective. For instance: "In urban areas, COVID-19 cases are on the rise." Here, the phrase "In urban areas" becomes the marked Theme being the Circumstantial element the one chosen to be placed in first position in this clause.

In journalistic discourse, a common grammatical structure involves the use of declarative clauses where the Subjects act as Themes. These are referred to as unmarked choices, serving as the starting point of the message. For instance:

Table 1: Unmarked Themes in Declarative Clauses

Clause	Theme	Rheme
The stock market plummeted today due to economic uncertainties.	The stock market	plummeted today due to economic uncertainties.
The tech giant Apple has unveiled its latest smartphone.	The tech giant Apple	has unveiled its latest smartphone.

Source: BBC News

In both these clauses, the Subject acts as the unmarked Theme choice, indicating that the clauses follow a standard declarative structure. The focus is on providing information about the subjects - "The stock market" and "The tech giant Apple". This is a common strategy in news writing to put the spotlight on the main actors or entities in the news event.

Contrastingly, there are instances where the Theme is marked, intentionally highlighting specific aspects of the message. Consider the examples:

Table 2: Marked Themes in Declarative Clauses

Clause	Marked Theme	Rheme
Due to economic uncertainties, the stock market plummeted today.	Due to economic uncertainties	the stock market plummeted today.
Unveiling its latest smartphone, the tech giant Apple has made headlines.	Unveiling its latest smartphone	the tech giant Apple has made headlines.

Source: Adapted from BBC News⁴

Here, "Due to economic uncertainties" is the marked Theme, emphasizing the reason for the plummeting of the stock market. In the clause "Unveiling its latest smartphone, the tech giant Apple has made headlines," "Unveiling its latest smartphone" is the marked Theme, underscoring the action taken by Apple.

⁴ The same example was used to illustrate how the same sentences can differ due to its thematic structure.

Furthermore, the imperative mood is frequently utilized in online news, particularly in headlines or calls to action. As is illustrated by the examples in table 3:

Table 3: Unmarked Themes in Imperative Clauses

Clause	Unmarked Theme	Rheme
Invest wisely as the stock market plummets.	Invest	wisely as the stock market plummets.
Check out Apple's latest smartphone unveiled today.	Check out	Apple's latest smartphone unveiled today.

Source: Adapted from BBC News

In essence, the deliberate selection of Themes—either marked or unmarked—holds substantial impact on a reader's perception and interaction with the news content. The news source employs this linguistic strategy to guide the focus of the reader and construct contrast within the discourse. In this case, the Predicator or the verb is considered the unmarked Theme. For example, in the clauses "Invest wisely as the stock market plummets" and "Check out Apple's latest smartphone unveiled today," the verbs "Invest" and "Check out" are the unmarked Themes.

3. Methodology

This chapter delineates the methodological framework employed for conducting the textual analysis of online news articles from the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The sources under investigation include well-known news websites from the United Kingdom (BBC), the United States (The New York Times), and Brazil (G1 and UOL).

In alignment with the nature of the study, a qualitative descriptive methodology was applied to the data set at hand, which, as described by Litosseliti (2018), focuses on elucidating patterns, structures, and textual descriptions. This type of methodology goes in tune with the analytical approach offered by SFL. The choice of this method was largely determined by the nature of the data under examination – online news articles – over which the researchers had no control. The articles analyzed in this study exist independently of the research being conducted, having been created and published by external entities. The role of the research process was solely observational and analytical, examining these articles in their original state, with no capacity for alteration or modification. The 'unchanged' nature of these online news

articles significantly influenced the selection of the employed methodology, offering a source of data that is both unaltered and unbiased.

Consequently, the qualitative descriptive method was deemed an appropriate fit for the analysis of the selected pieces of news, focusing on the thematic construction. In this sense, this methodological choice facilitates an exploration of the linguistic choices and their contextual implications within the online news discourse on the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

This chapter is divided into two key subsections: 3.1. Dataset Selection, and 3.2. Analytical Procedures. These two parts further elaborate on the linguistic examination and offer comprehensive details on the various analytical strategies adopted for data gathering and interpretation.

3.1. Dataset

The dataset for this study was curated from two Brazilian news websites—UOL and G1—and two English-language media outlets—BBC from the UK and The New York Times from the US. The goal was to obtain a sample that offers diverse perspectives on a comparable Theme and scope. To this end, one news article was selected from each of these sources, ensuring they were published within a similar timeframe. This strategy ensured consistency in the contextual background across the different articles, providing a stable foundation for the comparative analysis. These selections span different linguistic and cultural contexts, and yet are united by their focus on a common geopolitical theme, further enhancing the study's comparative value. The subsequent sections will detail the methodological approach adopted to extract, analyze, and interpret the data.

3.1.1 Why BBC?

For the present research, one of the selected sources for the dataset was the BBC News website. BBC News is an operational business division of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) responsible for the gathering and broadcasting of news and current affairs in the United Kingdom (UK) and around the world. BBC News stands as a respected, expansive, and highly reputable global news entity. With its headquarters in London, it offers news coverage across multiple platforms not only in English but also in over 40 different languages⁵. The rationale behind this selection is that as the largest provider of online news in the UK, it ensures access to a vast and diverse range of online news in English, in which the linguistic choices made offer

⁵ Source: <https://www.reutersagency.com/en/partners/connect-bbc/>

a rich dataset to explore the interaction between the textual metafunction and the broader systemic-functional linguistic framework within a real-world context.

Moreover, the BBC's prominent role and substantial influence within the UK media cannot be overstated. As such, its coverage acts as a key benchmark for assessing the overall performance of UK media. This analysis therefore contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the journalistic conventions and practices prevalent within the UK.

As of May 2023, the BBC News website accumulated an impressive total of 655 million visits. When examined globally, the highest number of visitors hailed from the United States, followed by the UK, India, Canada, and Australia⁶. This international reach underlines the BBC's role as a key player in global news dissemination and amplifies the value of its inclusion in this study. The ensuing sections will delve into the specifics of this data, providing a comprehensive view of the textual and thematic structures within the selected news pieces.

In news production, it is not uncommon for multiple entities to collaborate. In the case of the BBC report analyzed, there is evidence that information provided by Reuters, a leading international news agency, was used in crafting the story. The participation of a third party such as Reuters introduces an additional layer of complexity when trying to discern responsibility and perspective in a news story (AGUIAR, 2016).

Reuters, like other news agencies, has its own journalistic standards, guidelines, and methods of sourcing information, all of which can influence how news is reported. They gather, verify, and distribute news, and their content is widely syndicated in other media outlets, like the BBC. When the BBC uses information provided by Reuters, it effectively integrates Reuters' journalism standards and perspectives into its own reporting.

This amalgamation of sources and perspectives can have various implications in the context of our study. Statements or facts may originate from Reuters' reporting but are presented within the larger narrative framework constructed by the BBC. Therefore, it may be challenging to distinguish whether certain thematic decisions, linguistic nuances, or the emphasis on particular details reflect the editorial approach of the BBC, Reuters, or both.

Second, the integration of multiple sources can influence the depth and breadth of the news narrative. The BBC's utilization of Reuters' information might lead to a more comprehensive report, incorporating diverse facets of the conflict and potentially offering a more balanced or global perspective.

⁶ Source: <https://www.semrush.com/website/bbc.com/overview/>

Lastly, the collaboration between news organizations like the BBC and Reuters can impact the perceived reliability and credibility of the news. Audiences may view the information as more trustworthy given the involvement of multiple reputable news organizations, each with their own process of fact-checking and verification.

However, it is important to remember that the news text analyzed here is ultimately published under the BBC banner, suggesting that the BBC has the final say in how the story is presented, including the thematic structure, language choice, and the framing of events, regardless of the original source of certain pieces of information. Hence, in our analysis, we should still primarily consider the BBC as the responsible party for the construction and presentation of the news narrative.

3.1.2 Why The New York Times?

The New York Times was selected as another source for this study due to its prominence and extensive influence, both within the United States and globally. The New York Times is widely recognized as a standard setter for other US news media, often guiding the tone and direction of news narratives nationwide.

Historically, it has been noted that The New York Times not only determines the news agenda for other media outlets but also wields considerable influence over American leaders and US foreign policies (COHEN, 1961; DAVISON, 1976; GRABER, 1980; WEISS, 1974).

The New York Times has experienced significant growth in its readership over recent years. As of 2021, its total subscriptions amounted to an impressive 7.8 million, marking a 42% increase from 2019. This substantial growth, which included 8 million paid subscribers across both print and digital platforms, reflects The New York Times' successful expansion as a globally recognized news source⁷.

This assertion emphasizes the substantial impact that The New York Times has on shaping public discourse and policy-making processes, thus providing a rich and potent source for our analysis. The exploration of thematic structures and linguistic choices within the articles of The New York Times allows for an examination of how news discourse is crafted and presented in one of the most influential media outlets.

⁷ Source: <https://blog.gitnux.com/new-york-times-readership-statistics/#:~:text=FAQ-,What%20is%20the%20average%20daily%20circulation%20of%20the%20New%20York,editions%20is%20roughly%203.8%20million.>

Furthermore, by analyzing these articles, this research aims to enhance our understanding of journalistic practices within the United States, as represented by this renowned publication.

3.1.3 Why G1?

Launched on September 18, 2006, G1, the news site of *Globo*, marked a significant step in the evolution of digital journalism in Brazil. The creation of G1 represented a hybrid structure that incorporated professionals, knowledge, and infrastructure from both TV Globo's journalism and Globo.com – a company established by *Grupo Globo* (formerly *Organizações Globo*) in 2000 to provide internet services and content⁸.

G1 was *Globo*'s pioneering endeavor in digital journalistic content, a first-of-its-kind initiative designed specifically for the digital sphere. While *Globo*'s television programs had an online presence, their teams were not dedicated to producing exclusive digital content. Globo.com, on the other hand, had ventured into creating journalistic websites but none with a fully dedicated newsroom for round-the-clock news coverage.

With the advent of G1, *Globo* fully committed to digital journalism. By 2008, G1 had already assumed a leading position among Brazil's news portals in terms of audience size. Nowadays, it reaches an average of more than 55 million users monthly, according to Comscore data. Being part of the largest media conglomerate in Brazil carries significant implications. It has expansive reach with newsrooms spread across all states in Brazil, a strong presence on key social media platforms. This extensive reach and influence make G1 significantly important in shaping public discourse and opinion in Brazil. Hence, it is an important source for our research, offering perspectives on the role and impact of media in the world's fifth-largest country.

3.1.4 Why UOL Notícias?

UOL (*Universo Online*) has been part of Brazilian internet culture since its inception in 1996. As the country's first content portal, UOL not only introduced online content to the Brazilian public but also played a decisive role in popularizing internet access throughout the nation. It started as one of the firsts service providers in the era of dial-up connections, and its influence has continued to grow.

Founded by Luiz Frias, who also presides over the *Grupo Folha*, UOL is closely associated with one of the country's most renowned newspapers, *Folha de S. Paulo*. In 2005,

⁸ Source: <https://g1.globo.com/institucional/sobre-o-g1.ghtml#>

the portal and the newspaper, both administered by the Frias family, merged into a single media group, integrating their operations, and amplifying their reach and influence.

As per May 2022 data from ComScore, UOL has firmly established itself as an integral component of the Brazilian internet landscape. Its digital content reaches an astounding 82.4% of the connected population, amounting to over 108 million unique users⁹.

UOL *Notícias's* extensive reach within Brazil and its historic role in the country's digital evolution highlight its significance as a source for this research. As part of the prominent *Grupo Folha* and one of the earliest and most influential internet platforms in the country, UOL offers valuable insights into the media practices and news dissemination strategies within Brazil's dynamic digital landscape. The choices and narratives shaped by UOL undoubtedly influence the perceptions and opinions of a large segment of Brazil's connected public, making its inclusion crucial for a comprehensive understanding of media influence in Brazil.

3.2. Analytical Procedures

The analytical procedure for this study was carried out in two primary stages: Data Collection and Data Analysis. Each stage is detailed below, elaborating the specific methodology implemented.

3.2.1 Data Collection

News articles were sourced directly from the websites of the chosen news outlets: BBC News, The New York Times, G1, and UOL. The reason for the selection was that these articles needed to be published after the declaration of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Furthermore, attention was given to ensure that the selected articles were addressing similar aspects of the conflict and were published within the same time frame. This strategy facilitated a consistent contextual background for the subsequent analysis across the different news platforms.

The method employed to collect the articles from the websites consisted of simple text extraction, involving copying the body text of the articles and pasting it into a document (docx) for further analysis. This process excluded any non-textual elements such as images, links, and advertisements. This exclusion was crucial for maintaining the focus on the textual content of the articles, which was the primary subject of analysis in the study. The exclusion of images, links, and advertisements also ensured that the analysis was not influenced by visual or

⁹Source:

<https://canaltech.com.br/empresa/uolinc/#:~:text=Uma%20das%20empresas%20pioneiras%20da,portal%20de%20conteúdo%20no%20país.>

interactive elements, which could introduce an additional layer of complexity and potential bias.

Despite the focus on text, it should be recognized that the articles varied in length and structure. Specifically, the BBC article in Appendix A, which contains 1033 words; as for The New York Times article in Appendix B, it only comprises 243 words. This stark difference could reflect various factors, such as differing editorial standards, depth of coverage, or the intended audience of each publication. Additionally, the excerpt from G1 in Appendix C contains 482 words, and the excerpt from UOL in Appendix D has 362 words.

This variation is indicative of the distinct characteristics of each website and the linguistic and cultural preferences of their respective readership. Thus, it is important to consider these differences during analysis, as they may influence the presentation and interpretation of the conflict. Upon comparison, it is clear that the BBC news article is considerably more extensive in terms of word count, containing approximately four times the number of words found in the New York Times article. Nevertheless, all sources provide significant coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, highlighting the significant events and implications of the situation.

3.2.2 The Analysis

The data collection was followed by a qualitative analysis phase, adopting a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach. In particular, Theme structure in the exploration of journalistic discourse was given direct attention.

The process of data analysis began by transferring all the selected news articles into a standard Word document. This decision facilitated a more organized and streamlined analysis, allowing for systematic marking and notation. The articles were then divided into their respective sentences or clauses, the basic units of analysis in our investigation.

The first analytical step involved identifying the process in each sentence or clause and underlining it. In Systemic Functional Linguistics, the process refers to the verb or verb phrase that represents the happening or the state of being described in the clause. Following the identification of the process, we moved identifying marked and unmarked Themes and their corresponding Rhemes. During this analysis, it was observed how Themes and Rhemes were structured and what they revealed about the information flow within the text. Special attention was paid to marked Themes, as these deviations from the typical sentence structure often carry additional significance or emphasis.

After identifying the Themes and Rhemes, the data was transferred to four individual tables - one for each news article. These tables were structured with four columns, designated for 'Theme,' 'Markedness,' 'Function,' and 'Classification,' respectively.

The inclusion of these specific categories - 'Markedness,' 'Function,' and 'Classification,' was derived from patterns and observations that became apparent during the reading and segmentation of the news articles.

1. 'Markedness' refers to the differentiation between marked and unmarked Themes. An unmarked Theme typically starts with the Subject or the Predicator, aligning with traditional English sentence structures, while a marked Theme involves the deviation from this standard structure to emphasize certain information or highlight its importance.
2. 'Function' concerns the role of the Theme within the context of the sentence. This could encompass the subject of the action (Participant), the action itself (Process), or the circumstances surrounding the action (Circumstance).
3. 'Classification' refers to the broad categories into which each Theme was assigned, based on its content and context within the discourse. In this analysis, 'Classification' denoted whether the Theme was 'Human,' 'Non-human,' 'Time,' 'Angle,' or 'Place.'

We created these categories to provide a structured and thorough understanding of the construction and choice of Themes within each news piece, effectively revealing how these Themes could guide reader's understanding of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The items below describe these categories in:

Human Themes: Highlighting individual actors or groups, this classification is key in identifying who is being foregrounded in the discourse. This can indicate who the perceived primary actors or influencers are within a given context.

Non-human Themes: This category includes Themes that are objects, ideas, or non-human entities. An emphasis on non-person Themes can suggest a focus on conceptual or philosophical ideas, or on actions and events rather than individual actors.

Time Themes: By emphasizing time, a text can show the importance of temporal aspects such as urgency, historical context, or future plans. This can be used to structure narratives and arguments effectively, linking past, present, and future.

Place Themes: Place Themes set the spatial context of the discourse, providing a location for events or actions. They can be used to establish a connection to specific geographical areas, communities, or cultural contexts.

Angle Themes: These Themes reveal the standpoint or perspective from which a topic is approached. The angle can disclose underlying attitudes, opinions, or values that shape the narrative.

This categorization allowed for the unearthing of implicit strategies within the linguistic construction of news narratives. Following the classification, each Theme within these categories was counted to yield an understanding of the thematic structure within each article, as in any qualitative analysis numbers are seen as a quantitative turbulence and this need to be interpreted to subside and confirm the descriptions and interpretations allowed by the unpacking of lexico-grammatical elements present in the texts. The tally was then used to calculate the percentage representation of each classification category within the Theme of each news piece.

This approach enabled a direct comparison of thematic structures across the different news articles. By juxtaposing these percentages, patterns and variances across the media outlets could be effectively discerned. This offered valuable insights into how differing linguistic choices and thematic structures can shape the portrayal and perception of the Russia-Ukraine conflict across these diverse news outlets.

By analyzing the frequency and percentage distribution of these categories within the thematic structure of each article, we were able to discern significant differences and similarities in the thematic presentation of the news across these four platforms. This, in turn, shed light on the varying ways in which news narratives are constructed and manipulated within journalistic discourse, offering a nuanced understanding of the systemic-functional linguistic framework within the context of global news reporting.

Although this study primarily employs qualitative analysis, the counting of occurrences within the classified Themes serves an essential role. While it is not a quantitative analysis in the traditional sense (LAZARATON, 2005), this counting method allows us to see the distribution and prevalence of various Theme types within each news article.

This method allows us to establish a relative scale of representation for each Theme classification within the different texts. By calculating the percentages of each Theme type, it will be possible to draw comparisons and contrast the thematic structures of each news article more effectively.

Thus, the ultimate goal is to enhance our understanding of the thematic patterns in these journalistic texts and discuss how these patterns reflect the linguistic choices and structures within the broader systemic-functional linguistic framework.

For the purpose of clear understanding and ease of reading, the full texts of the news articles under consideration can be viewed in Appendices A, B, C, and D. To facilitate the referencing and cross-examination of the textual materials, the clauses have been assigned a numbering system (Appendix E). This appendix provides each text numbered in accordance with their occurrence. This ensures that when a specific example is presented in the analysis without its original context, the reader can locate the complete text and context in the corresponding appendix using the provided code.

The excerpts from the Brazilian news articles, originally published in Portuguese, have been translated into English. These translations are presented in the footnotes and are conducted in a 'free translation' style and were carried out by the researcher herself with an aim to convey the essence of the original text while making it accessible to a broader, non-Portuguese speaking audience. The choice of 'free translation' allows for a faithful representation of the tone, style, and cultural nuances inherent in the source text.

Having laid the groundwork with our methodological approach, we now transition to the next stage of our research—the analysis. In the following chapter, we will dive into a detailed examination of the data gathered from the selected news articles.

4. Analysis: Unfolding of thematic structure

In the context of online news regarding the Ukraine conflict, the principles of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) can illuminate the role language plays in constructing and conveying meaning. Each news article, as an instantiation of the linguistic system, encapsulates a wide range of choices made from the system potential, serving the purpose of informing, persuading, or provoking readers' thoughts about the conflict.

The context of situation - specifically field, tenor, and mode - becomes especially pertinent in this scenario. The 'field' corresponds to the subject matter or the topic of the discourse. In the context of the Ukrainian conflict, the field circumscribes military engagements, geopolitical maneuvers, historical events, and their repercussions. This results in specific terminologies, idioms, and expressions prevalent in news articles. For instance, the language might be teeming with military jargon, geopolitical lexicon, or references to significant historical events, all of which help construct a comprehensive narrative around the

conflict. Likewise, references to past and present international laws, treaties, and significant events in the history of the two countries are likely to be incorporated into the discourse.

The ‘tenor’, or the social relations between the participants, is notably complex in this context. The relationship between the news source (as information relayers) and the audience (as information consumers) is a critical aspect. News outlets must maintain a certain level of objectivity and neutrality, yet their portrayal of events can subtly hint at a particular stance. The interpersonal dynamics between the nations involved in the conflict are also reflected in the discourse. The choice of words, tone, and narrative can reveal how each party is perceived or portrayed. The portrayal of various stakeholders in the conflict - Ukraine, Russia, NATO, and other international players - might reveal certain interpersonal dynamics. These dynamics could be reflected through linguistic choices like the usage of passive or active voice, attribution of responsibility, and evaluative language that can indicate biases and viewpoints. For instance, an article might use a passive voice to distance an actor from a controversial action, or active voice to emphasize an actor's role in a positive development.

In the unfolding of the analysis, an important aspect to consider is the geopolitical status of the news sources under consideration. The dichotomy of central versus peripheral countries - represented here by the UK and the US as the central entities, and Brazil as the peripheral one - could significantly influence the narrative style, tone, and the overall thematic development of the news content (HALL, 1997).

The logic underpinning this thought is rooted in the power dynamics inherent in global geopolitics. The central countries, such as the UK and the US, often wield significant influence on international relations and global discourse. Consequently, their narration of events, especially those concerning international conflict like the Ukraine-Russia crisis, often serves as the primary global narrative. These narratives might inherently harbor certain biases that reflect their geopolitical interests and perspectives.

On the other hand, peripheral countries like Brazil might provide a distinct narrative. Though they engage in international affairs, their relative influence on global events is less direct compared to the central countries. This difference in power dynamics could lead to a variation in the linguistic choices, narrative structure, and thematic progression in their news reporting. Therefore, it is essential to recognize that the power dynamics between central and peripheral countries can shape their respective narratives. This understanding forms a backdrop for the comparative analysis of news pieces from these different geographical and geopolitical contexts.

The final element, 'mode', pertains to the channel of communication. In contemporary online journalism, the mode is often written language disseminated via digital platforms. This influences the linguistic features that are chosen to ensure the effectiveness of the communication. For example, journalists may opt for concise clauses to facilitate easy reading on screens or supplement the text with multimedia elements like videos or infographics to enrich the reader's understanding. The digital platform also offers an avenue for interactivity features like comment sections, social sharing buttons, and hyperlinks allowing readers an opportunity to engage with the content, contribute their perspectives, and access related information. Despite these interactive possibilities provided by the digital platform, our study is focused on the written text provided by the news outlets.

The data collected throughout this study offers insights into the complexities inherent in the categories outlined for this research. These categories play a significant role in structuring the investigation and will support the discussions that follow. Through the dataset analysis, three major categories emerged. The following sections will delve into these categories further, providing an investigation of thematic choices together with their functions.

4.1. Markedness of online news

The first category under analysis is markedness, a significant aspect in the structuring of news discourse, shedding light on both overt and subtle communicative strategies deployed on the news. The unmarked Themes, representing standard thematic choices, typically align with the grammatical Subject of a clause. On the contrary, marked Themes diverge from this norm, bearing greater communicative weight to accentuate perspectives or details.

4.1.1 BBC: “Ukraine conflict: Kyiv braces for Russian assault”

The BBC news article, (APPENDIX A), with approximately 1000 words, exhibits a significant prevalence of unmarked Themes. Of the total 59 Themes identified, 71% were unmarked, while the remaining 29% were marked Themes. This data implies several key insights about the structure and style of this particular news report. This predominance of unmarked Themes can be attributed to the inherent structure of news reporting which often chooses direct, subject-verb-object clause construction, reflecting the conventionality and simplicity of unmarked Themes. Furthermore, unmarked Themes can establish clarity and straightforwardness in delivering information, a feature that is typically favored in news

discourse for its ability to convey key points unambiguously to a broad reader base. The following instance presents an occurrence of such and is discussed next.

Appendix E – News A.1

The sound of gunfire	has echoed through Ukraine's capital Kyiv as Russian tanks were filmed entering the city for the first time.
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

In the clause, "*The sound of gunfire* echoed through Ukraine's capital Kyiv as Russian tanks were filmed entering the city for the first time," the unmarked Theme, "The sound of gunfire," aligns with the Subject.

The use of an unmarked Theme here, especially at the beginning of the article, suggests that the first sentence sets the tone for the rest of the article, telling the reader that the information they will read is being reported as objectively as possible. There's no linguistic emphasis placed on any one part of the sentence, allowing all details to be absorbed equally by the reader.

This efficiently highlights the prevailing conditions in Kyiv, drawing attention to the ongoing conflict. A prompt understanding emerges that the clause composition aims to emphasize the violence's impact within this context, initiating the clause with "the sound of gunfire" as a striking introduction.

Although it is an unmarked Theme, the linguistic choices employed for the Theme convey what the Ukrainian population might have experienced at the moment when the war tanks rolled into their country's capital for the first time. Therefore, the news report do not merely present facts—it also offers readers a vivid portrayal of the war-torn scenario for the reader.

In this case, an atmosphere of immediacy and urgency is constructed, effectively provoking empathy and concern from the reader towards the situation in Ukraine. The employment of sensory language like "sound" and "gunfire" delineates a vivid picture of the reality on the ground, enabling readers to vicariously undergo the upheaval and disorder.

Consequently, it can be inferred that the linguistic selections were tactically made, considering the news outlet's international scope. This not only disseminates information but might also influences readers' perceptions across different countries, this underlines the potency of linguistic choices within journalistic discourse, and their capacity to shape readers' perceptions and comprehension of unfolding events.

The next passage from BBC reads:

Appendix E – News A.11

Overnight,	Kyiv was hit by blasts, with at least one block of flats damaged and several civilians injured.
Marked Theme	Rheme

In the context of this clause, the term "*Overnight*" serves as the marked Theme, standing apart from the conventional subject-predicate structure and instead foregrounding the temporal aspect of the event. This marked Theme choice instantly captures the reader's attention and sets the temporal stage for the subsequent information.

The marked Theme, "*Overnight*," underlines the sudden and abrupt nature of the occurrence, accentuating the sense of danger and urgency inherent in the situation. It provides a time reference that situates the events, giving readers an understanding of when these devastating events took place. The remaining part of the clause: "Kyiv was hit by blasts, with at least one block of flats damaged and several civilians injured," functions as the Rheme of the clause. It details the results of the event and the aftermath. This part is where the new information is relayed to the reader, fulfilling the purpose of news dissemination.

The choice of a marked Theme here relates to the broader structure and objective of online news reporting. It adheres to the principles of news value, providing important, timely, and impactful information right at the outset to engage readers and convey the seriousness of the situation, which illustrates the flexibility and impact of thematic choices in news reporting.

The next clause under consideration is:

Appendix E – News A.12

Russia	has denied carrying out strikes.
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

In this instance, the unmarked Theme is "*Russia*," corresponding to the Subject of the clause, the choice of Theme here remains consistent with the conventional grammatical structure of a clause, where the subject is typically the Theme. The focus on "Russia" as the unmarked Theme places the actions and statements of the country at the forefront of the discourse. This draws immediate attention to Russia as the primary participant in the ongoing conflict, thus reflecting the global concern and interest in Russia's role and actions.

The remainder of the clause, "has denied carrying out strikes," functions as the Rheme of the clause. It presents new information about Russia's denial of any military strikes, thereby providing the readers with a fresh development in the conflict narrative.

Overall, the selection of "Russia" as an unmarked Theme contributes to this objective by keeping the global audience engaged with the key player in the conflict and the unfolding events. It underlines the strategic use of Thematic structures in online news reporting, reinforcing the narrative flow and informing readers' perception of the events.

Appendix E – News A.38

On Friday afternoon,	Russia's defense ministry announced it had captured the Antonov airport.
Marked Theme	Rheme

The clause under consideration is: "*On Friday afternoon*, Russia's defense ministry announced it had captured the Antonov airport." In this instance, "*On Friday afternoon*" functions as a marked Theme, setting the temporal frame for the information that follows. This focus on time is crucial in establishing the immediacy and currency of the information, a characteristic especially important in news reporting.

The marked Theme, "On Friday afternoon," not only provides a timestamp but also builds a context for the events, which allows readers to piece together a chronological narrative of the conflict. It is particularly effective in keeping readers informed on the pace and progression of events.

The remainder of the clause, "Russia's defense ministry announced it had captured the Antonov airport," is the Rheme providing the core information concerning the event that took place in the time frame set by the marked Theme. This information is significant as it gives details on Russia's actions and their impact on the ground, which is the capture of a strategic location, the Antonov airport.

By employing a marked Theme in this clause, the text emphasizes the unfolding nature of events and the significance of timely information in conflict reporting. It also allows for the temporal context to be highlighted, which is essential in understanding the development and escalation of military engagements. This structure is illustrative of how news reporting employs Thematic choices to enhance the communication of critical information to its audience.

Another excerpt from the BBC piece of news reads:

Appendix E – News A.15

As the second day of fighting began,	Moscow, which is attacking from the east, north and south appeared to have Kyiv firmly in its sights.
Marked Theme	Rheme

Here, "As the second day of fighting began" serves as the marked Theme, laying emphasis on the temporal progression of the conflict and setting a stage for the information that follows. The marked Theme accentuates the chronological development of the conflict. This is fundamental in a news report as it constructs a narrative timeline, assisting readers in tracking the evolution and progression of the conflict. By marking the onset of the second day of fighting, the reader's attention is drawn to the persisting and escalating nature of the conflict.

The Rheme of the clause, "Moscow, which is attacking from the east, north and south appeared to have Kyiv firmly in its sights," presents the primary information of this particular report. It highlights Moscow's multiple-front offensive and its apparent focus on Kyiv. This part of the clause provides crucial insights into the strategies and objectives of the conflict as perceived by the news outlet.

By using a marked Theme, the clause creates a narrative continuum that shows the unfolding of the conflict, underlining the chronological advancement of the battle. The subsequent details about Moscow's strategy reinforce the impression of a planned, concentrated attack, thereby influencing the reader's perception of the events.

That said, in this news article:

1. Russia appears as the Theme 8 times:
 - "Russian tanks were filmed entering the city for the first time."
 - "Russia is ready for talks with Ukraine."
 - "Russia wants Ukraine to rule out ever joining Nato."
 - "Russia's defence ministry announced it had captured the Antonov airport."
 - "Russia was building an 'overwhelming force' to take control of the city."
 - "Russia's Ministry of Defence said levels were normal..."
 - "Russia has not admitted any deaths, whilst both sides claim to have inflicted heavy losses on the other."
 - "Russia - who declared war in a dramatic televised address..."
2. Ukraine appears as the Theme 7 times:
 - "Ukraine's capital Kyiv"

- "Ukraine's Ministry of Defence called on those living in the northern outskirts..."
- "Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has repeatedly called for talks with Mr Putin."
- "Ukraine has said the jet was Russian."
- "Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky had earlier said Russia was seeking to 'destroy Ukraine politically by destroying the head of state'."
- "Ukraine's regions."
- "Ukraine says at least 137 people - civilians and soldiers - have been killed."

This pattern of Themes shows that Russia appears slightly more often as the Theme compared to Ukraine. However, the difference is not overly pronounced. This could be interpreted in several ways. Firstly, given that the news article is focusing on the conflict between the two nations, it is expected that both would feature prominently as Themes.

However, the fact that Russia appears more frequently as the Theme may suggest that the news article is focusing more on Russia's actions in the conflict, rather than Ukraine. This could be an attempt to highlight Russia's role as the aggressor in the conflict, making Russia's actions the central focus of many sentences.

It is also worth noting that appearing as the Theme often means that this entity is the one performing actions. Therefore, Russia's frequent appearance as the Theme underscores its active role in this situation, initiating most of the key actions in the conflict. Conversely, the fact that Ukraine is less often the Theme might subtly convey its more passive or reactive role in the face of Russian aggression.

However, these interpretations depend heavily on the broader context of the text and the specific actions associated with Russia and Ukraine in each sentence. It is also important to remember that news reporting aims to be balanced and factual, and any perceived emphasis on one party over another could be simply a reflection of the reality of the situation being reported.

These examples provide a clear demonstration of how the BBC article uses both unmarked and marked Themes for clarity, emphasis, and drama, showcasing different storytelling dynamics in news reporting.

For instance, a prominent construal is the distinct representation of groups. Ukraine, Russia, and the EU each receive a different portrayal in the text. Ukraine often appears as a victim under assault, with phrasing such as "Kyiv braces for Russian assault" and "Kyiv was hit by blasts." This framing elicits sympathy for Ukraine. Conversely, Russia is depicted as the instigator. Active language used to describe Russia's actions, such as "Russian tanks were

filmed entering the city," and "Russia wants Ukraine to rule out ever joining NATO," paints them as the primary aggressor. Meanwhile, the EU's role is that of a potential mediator, imposing sanctions in a bid to quell the conflict.

This use of Thematic structure reflects the layered complexity of the situation and supports a multifaceted presentation of the news story. As we progress to the next section, we will turn our attention to the news piece from The New York Times, which will be discussed in detail in section 4.1.2.

4.1.2 The New York Times: “War in Ukraine - Russia has launched a major invasion.”

In this news, a total of 20 Themes were identified. Out of these, 7 Themes were marked, indicating an intentional emphasis, or highlighting of specific aspects of the information conveyed. The remaining 13 Themes were categorized as unmarked, reflecting a more straightforward or typical presentation of the Theme, serving as the starting point of the message. This distribution suggests that unmarked Themes were more prevalent, accounting for approximately 65% of the total Themes identified, while the marked Themes comprised the remaining 35%. The first clause of the article sets the stage with an unmarked Theme:

Appendix E – News B.3

The most significant European war in almost 80 years	has begun.
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

In this statement, the unmarked Theme, "The most significant European war," is positioned before the verbal complex: "has begun." This standard clause configuration in English does not deviate from the normative grammatical order; hence, it is not explicitly employed for emphasis or to manifest a specific viewpoint. However, it is noteworthy that the choice of the unmarked Theme does carry significant weight in the discourse as a whole.

In presenting "The most significant European war in almost 80 years" as the unmarked Theme, the article foregrounds the gravity of the situation, establishing the context that what is transpiring in Ukraine is not a minor conflict, but a major war of a magnitude not seen in Europe for almost eight decades. This sets a serious and somber tone for the article and primes the reader to view the events unfolding in Ukraine within this context. It subtly communicates the significance of the events being reported, emphasizing the historical weight and international

importance of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. However, it's not only unmarked themes that are observed in this news piece, consider the following instance:

Appendix E – News B.4

Early this morning in Ukraine,	Russian troops poured over the border, and Russian planes and missile launchers attacked Ukrainian cities and airports
Marked Theme	Rheme

In the clause, we observe a marked Theme. The circumstance of time, "Early this morning in Ukraine," precedes the subjects, "Russian troops" and "Russian planes and missile launchers." This construction emphasizes the temporal context and the location of the events, drawing reader's attention to these aspects.

Within the New York Times article covering the Russia-Ukraine conflict, although the majority of Themes are unmarked, the presence of marked Themes, constituting 35% of the total, is certainly substantial. The predominance of marked Themes referring to circumstances of time and place is especially noteworthy. Far from being arbitrary, this focus on spatio-temporal context is a deliberate journalistic strategy that significantly influences the reader's interpretation and understanding of the ongoing events.

Using marked Themes to foreground the circumstances of time, such as "Early this morning in Ukraine," draws immediate attention to the immediacy and urgency of the events. It effectively communicates the rapid, ongoing nature of the conflict and provides a temporal anchor that locates the reported events in a specific, relatable timeframe. This creates a sense of immediacy and present-ness, which could potentially enhance the reader's engagement with the article.

On the other hand, marked Themes indicating place, such as "In Ukraine," foreground the geographical context of the conflict. This serves to continually remind the reader of the specific location of the events, which is especially pertinent in international news reporting where readers may be geographically distant from the conflict.

Furthermore, this emphasis on geographical context is also indicative of the broader geopolitical implications of the conflict. By continually reiterating the location of the events, the article underscores that this conflict is not an isolated incident, but rather a major international event happening at the very edges of Europe and on the borders of NATO, posing potential implications for global peace and security.

This frequent use of circumstances of time and place as marked Themes also underscores the dynamic, unfolding nature of war reporting. It situates each event within a specific temporal and spatial context, mirroring the rapidly changing circumstances on the ground. It also reinforces the unpredictability and fluidity of the conflict, aspects that are central to the reader's perception and understanding of the situation.

Also, the marked Themes relating to circumstances of time and place in the New York Times article contribute significantly to the framing of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. By strategically foregrounding these elements, the article shapes the reader's interpretation of the events, emphasizing their immediacy, geographical relevance, and their broader geopolitical implications.

Having explored the thematic construction of an English language news outlet, it is now pertinent to shift our analytical lens to a Brazilian media source. In the following section, we will analyze a news piece from G1 *Brasil*, further broadening our understanding of the global media landscape's reporting on the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

4.1.3 G1: “Guerra na Ucrânia”

In the G1 news piece analyzed, approximately 79% of the clauses have unmarked Themes, and about 21% have marked Themes. This signifies that the majority of the clauses used a more expected and straightforward Theme and Rheme order (unmarked), while a smaller percentage chose a more emphatic or varied structure (marked).

The usage of marked and unmarked Themes contributes to the delivery of the news narrative, much like in the previous news analyzed in the subsections above. The following examples present some of these Themes discussing their meaning creation for the news at hand:

Appendix E – News C.1

Rússia	invade o país por terra, ar e mar. ¹⁰
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

Here, “*Rússia*” is the unmarked Theme, directly pointing out the key actor in the conflict, which sets the tone for the subsequent narrative.

Appendix E – News C.5

¹⁰ Russia invades the country by land, air, and sea.

Em resposta a Putin	o presidente ucraniano, Volodymyr Zelensky, disse que distribuiu armas aos ucranianos ¹¹ .
Marked Theme	Rheme

The clause, "*Em resposta a Putin*, o presidente ucraniano, Volodymyr Zelensky, disse que distribuiu armas aos ucranianos," features a marked Theme that situates President Zelensky's actions within the framework of a response to Putin. This particular linguistic choice offers several layers of complexity for analysis.

Firstly, the circumstance "Em resposta a Putin" creates a cause-and-effect structure, painting Zelensky's decision to distribute arms as a necessary reaction to Putin's actions. By framing Zelensky's actions as a response, the clause subtly positions Putin as the initiator of the action and Zelensky as the reactive force, thereby potentially situating Putin as the primary agent driving the narrative of conflict.

Moreover, this marked Theme also creates a narrative dichotomy between the two leaders, Putin and Zelensky, underlining their roles in the ongoing crisis. The reader is drawn to a juxtaposition, not only between their actions but also their leadership styles, political strategies, and perhaps even moral standpoints.

Finally, the marked Theme and its specificity regarding the response to Putin can be interpreted as an intentional strategy to highlight the bilateral dynamics of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It reminds readers of the personal stakes¹² and direct involvement of both leaders in this conflict, adding a layer of personal drama and thus heightening emotional engagement with the news content.

In this context, the linguistic choice made for the Theme can be seen as a critical tool in shaping the narrative and steering the readers' interpretation of events, highlighting the complex dynamics of power, leadership, and agency in the unfolding conflict, which is the case of the following occurrence.

Appendix E – News C.1

União Europeia	classificou o momento como o pior desde a 2ª Guerra Mundial ¹³ .
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¹¹ In response to Putin the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he had distributed weapons to Ukrainians.

¹² Source: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/07/03/europe/zelensky-ukraine-putin-erin-burnett-interview-intl-cmd/index.html>; <https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/internacional/zelensky-diz-que-o-mundo-inteiro-quer-matar-putin/>.

¹³ The European Union described the moment as 'the worst since World War II.

Unmarked Theme	Rheme
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The clause "*União Europeia* classificou o momento como o pior desde a 2ª Guerra Mundial," with its unmarked Theme "*União Europeia*," brings a broader international viewpoint into the development of the discourse, making the unfolding narrative more nuanced and complex.

The European Union, as an external yet highly influential actor in global politics, provides an outside perspective that is not directly involved in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, unlike Putin or Zelensky mentioned in previous examples. This shift in viewpoint helps to underline the gravity of the situation on a global scale.

Moreover, by having the European Union classify the situation as "the worst since World War II," the clause provides a historical context that dramatically amplifies the perceived severity of the conflict. Drawing a parallel with one of the most destructive events in recent history serves to intensify the narrative and may incite readers to perceive the ongoing conflict as a crisis of monumental proportions.

Furthermore, this linguistic choice also construes the powerful role of international bodies like the European Union in shaping global narratives and influencing public opinion. By attributing such a severe classification to the conflict, the European Union may be steering global perceptions and political reactions towards the crisis.

Therefore, the choice of Theme here contributes significantly to the narrative structure, guiding the readers towards a particular interpretation of the ongoing conflict that underscores its gravity and historical significance.

Appendix E – News C.1

Nas ruas da Ucrânia,	as imagens mostram o cenário de caos ¹⁴
Marked Theme	Rheme

The clause "*Nas ruas da Ucrânia*, as imagens mostram o cenário de caos" presents a marked Theme "*Nas ruas da Ucrânia*," is used to ground the ensuing depiction of chaos in a specific and relatable location. By directing the reader's attention to the streets of Ukraine, the narrative offers a more immediate and humanizing perspective of the conflict depicting reader's imagining of the scenario in the streets of Ukraine.

¹⁴ In the streets of Ukraine, the footage shows the chaos.

The Rheme "as imagens mostram" signifies that the chaos is not just reported but visibly demonstrated, presumably through accompanying photos or video footage. This evokes a more powerful, visceral response from the reader, underscoring the stark reality of the situation as images do talk much more than words and the reader is led in this way to the new information of the chaos. The "cenário de caos" portrayed in the Rheme forms a stark contrast to the mundane setting of the streets, suggesting the intrusion of war into ordinary civilian spaces. It underscores the disastrous disruption of normal life, highlighting the immediate human cost of the conflict.

In sum, the use of a marked Theme in this context works to ground the chaos of war in the tangible reality of everyday life, highlighting the direct human impact and thus potentially heightening the reader's emotional engagement with the situation. It offers an on-the-ground perspective that may contrast with the more detached, top-down viewpoints offered by political leaders or international bodies. This could help to humanize the conflict, provoke empathy, and possibly stimulate the reader towards advocacy or action. Humanizing a Theme can unmark the Theme but bring to the fore the sayer of the locution. The following occurrence does so:

Appendix E – News C.18

Zelensky	disse ainda que seu país foi 'deixado sozinho' para se defender contra a invasão russa. ¹⁵
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

The clause "Zelensky disse ainda que seu país foi 'deixado sozinho' para se defender contra a invasão russa" features an unmarked Theme "Zelensky," which centers the narrative around the Ukrainian president's perspective. The quoted statement within the Rheme effectively conveys a strong sentiment of abandonment and isolation.

Zelensky's quoted words 'deixado sozinho' (left alone) serves to project a potent image of Ukraine standing alone in its struggle against the Russian invasion. This characterization implicates a perceived lack of adequate support from the international community, adding a critical dimension to the ongoing discourse.

The choice of the unmarked Theme "Zelensky" emphasizes his leadership role and personal stake in the unfolding crisis. His portrayal as a vocal critic of international response

¹⁵ Zelensky also said that his country was 'left alone' to defend against the Russian invasion.

strategies adds another layer to the narrative, illuminating the complexities and tensions in global diplomacy surrounding the conflict.

This particular structure intensifies the emotional appeal of the narrative, reinforcing a sense of urgency and desperation. It might foster a more empathetic response from the readership, particularly in nations that are part of the international community being indirectly critiqued.

Consequently, through the careful use of marked and unmarked Themes, G1 Brasil news report crafts a multifaceted narrative that encapsulates varied perspectives and emotional depths of the Ukrainian crisis, engaging its readership in the ongoing discourse.

4.1.4 UOL: “Rússia de Putin invade a Ucrânia”.

In the UOL news piece analyzed, around 73% of the clauses have unmarked Themes, while about 27% have marked Themes. This indicates that the majority of the clauses followed a more straightforward and conventional Theme and Rheme order (unmarked), while a smaller proportion followed a more emphatic or varied structure (marked).

Appendix E – News D.2

A Rússia,	iniciou, na madrugada desta quinta-feira (24), uma invasão da Ucrânia, com ataques aéreos em todo o país, incluindo na capital Kiev, e a entrada de forças terrestres ao norte, leste e sul, segundo os guardas de fronteira ucranianos, que registram suas primeiras perdas ¹⁶
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

In this sentence, the unmarked Theme "*A Rússia*" sets the stage for the major event of the day, the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The direct, active voice used in "iniciou, na madrugada desta quinta-feira (24), uma invasão da Ucrânia" leaves no room for ambiguity about who the initiator of the action is.

¹⁶ Russia began an invasion of Ukraine in the early hours of Thursday (24), with air strikes across the country, including in the capital Kiev, and the entry of ground forces to the north, east and south, according to Ukrainian border guards, who record their first losses.

The subsequent expansion of the Rheme "com ataques aéreos em todo o país, incluindo na capital Kiev, e a entrada de forças terrestres ao norte, leste e sul" provides specific details about the nature and scope of the invasion, serving to underline the severity of the situation as a chaotic disaster detailed by the use of circumstances of time, place, mode, among others.

Further details like "segundo os guardas de fronteira ucranianos, que registram suas primeiras perdas" provide additional sources of information and verification, reinforcing the reality of the event and underscoring the human toll of the conflict. By adding this type of element of verification, journalist discourse guarantees readers the authenticity of the information.

The structure and wording of this sentence convey a sense of urgency and alarm, creating a sense of immediacy and underscoring the scale of the unfolding crisis. By beginning with "A Rússia", the writer foregrounds Russia's role in the conflict, reinforcing the narrative of Russia as the instigator of the invasion.

One could argue that this sentence also subtly communicates a sense of inevitability. It is also worth noting that by relying on Ukrainian border guards as a primary source of information, the narrative might be implicitly aligning with the Ukrainian perspective, which could subtly influence readers' perceptions of the conflict. However, without additional contextual information, it's impossible to definitively determine the motivations or intentions behind these editorial choices.

Appendix E – News D.4

Dois dias depois de reconhecer a independência dos territórios separatistas ucranianos no Donbas,	o presidente russo, Vladimir Putin, que disse que queria "defendê-los" contra a agressão ucraniana, lançou a invasão ¹⁷ .
Marked Theme	Rheme

The temporal phrase "Two days after recognizing the independence of Ukrainian separatist territories in Donbas" functions as a marked Theme, not merely temporally contextualizing the subsequent action, but also emphasizing a potential causal link between the recognition of independence and the ensuing invasion. In this way, the Rheme, which reports Putin's actions and statements, takes on a tone of justification - an action taken "in defense" of the newly recognized territories.

¹⁷ Two days after recognizing the independence of Ukrainian separatist territories in Donbas Russian President Vladimir Putin, who said he wanted to defend them against Ukrainian aggression, launched the invasion.

This strategic use of the marked Theme can shape the reader's perception of Russia's actions, casting them in a certain light that appears reactionary rather than initiatory. The use of direct quotes from Putin "who said he wanted to 'defend them' against Ukrainian aggression" serves to humanize the Russian leader, giving readers direct insight into his reasoning, and possibly even inciting empathy or understanding.

However, this reporting choice could be seen as subtly supporting Russia's narrative of the events. The inclusion of a marked Theme that emphasizes Russia's defensive stance might lead readers to view the invasion in a more sympathetic way, as a necessary evil rather than an unprovoked attack.

This potential slanting highlights the influential role of thematic choice in steering public perception and comprehension of complex geopolitical events. As we proceed with our analysis, let's consider another example:

Appendix E – News D.11

Sirenes de alerta para bombardeios	soam a cada 15 minutos em Lviv, a cidade para onde os Estados Unidos e vários outros países transferiram suas embaixadas, e em Odessa ¹⁸ .
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

In this example, the unmarked Theme "Bombing alert sirens" is the grammatical Subject of the clause. The clause is unmarked as it follows a typical subject-predicate-object structure. The Rheme provides details on how frequently these sirens are sounding and their location, offering a deeper insight into the severity and geographical focus of the conflict.

The unmarked Theme "Bombing alert sirens" situates the reader within the reality of the ongoing conflict, while the Rheme introduces the specific details. By highlighting the frequency of the sirens and stating that Lviv—where numerous countries, including the United States, have relocated their embassies—is experiencing this situation, the clause infuses a sense of urgency and underscores the international significance of the conflict. This thematic structure communicates that the conflict is not just a local issue, but rather one with far-reaching implications for the international community. Consequently, this might encourage international readers or governments to take note of the gravity of the situation and potentially reevaluate their actions or policies accordingly.

¹⁸ Warning sirens for bombings sound every 15 minutes in Lviv, the city where the United States and several other countries have moved their embassies, and in Odessa.

Appendix E – News D.3

A ofensiva	provocou clamor internacional, ao qual Moscou não deu ouvidos ¹⁹ .
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

'The offensive', is the main subject of the clause and serves to center attention on Russia's actions. The Rheme presents the global response and Russia's disregard of it, creating a clear juxtaposition between the international outcry and Moscow's apparent indifference. The structure of this clause underscores the tension between international expectations and Russia's actions, hinting at the possibility of increasing global conflict or alienation of Russia. For policymakers or diplomats, this could imply the necessity for stronger international actions or sanctions to counter Russia's disregard for global opinion as displayed by their unresponsiveness to the international disturbance.

The employment of 'The offensive' as the unmarked Theme intensifies focus on the action initiated by Russia, and its consequential impact internationally. This positions the reader to grasp the gravity of the situation and its broad-reaching implications. The Rheme emphasizes the global disapproval and Moscow's dismissive attitude, painting a stark image of Russia as a nation defying global consensus. This arrangement of information effectively captures the brewing international tension and points to Russia's potential isolation due to its actions.

Appendix E – News D.8

Ele	repetiu suas acusações infundadas de um "genocídio" orquestrado pela Ucrânia nos territórios separatistas pró Rússia no leste do país e utilizou como argumento o pedido de ajuda dos separatistas e a política agressiva da Otan em relação à Rússia, da qual a Ucrânia seria uma ferramenta
Unmarked Theme	Rheme

The Theme of this clause is the simple pronoun "He", referring to Putin. This choice puts the emphasis on Putin's actions and statements, creating a focus on the individual leader as opposed to the broader geopolitical situation. The Rheme of the clause is extensive,

¹⁹ The offensive sparked an international outcry, to which Moscow did not listen.

illustrating Putin's accusations, perceived threats from NATO, and the positioning of Ukraine as a tool against Russia.

The use of the word "unfounded" before "accusations" introduces a perspective on the validity of Putin's claims. By highlighting Putin's personal actions and statements, this sentence structure personalizes the geopolitical situation, potentially fostering a view of the conflict as driven by individual leaders' decisions rather than systemic or historical factors. The assertion of the accusations being "unfounded" could contribute to shaping readers' perceptions about the legitimacy of Putin's narrative and decisions. This type of construction can have significant implications on how the international community views and reacts to a politician's - Putin's - actions.

4.2 Function of the Theme

The Theme is not merely the first structural component of a clause; it serves a communicative function, it guides the reader through the message, establishing the context and focus of the clause. The Thematic choice could reflect the author's intended emphasis, guide the information flow, and influence reader's interpretation. In the analysis of the present research, the function of the Theme was investigated considering its role in affecting the discourse and its implications for understanding the broader context. The Themes manifest primarily as subjects, circumstances, and WH-elements (who, what, where, when, why, and how) in clauses. Analyzing the function of Themes provides deeper insights into how the news articles structure its narrative. It brings clarity to the roles different entities play, the circumstances of their actions, and the types of questions addressed in the discourse. Themes are crucial in the syntactical organization of the news report and in presenting a coherent narrative of the Ukraine-Russia conflict.

4.2.1 Subject Themes

Subject Themes are typically the central actors or entities of the clause; they constitute the nucleus of the information, around which the rest of the message clusters. By placing the main actors or entities at the beginning of the clause, the Subject Themes set the stage for the subsequent message. These Themes often denote the key actors or entities in the discourse, directly influencing how the message is perceived. As such, the selection of Subject Themes is a critical aspect of shaping the narrative within the text.

In this type of text—news reporting—it is typical for the majority of clauses to be declarative in nature, and thus, the most anticipated or "unmarked" Theme in such cases is usually the Subject of the clause. In this context of news articles, this means that the Subjects often reflect the main focus of the news piece, setting the tone for the story and guiding the reader's attention. For example, in a news article about the Russia-Ukraine conflict, a clause might start with "Russian troops" or "Ukrainian civilians," signaling the primary actors and thus, the perspective from which the story is told.

4.2.1.1 BBC

In the BBC article, the function of the Subject was the most common, with 47 occurrences. The preponderance of Subject Themes in the BBC article demonstrates a focus on presenting concrete, fact-based information. The frequent use of subjects - such as "Ukraine's Ministry of Defence", "The European Union", or "President Zelensky" - as Themes underlines the actors involved and their specific actions in the conflict. This aligns with the news genre's objective of reporting on who did what, where, when, and why, fostering a clear, direct narrative.

The second most common function is Circumstance, with 11 occurrences. This function typically provides additional information about the action, the participants, or the entire situation described in the clause, such as the time or place. Themes like "Overnight", "On Friday afternoon", and "For weeks" are instances of circumstantial Themes.

The function of the 'Wh' element occurs only once with the Theme "What should we think". This function introduces a question or a hypothetical situation that seeks information about the situation described in the clause.

Consider the following example from the BBC news piece:

Appendix E – A.3 News

Ukraine's Ministry of Defence	called on those living in the northern outskirts, where the tanks were seen, to make firebombs 'to neutralise the enemy'.
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In this case, "*Ukraine's Ministry of Defence*" is the grammatical Subject that also acts as the Theme of the clause. As such, it initiates the process within the clause and establishes the contextual framework for the information that ensues. This strategic positioning emphasizes

the Ministry's role in the current situation, granting it significant agency. The Ministry's call for citizens to make firebombs is presented as a direct response to the imminent threat, painting a picture of urgency and resistance. By putting the Ministry of Defence in the leading position of the clause, the narrative underscores its active role in mobilizing national defense efforts.

4.2.1.2 The New York Times

In the New York Times article, both Subject and Circumstance are common functions found in Themes. Out of the total 20 Themes, 11 are Subjects and 8 are Circumstances. The prominence of Subjects (11 instances) once again underscores the news article's focus on describing events and actions related to various actors or entities. These Subjects vary from collective entities such as "Ukrainians" or "Russia" to non-human actors like "blasts" or "the attacks". By using these Subjects as Themes, the report is able to present a variety of information about the situation, giving the readers a broad perspective of the unfolding events.

Circumstances are used as Themes 8 times, mainly indicating Place (e.g., "At an airport outside Kyiv", "In the southern port city of Odessa", "In Lutsk", "In Kyiv", and "In eastern Ukraine"). The usage of Place as a marked Theme helps to give a sense of geography and space, which is crucial in war reporting as it situates the events in a specific location. This not only provides a clear setting for the reported events but also helps to illustrate the scope and reach of the conflict.

Similar to the BBC analysis, most of these Themes are unmarked, highlighting the usage of typical sentence structure in English where the Subject comes before the predicate. This pattern is often found in news writing as it promotes clarity and easy comprehension. In summary, the NYT article, much like the BBC one, uses a mix of Subjects and Circumstances to provide a rich, detailed, and comprehensive narrative. The frequent use of place-based Circumstances emphasizes the geographical scope of the conflict, while the varied Subjects help to capture the complexity of the events and actors involved.

4.2.1.3 G1

In this G1 Brasil article, we find again a mix of Subject and Circumstance functions in Themes, but the usage is skewed heavily towards Subjects. Of the 34 Themes, 28 are Subjects and 6 are Circumstances. The majority usage of Subjects (28 instances) once again helps present the readers with a clear narrative of the situation, detailing various actors, entities, and events related to the conflict.

These Subjects range from concrete entities like "Russia", "Kiev and Kharkiv, the two largest cities in Ukraine", "An unidentified missile", "Russian troops", to more abstract entities like "The escalation of tension between Russia and Ukraine in recent days", "Bombings", and "The mobilization". The inclusion of specific numbers in the subject role (e.g., "137 people", "316 people") provides a stark reminder of the human impact of the conflict.

Circumstances are used as Themes 6 times, with a focus on Time and Place. Examples include:

Appendix E – News C.

Dias após uma série de ameaças e de ter reconhecido a independência de duas províncias separatistas do leste ucraniano	o presidente russo, Vladimir Putin, invadiu a Ucrânia.
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Again, these give temporal and spatial context to the events being reported, which is essential in painting a detailed picture of the evolving situation.

Furthermore, the G1 Brasil article uses one instance of a marked Theme denoting conformity: "Segundo informações do jornal ucraniano Pravda News". This functions to establish the source of the information, providing credibility and accuracy to the claims made.

Similar to the BBC and NYT articles, most of these Themes in the G1 article are unmarked, indicating the typical sentence structure in Portuguese (the language in which G1 publishes), where the Subject precedes the predicate. This promotes clarity and easy comprehension.

In summary, the G1 Brasil news article, like the BBC and NYT ones, uses Subjects and Circumstances effectively to convey a narrative that is both rich and informative, capturing the complexity of the events and actors involved in the conflict. The prevalence of Subjects, including specific numbers, underscores the article's focus on detailing the actors and the impact of the conflict, while Circumstances provide necessary temporal, spatial, and source-related context.

4.2.1.4 UOL

In UOL news piece, 27 themes were analyzed, 21 are Subjects, which is consistent with the patterns observed in the previous articles. Five of the themes serve the function of Circumstance. Four out of these five circumstances are marked, suggesting a slight deviation from the typical sentence structure. This may be used to emphasize certain events or contexts.

The Circumstances primarily denote Time and Place. As the excerpts show:

Appendix E – News D.

Dois dias depois de reconhecer a independência dos territórios separatistas ucranianos no Donbas,	o presidente russo, Vladimir Putin, que disse que queria "defendê-los" contra a agressão ucraniana, lançou a invasão.
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Appendix E – News D.

No metrô de Kiev,	dezenas de pessoas tentavam se abrigar ou deixar a cidade, de trem ou por estrada.
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The fact that most themes are unmarked aligns with Portuguese sentence structure, where the subject usually precedes the predicate. In summary, this UOL news piece, similar to the previous articles, effectively uses a mix of Subjects (predominantly) and Circumstances to create a narrative that is rich in detail and information. The variety of human and non-human subjects highlights the complex interplay of individual actions and broader geopolitical events. Circumstances provide crucial temporal and spatial contexts to help readers understand the unfolding situation.

4.2.2 Circumstantial Themes

Circumstantial Themes set the stage for the circumstances under which the activities or events in the clause are taking place. They often provide information regarding time, place, manner, cause, or condition.

Appendix E – News A.22

Overnight,	Kyiv was hit by blasts, with at least one block of flats damaged and several civilians injured.
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In this case, "*Overnight*" is a circumstantial Theme denoting the time when the action occurred. This Theme provides essential context for understanding the unfolding events.

The fewer occurrences of circumstantial Themes, while still significant, could imply that the main emphasis of the article lies not on the contexts or conditions of actions but rather on the actions themselves. Nonetheless, these circumstantial Themes provide temporal and

spatial frames, enriching the narrative by situating the events in their specific contexts. Consider the following excerpt from the NYT news piece:

Appendix E – News B.4

Early this morning in Ukraine,	Russian troops poured over the border, and Russian planes and missile launchers attacked Ukrainian cities and airports
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The theme "*Early this morning in Ukraine*" puts a strong emphasis on the location and the timing of the events described.

By beginning with the time and place, the author immediately situates the reader within the context of the unfolding events. The use of "early this morning" implies the suddenness and urgency of the situation, drawing attention to the fact that the conflict has escalated without warning, causing surprise, and requiring immediate attention.

By emphasizing "in Ukraine," the writer underscores that the action is happening on Ukrainian territory. It highlights the invasion aspect of the action and subtly paints Russia as the aggressor, since it is their troops that are entering another country's borders.

Following the theme, the rest of the sentence describes the military actions undertaken by the Russian troops and their impact, further emphasizing the gravity of the situation. This structure, therefore, allows the author to convey the suddenness, seriousness, and scale of the conflict, establishing a narrative of an unexpected and large-scale invasion.

The selection of the theme is significant because it contributes to how the narrative of the Ukraine-Russia conflict is constructed and perceived. The theme primes the reader to view the subsequent events (the pouring of troops and attacks on cities and airports) as aggressive actions happening to Ukraine.

In sum, the choice of theme in this sentence, "Early this morning in Ukraine," serves to highlight the immediacy, the location, and the urgency of the Russian military actions, shaping the reader's perception of the unfolding events. Still from the NYT the following instance:

Appendix E – News B.4

A Rússia	iniciou, na madrugada desta quinta-feira (24), uma invasão da Ucrânia, com ataques aéreos em todo o país, incluindo na capital Kiev, e a
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	entrada de forças terrestres ao norte, leste e sul, segundo os guardas de fronteira ucranianos, que registram suas primeiras perdas. ²⁰
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which translates to "In the early hours of this Thursday (24)", the news report creates a sense of immediacy and urgency. The choice of such a theme could be aimed at heightening the perceived suddenness and intensity of the invasion.

This also subtly influences the reader's understanding of the event. For instance, events that occur in the 'early hours' or 'dawn' are often associated with surprise or secrecy due to the typical quietness or stillness of that time period. Thus, the circumstantial Theme here could be enhancing the reader's perception of the invasion as a sudden, unexpected move.

The choice of this circumstantial Theme adds depth to the narrative, showing that the invasion started abruptly and at a time when the targeted nation (Ukraine) might have been least prepared. It therefore impacts the reader's perception of the invasion's strategy and execution.

4.2.3 WH-element Themes

WH-element Themes are primarily interrogative words that orient the reader toward answering a particular question. These Themes help in generating expectations about the kind of information that will follow.

How can we	lie through it in our time?" Oxana Gulenko asked Reuters as she cleaned up broken glass from one blast.
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In this question posed by Oxana Gulenko, "How" is the WH-element Theme that guides the expected response. The answer to this question would ideally provide a method or strategy to cope with the present circumstances.

The presence of only one WH-element Theme might reflect the news outlet's primary role as a provider of information, rather than a forum for posing open questions. This solitary WH-element Theme, situated in a direct quote from a civilian, opens up a space for reflecting on the events rather than merely reporting them. It also introduces a more personal, subjective dimension into the predominantly factual narrative.

²⁰ Russia began an invasion of Ukraine in the early hours of Thursday (24), with air strikes across the country, including in the capital Kiev, and the entry of ground forces to the north, east and south, according to Ukrainian border guards, who record their first losses.

In sum, the analysis of Themes in the BBC news article gives insights into the news outlet's strategy of narrative construction. It shows an emphasis on actors and their actions, with additional layers of contextual information and a touch of personal, reflective discourse. The specific distribution of Themes reflects the article's objective to inform its readers clearly and factually about the ongoing Ukraine-Russia conflict while also incorporating elements of personal human experience.

4.3 Classification of the Theme

The classification of the Theme can offer insights into the structure of the discourse. Themes can be classified into topical, interpersonal, or textual, each contributing to the narrative in unique ways. Topical Themes typically introduce what the clause talks about; interpersonal Themes establish the speaker's stance or attitude, while textual Themes connect the message with the broader discourse. This section will explore the classifications of Themes found in the dataset and discuss how they collectively contribute to the overall narrative.

By examining these categories, it allows the understanding of the implicit meanings and unpacking the data, drawing connections between linguistic choices and their effects on the overall discourse. The following sections will unfold these categories, each illuminating a facet of the underlying Thematic structure and function in the data set that composes this study.

The classification of a Theme into categories such as human, non-human, time, place, or angle helps to understand the focus or perspective from which the discourse is constructed and presented. It allows analysts to uncover the priorities and potential biases of the speaker or writer and provides insights into their view of the world.

News A - BBC:

1. Non-Human Subjects: 10 instances - Russia, here, The most significant European war in almost 80 years, and Russian planes and missile launchers, The attacks, Ukraine's government, blasts, It.
2. Human Subjects: 4 instances - [*people], They, We
3. Circumstances of Time: 1 instance - Early this morning in Ukraine
4. Circumstances of Place: 5 instances - At an airport outside Kyiv, In the southern port city of Odessa, In Lutsk, In Kyiv, In eastern Ukraine.
5. Existential Process: 1 instance - There's

News B - The New York Times:

1. Non-Human Subjects: 13 instances - Russia, here, The most significant European war in almost 80 years, and Russian planes and missile launchers, The attacks, Ukraine's government, blasts, It, Ukrainians.
2. Human Subjects: 3 instances - [*people], They, We.
3. Circumstances of Time: 1 instance - Early this morning in Ukraine.
4. Circumstances of Place: 6 instances - At an airport outside Kyiv, In the southern port city of Odessa, In Lutsk, In Kyiv, In eastern Ukraine.

News C - G1:

1. Non-Human Subjects: 14 instances - Russia, Kiev e Kharkiv, as duas maiores cidades da Ucrânia, União Europeia, Missil não identificado, A escalada de tensão entre Rússia e Ucrânia dos últimos dias, Cidades como Kiev e Kharkiv, as duas maiores do país, Tropas russas, Bombardeios, O país, A mobilização, As autoridades ucranianas, As forças russas, O aeroporto militar de Hostomel, que fica a cerca de 23 quilômetros da capital de Kiev.
2. Human Subjects: 10 instances - 137 pessoas, 316 pessoas, Uma autoridade americana, Os russos, Em resposta Volodymyr Zelensky, Zelensky, Zelensky, O líder ucraniano, Zelensky, O assessor da presidência da Ucrânia, Mykhailo Podolyak, Seis dos feridos.
3. Circumstances of Time: 2 instances - Dias após uma série de ameaças e de ter reconhecido a independência de duas províncias separatistas do leste ucraniano, Mais cedo, Por volta das 11h desta quinta no horário local (6h no horário de Brasília).
4. Circumstances of Place: 1 instance - Nas ruas da Ucrânia.
5. Circumstances of Angle: 1 instance - Em resposta a Putin.
6. Circumstances of Conformity: 1 instance - Segundo informações do jornal ucraniano Pravda News.

News D - UOL:

1. Non-Human Subjects: 14 instances - Rússia de Putin, A Rússia, A ofensiva, Sirenes de alerta para bombardeios, a cidade para onde os Estados Unidos e vários outros países, O exército russo, enquanto Kiev, A Ucrânia, Os voos, O ataque russo.
2. Human Subjects: 6 instances - [*eu], [*nós], Ele, e [*ele], O presidente ucraniano, Volodymyr Zelensky, Os guardas de fronteira, O embaixador da Rússia na ONU, Vassily Nebenzia, E[*ele], Eu.
3. Circumstances of Time: 2 instances - Dois dias depois de reconhecer a independência dos territórios separatistas ucranianos no Donbas, Pouco depois.

4. Circumstances of Place: 2 instances - No metrô de Kiev, Em um vídeo postado no Facebook.

The articles from the New York Times and BBC focus more on non-human subjects. These might focus more on events, locations, or entities like countries rather than individual human actors. G1 and UOL, however, balance their reporting with a significant number of human subjects, possibly indicating a focus on personal stories or individual accountability. When it comes to circumstances, G1 shows a broad use of these, including time, place, angle, and conformity. This could indicate a wider variety of information being conveyed. Meanwhile, the other outlets mainly use time and place circumstances, possibly focusing more on the when and where of the events.

Overall, the classifications help us understand the focus and scope of each news outlet's reporting. For instance, more human subjects may suggest a focus on personal stories, while more non-human subjects may indicate a focus on broader events or structures. Meanwhile, different types of circumstances can give us insights into what aspects of the story are being emphasized.

4.4 Overview of the Findings

The analysis of the texts reveals a consistent pattern across the sources. In the BBC articles, as well as in those from the New York Times (NYT), the thematic structure predominantly revolves around unmarked Themes, which position Russia and Ukraine as the subjects. This straightforward approach effectively conveys a clear message, focusing on the primary actors in the situation while avoiding unnecessary complexities or deviations.

Similarly, the Brazilian texts exhibit a similar structure. G1 and UOL, like their English counterparts, frequently employ unmarked Themes that anchor the narrative on Russia and Ukraine as the main subjects. This style of reporting mirrors the directness found in the BBC and NYT articles. Also, the four news outlets, while adhering to this pattern, they incorporate marked Themes, with a strong inclination towards circumstantial Themes. These circumstantial Themes often introduce temporal or situational details at the beginning of clauses, thereby offering more nuanced and context-rich narratives. This approach emphasizes the immediacy and context of the unfolding events, immersing readers in the details and timeline of the invasion.

Both English and Portuguese texts share a common ground in focusing on the key actors, Russia, and Ukraine, and offering straightforward, context-rich narratives to their readers. Analyzing the thematic profiles of these two languages becomes evident that English news articles construct a narrative with a stronger emphasis on geopolitical factors and significant events related to the conflict.

The thematic construction often centers around broader geopolitical entities like Russia or Ukraine, as well as physical objects or locations such as planes, missile launchers, and various cities in Ukraine. There is a lesser focus on individual human actors, indicating a more macroscopic view of the conflict. Marked circumstances in these articles mainly pertain to time and place, providing context for when and where the events unfold.

In contrast, Brazilian Portuguese news articles present a slightly more balanced mix of human and non-human subjects. While they also report on broader geopolitical aspects of the conflict, there is a greater focus on individual human actors. This might suggest a different view of the conflict, potentially placing more emphasis on personal stories or individual responsibility.

In terms of circumstances, these outlets demonstrate a wider variety, including time, place, conformity, and angle. This broader use of circumstances could indicate a more varied or nuanced approach to contextualizing the events. Considering these distinctive features, English news articles adopt an objective, fact-based reporting style with their emphasis on non-human subjects and frequent use of time and place circumstances. This choice of thematic construction creates a sense of distance or objectivity, while providing concrete context for the conflict. Brazilian Portuguese news articles, on the other hand, present a more comprehensive, multifaceted view of the conflict by striking a balance between human and non-human subjects.

The wider variety of circumstances, including conformity and angle, offers a broader context that allows to explore the reasons behind events and the perspectives of those involved.

5. Concluding Remarks: What Themes tell us for online news?

In our exploration of online news media, we have uncovered key insights into how these outlets shape narratives, particularly in the context of conflict such as the Russia-Ukraine situation. Through the application of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), we have illuminated the impact of thematic structure, and contextual elements on the construction of perspectives on war.

Retracing our steps through the realms of English and Brazilian Portuguese news outlets, we are reminded of the context that frames our exploration. The Russia-Ukraine conflict

has triggered widespread global attention, with news outlets playing a critical role in narrating the ongoing crisis. Our analysis has delved into these narratives, investigating the thematic construction within articles and how these serve to foreground key aspects of the conflict.

The evaluation of diverse sources uncovers a consistent pattern in the thematic structure of news articles, providing a nuanced understanding of online news media's narrative construction. The outlets analyzed in this study, including the BBC, the New York Times (NYT), G1, and UOL, demonstrate similar strategies in their thematic organization.

These news providers primarily utilize unmarked Themes that establish Russia and Ukraine as the main actors, thus creating a straightforward narrative line. This direct approach allows for clarity and focuses on key elements of the Russia-Ukraine situation without adding unnecessary complexities. Despite this directness, these outlets do not shy away from employing marked Themes, which often introduce circumstantial details at the beginning of clauses. This technique provides a nuanced narrative, enriching the context, and immersing readers in the unfolding events' details and timeline.

The thematic construction of news articles covering the Russia-Ukraine conflict in both English and Brazilian Portuguese was revealed to have significant implications for reader's perception and understanding of the unfolding of events. Themes in both languages were used to foreground specific aspects of the conflict, including highlighting key actors, accentuating certain events, and setting the stage with specific spatio-temporal contexts.

Both English and Brazilian Portuguese media share this focus on the key actors and the ability to provide direct, context-rich narratives. However, it is through a detailed comparison of thematic profiles that the nuanced differences emerge. English news articles prioritize geopolitical factors and significant events related to the conflict, taking a more macroscopic view of the situation. The narrative is often centered around broader entities like Russia or Ukraine, and specific objects or locations, with lesser focus on individual actors.

Conversely, Brazilian Portuguese news articles strike a balance between human and non-human subjects, creating a more multifaceted view of the conflict. Along with broader geopolitical aspects, these articles emphasize individual human actors, potentially accentuating personal stories or individual responsibility. The utilization of a wider variety of circumstances, including time, place, conformity, and angle, provides a broader context and adds depth to the narrative, exploring the reasons behind events and various perspectives.

The journey through online news media has exposed significant insights into the narrative construction of conflict, specifically within the context of the Russia-Ukraine

situation. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) guided our investigation, highlighting the impact of thematic structure and context on narrative building.

Retracing the analysis of English and Brazilian Portuguese news outlets, we reflect upon the wider picture that frames this conflict. These outlets have become essential storytellers of the crisis, focusing on key actors and pivotal events, crafting narratives that influence the readers' understanding of the conflict.

In a narrative landscape populated by various actors, Ukraine, Russia, and the EU each receive unique portrayals. Ukraine often appears as a victim, stirring sympathy. In contrast, Russia is depicted as the instigator, painting a picture of aggression, while the EU stands as a potential mediator, seeking conflict resolution.

The exploration of marked and unmarked Themes shed light on the strategic linguistic choices that shape conflict narratives. Beyond these, elements like narrative framing, language choice and tone, humanization of the conflict, and multimedia use interweave to form comprehensive narratives.

Quoting President Zelensky allows for personalization, attribution of responsibility, and capturing nuance and context, while maintaining a sense of journalistic objectivity. However, it carries potential limitations and risks, requiring careful consideration of the impact on the narrative.

Reflecting upon the context of these news outlets, it is noted that English news outlets, based in core countries, lean towards a more geopolitical perspective. In contrast, Brazilian news outlets, a semi-peripheral country, balance geopolitical events and human experiences. However, these trends should not be seen as definitive characteristics of journalism in core or semi-peripheral countries. Factors such as editorial policy, journalistic culture, and audience demographics can significantly influence the thematic construction of news.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of understanding the narrative construction in news media, a critical tool for fostering informed discourse and decision-making in an interconnected global society.

5.1 Limitations and Future Research Directions

As with any research, this study was bound by certain limitations, which provide opportunities for further exploration in future studies.

6.1 Limitations

1. **Scope of the Study:** This study focused on four news outlets (BBC, NYT, G1, and UOL) and their coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The limited number of outlets

and the specific topic may not be representative of the broader landscape of online news media.

2. **Language and Culture:** This study analyzed news outlets publishing in English and Brazilian Portuguese. Other languages and cultural perspectives were not included, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.
3. **Thematic Analysis:** While the thematic analysis illuminated certain patterns in the narrative construction of the news articles, it could not capture every nuance. Certain elements of storytelling, such as tone or implicit bias, can be challenging to analyze quantitatively.
4. **Temporal Context:** The Russia-Ukraine conflict is a dynamic, ongoing situation. Therefore, the conclusions drawn from the analyzed articles pertain to a specific timeframe and might not represent the entire timeline of the conflict.

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

1. **Broader Scope:** Future studies could expand the number of news outlets, including those from different countries or regions, to provide a more comprehensive picture of news media's narrative construction.
2. **Multilingual Analysis:** Exploring news narratives in other languages would offer valuable insights into the ways different linguistic and cultural backgrounds influence news reporting.
3. **Deeper Analysis:** Future research could employ more complex linguistic and discourse analysis methods to explore subtle aspects of narrative construction, such as the use of metaphors, idioms, or the role of visual elements.
4. **Longitudinal Studies:** A longitudinal analysis of news articles could provide insights into how narratives evolve over time in response to changing events and contexts.
5. **Comparison Across Media Types:** Comparing narrative structures across different types of media (e.g., print, online, broadcast) could offer a more rounded perspective on media practices.
6. **Audience Analysis:** Research into audience reception and interpretation of news narratives would be a valuable addition, helping to understand how news narratives influence public opinion and attitudes.

Through addressing these limitations and exploring the suggested directions, future research can continue to deepen our understanding of how news narratives are constructed and their implications for readers worldwide.

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APPENDIX A – BBC NEWS

BBC

Ukraine conflict: Kyiv braces for Russian assault

The sound of gunfire has echoed through Ukraine's capital Kyiv as Russian tanks were filmed entering the city for the first time. Ukraine's Ministry of Defence called on those living in the northern outskirts, where the tanks were seen, to make firebombs "to neutralise the enemy". The European Union has announced new sanctions to freeze Vladimir Putin's personal assets in Europe. The Kremlin, meanwhile, says that Russia is ready for talks with Ukraine.

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said talks would have to be about Ukraine declaring a "neutral status" - which would include "demilitarisation". Russia wants Ukraine to rule out ever joining Nato. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has repeatedly called for talks with Mr Putin, but [*] has given no sign that he would agree to talks on the basis of "demilitarisation". Overnight, Kyiv was hit by blasts, with at least one block of flats damaged and several civilians injured. Russia has denied carrying out strikes. An unnamed source at Russia's defence ministry also said a plane shot down over Kyiv was Ukrainian, Reuters news agency reports. Ukraine has said the jet was Russian. As the second day of fighting began, Moscow - which is attacking from the east, north and south - appeared to have Kyiv firmly in its sights. Mayor Vitali Klitschko said "the enemy" was trying to put Kyiv "on its knees". On Friday afternoon, Russia's defence ministry announced it had captured the Antonov airport, using 200 helicopters and a landing force in order to take the base to the north of Kyiv from Ukraine. Western intelligence officials warned earlier that Russia was building an "overwhelming force" to take control of the city. Citizens in the northern Obolon district have been told to stay at home to avoid "active military operations" by city officials, Reuters adds. Obolon is the same area where it appeared tanks were filmed earlier in the day. The Ministry of Defence had already appealed to the district's residents on its Facebook page to "inform us of troop movements, to make Molotov cocktails [firebombs] and neutralise the enemy". Overnight, families took shelter in Kyiv's metro stations as aerial attacks struck the city, including the densely populated Pozniake area, injuring at least eight. "Putin, we want to see you slaughtered like an animal," one Kyiv resident told the BBC's Nick Beake. "How we can live through it in our time?" Oxana Gulenko asked Reuters as she cleaned up broken glass from one blast. "What should we think. Putin should be burnt in hell along with his whole family." Earlier, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said no talks could be held until the Ukrainian military lays down its arms. Mr Lavrov is also included in the EU's move to freeze personal assets - but it (sem processo) not clear whether he or President Putin have any significant assets in Europe. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky had earlier said Russia was seeking to "destroy Ukraine politically by destroying the head of state". "According to the information we have, the enemy has designated me as target number one. My family is target number two," he said. President Zelensky has vowed to stay in Kyiv and to continue fighting the attacks across Ukraine - which is coming from the north, south and east - ordering the call-up of conscripts and reservists in all of Ukraine's regions. The country's defence minister urged anyone able to hold a weapon to join the effort to repel Russia.

There have already been stories of immense bravery in the face of stark odds including that of 13 border guards on a tiny island in the Black Sea who refused to surrender to a Russian warship and were massacred in a bombardment. President Zelensky said they would be given posthumous war hero honours. Thursday also saw fighting around the site of the former nuclear

power plant in Chernobyl. **Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhaylo Podolyak** said the nuclear site itself had been lost following a "fierce battle".

On Friday, Ukraine's nuclear agency said it was recording raised radiation levels in the area. **A statement released by Russia's Ministry of Defence** said levels were normal, adding an agreement had been reached "to ensure security of the power plant and sarcophagus of the Chernobyl Nuclear Plant". **Ukraine** says at least 137 people - civilians and soldiers - have been killed. **Russia** has not admitted any deaths, **whilst both sides** claim to have inflicted heavy losses on the other.

President Vladimir Putin - who declared war in a dramatic televised address - has threatened any country attempting to interfere with "consequences you have never seen". **The UK, EU and other allies** vowed to impose tough new sanctions to punish Moscow, **but [*they]** said they would not send in troops. **French President Emmanuel Macron** held a telephone call with his Russian counterpart, in what was Mr Putin's first conversation with a Western leader in days, demanding an "immediate halt" to the offensive. **The Kremlin**, however, simply said the pair had a "serious and frank exchange of views". **Mr Zelensky**, meanwhile, hit out at the European leaders' response. **"Like World War Two**, you said never again, **but here** it is again and you're not doing enough to respond," he said. **Many** said it couldn't, wouldn't, happen. Not in 2022. **For weeks**, Western officials analysing the intelligence warned of President Putin's plan to take Kyiv. **For weeks**, I've asked Ukrainians in Kyiv about it, and **[*I've]** ran it past every foreign and defence minister, every Russia-watcher I met at last weekend's security conference in Munich. **It** just didn't make sense. **[*it]** Just didn't add up. **And now**, with every hour, Russian forces and fighting come ever closer to Kyiv. **A city where Ukrainians tell all of us to "call it Kyiv in Ukrainian, not Kiev in Russian", a city which feels so European,** is now in Moscow's sights. **"A failure of imagination"** is how former British intelligence chief Sir Alex Younger described it, adding "we thought history had changed in 1991" when the Soviet empire collapsed.

APPENDIX B – THE NEW YORK TIMES

The New York Times

War in Ukraine

Russia has launched a major invasion. **Here's** the latest.

The most significant European war in almost 80 years has begun. **Early this morning in Ukraine**, Russian troops poured over the border, **and Russian planes and missile launchers** attacked Ukrainian cities and airports. **The attacks** spanned much of the country, far beyond the border provinces where there has been sporadic fighting between the nations for years. **Ukraine's government** called it "a full-scale attack from multiple directions." **Blasts** could be heard in Kyiv, the capital, as well as more than a dozen other cities. **At an airport outside Kyiv**, rocket attacks targeted parked Ukrainian fighter jets. **In the southern port city of Odessa**, Russian troops arrived from the sea. **In Luts'k** — in the northwest corner of Ukraine, closer to Poland than Russia — explosions were also reported.

Ukrainians rushed to take shelter in bus and subway stations. **In Kyiv**, people packed up their cars **and [*people]** waited in long gas lines on their way out of the city. **In eastern Ukraine**, lines formed at A.T.M.s and gas stations. **"It's** panic, don't you see?" Yevheni Balai told The Times's Michael Schwartz, pointing to a line of anxious Ukrainians standing outside a closed bank in

Slovyansk, in the eastern part of the country. “They’ve gotten exactly what they wanted, the ones on the Other side, panic and destabilization,” he said. “We’ve lived eight years of unending war,” a woman who runs a blood bank in eastern Ukraine told The Times. “There’s nowhere to run. All Ukraine is exploding.”

APPENDIX C – G1

Guerra na Ucrânia: Rússia invade o país por terra, ar e mar; 137 foram mortos, e 316 estão feridos. Kiev e Kharkiv, as duas maiores cidades da Ucrânia, foram bombardeadas e atacadas com mísseis. Em resposta a Putin, o presidente ucraniano, Volodymyr Zelensky, disse que distribuiu armas aos ucranianos. União Europeia classificou o momento como o 'pior desde a 2ª Guerra Mundial'.

Por g1

Rússia x Ucrânia: Míssil não identificado atinge Kiev após ataque russo. A escalada de tensão entre Rússia e Ucrânia dos últimos dias culminou em ataques por terra, ar e mar, que [*ataques] começaram na madrugada desta quinta-feira (24). Dias após uma série de ameaças e de ter reconhecido a independência de duas províncias separatistas do leste ucraniano, o presidente russo, Vladimir Putin, invadiu a Ucrânia. Cidades como Kiev e Kharkiv, as duas maiores do país, foram atacadas com mísseis e bombas. Tropas russas também desembarcaram em Odessa, que fica às margens do Mar Negro, e cruzaram a fronteira até Kharkiv. Ao menos 137 pessoas morreram e outras 316 ficaram feridas na Ucrânia após os ataques russos, disse o ministro da Saúde da Ucrânia, Oleh Lyashko. Bombardeios continuaram na região separatista de Donetsk, segundo o vice-ministro da Defesa. Uma autoridade americana disse à agência Reuters que os russos dispararam mais de 160 mísseis contra alvos ucranianos. Em resposta, Volodymyr Zelensky, presidente da Ucrânia, disse que o país reagiu, matando 50 soldados, destruindo 4 tanques russos e derrubando 6 aeronaves. Zelensky também afirmou que [*Zelensky] distribuiu armas ao povo e que o país adotou a lei marcial (quando regras militares substituem as leis civis comuns de um país). Nas ruas da Ucrânia, as imagens mostram o cenário de caos: filas em postos de combustíveis, corridas aos supermercados por mantimentos, engarrafamentos e estações de trens lotadas (veja fotos aqui). Zelensky disse ainda que seu país foi “deixado sozinho” para se defender contra a invasão russa. O líder ucraniano também convocou uma mobilização geral de todos os homens com idade entre 18 e 60 anos para se alistarem nas Forças Armadas. A mobilização vai durar pelo menos 90 dias. Zelensky pediu que voluntários se apresentassem para trabalhar com diversos serviços e solicitou aos cidadãos que doem sangue. As autoridades ucranianas informaram que tropas russas tomaram a região onde fica o depósito de resíduos nucleares de Chernobyl. As forças russas chegaram lá depois de cruzar a fronteira da Belarus com a Ucrânia. O assessor da presidência da Ucrânia, Mykhailo Podolyak, destacou que essa é uma das ameaças mais sérias na Europa hoje. O aeroporto militar de Hostomel, que fica a cerca de 23 quilômetros da capital de Kiev, também foi dominado pelos russos. Mais cedo, autoridades militares ucranianas havam dito que paraquedistas russos desceram de 20 helicópteros e 8 aeronaves Mi-8 e começaram a combater os ucranianos para controlar o aeroporto. Segundo informações do jornal ucraniano Pravda News, um ataque das forças de ocupação russa teria deixado quatro pessoas mortas e 10 feridas em Vuhledar, na província separatista de Donetsk. Por volta das 11h desta quinta no horário local (6h no horário de Brasília), projéteis russos teriam atingido um hospital. Seis dos feridos seriam médicos. O estado de saúde dos profissionais não estava claro.

APPENDIX D – UOL NOTÍCIAS

UOL: **Rússia de Putin invade** a Ucrânia 24/02/2022 06h15 Kiev, 24 Feb 2022 (AFP) –

A Rússia iniciou, na madrugada desta quinta-feira (24), uma invasão da Ucrânia, com ataques aéreos em todo o país, incluindo na capital Kiev, e a entrada de forças terrestres ao norte, leste e sul, segundo os guardas de fronteira ucranianos, que registram suas primeiras perdas. **A ofensiva** provocou clamor internacional, ao qual Moscou não deu ouvidos.

Dois dias depois de reconhecer a independência dos territórios separatistas ucranianos no Donbas, o presidente russo, Vladimir Putin, que disse que queria "defendê-los" contra a agressão ucraniana, lançou a invasão. " **[*eu]** Tomei a decisão de uma operação militar", declarou Putin em um discurso na madrugada. " **[*nós]** Vamos nos esforçar para alcançar uma desmilitarização e uma desnazificação da Ucrânia", afirmou.

" **[*nós]** Não temos nos nossos planos uma ocupação dos territórios ucranianos, não pretendemos impor nada pela força a ninguém", assegurou, apelando aos soldados ucranianos "a deporem as armas". **Ele** repetiu suas acusações infundadas de um "genocídio" orquestrado pela Ucrânia nos territórios separatistas pró-Rússia no leste do país e **[*ele]** utilizou como argumento o pedido de ajuda dos separatistas e a política agressiva da Otan em relação à Rússia, da qual a Ucrânia seria uma ferramenta. **Pouco depois** começaram a ser ouvidas explosões em várias cidades ucranianas, da capital, Kiev, a Kharkov, a segunda cidade do país na fronteira com a Rússia, mas também em Odessa e Mariupol, às margens do Mar Negro.

Sirenes de alerta para bombardeios soam a cada 15 minutos em Lviv, **a cidade para onde os Estados Unidos e vários outros países** transferiram suas embaixadas, e em Odessa. **O presidente ucraniano, Volodymyr Zelensky**, ordenou infligir o máximo de baixas ao agressor", indicou o comandante-em-chefe das Forças Armadas ucranianas, o general Valery Zaluzni, assegurando que o Exército "reage com dignidade" aos ataques inimigos.

Os guardas de fronteira disseram que as forças terrestres russas entraram no território ucraniano pela Rússia e Belarus, informando três mortes em suas fileiras. **No metrô de Kiev**, dezenas de pessoas tentavam se abrigar ou deixar a cidade, de trem ou por estrada.

" **[*]** Acordei com o som de bombas, fiz as malas e fugi", contou à AFP Maria Kachkoska, de 29 anos, agachada em estado de choque no metrô. Mesmo quando ainda era escuro, o trânsito era similar ao da hora do rush. **Carros cheios de famílias** corriam para fora da cidade, para o oeste ou para áreas rurais, longe da fronteira russa, a 400 km de distância.

- " **[*]** Pedi que fosse embora" -Em Chuguev, perto de Kharkiv, uma mulher e seu filho lamentavam a morte de um homem por um míssil, uma das primeiras vítimas desse ataque. " **Eu pedi** que ele fosse embora", repetia o filho, ao lado de um velho carro e da cratera deixada pelo projétil que caiu entre dois prédios de cinco andares.

O exército russo assegurou que visa apenas locais militares ucranianos com "armas de alta precisão". **E[*]** alegou ter destruído bases aéreas ucranianas e de defesa antiaérea, **enquanto Kiev** declarou ter abatido cinco aviões russos e um helicóptero.... - Veja mais em <https://noticias.uol.com.br/ultimas-noticias/afp/2022/02/24/russia-de-putin-invade-a-ucrania.htm?cmpid=copiaecola>

O embaixador da Rússia na ONU, Vassily Nebenzia, disse que seu país tem como alvo "a junta governante em Kiev". Em um vídeo postado no Facebook, o presidente ucraniano declarou lei marcial em todo o país. "Não entrem em pânico", "vamos vencer", disse.... - Veja mais em <https://noticias.uol.com.br/ultimas-noticias/afp/2022/02/24/russia-de-putin-invade-a-ucrania.htm?cmpid=copiaecola>

A Ucrânia anunciou o fechamento do seu espaço aéreo para a aviação civil. Os voos foram cancelados nos aeroportos das principais cidades do sul da Rússia, perto da Ucrânia, e Moscou fechou o Mar de Azov ao transporte. O ataque russo, após meses de tensão e esforços diplomáticos para evitar uma guerra, provocou uma torrente de condenação internacional.... - Veja mais em <https://noticias.uol.com.br/ultimas-noticias/afp/2022/02/24/russia-de-putin-invade-a-ucrania.htm?cmpid=copiaecola>

APPENDIX E – SEGMENTED NEWS

News A - BBC			
Theme	Markedness	Function	Classification
1. The sound of gunfire	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
2. Russian tanks	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
3. Ukraine's Ministry of Defence	Unmarked	Subject	Human
4. where the tanks	Unmarked	Circumstance	Place
5. The Europe union	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
6. The Kremlin	Unmarked	Subject	Place
7. Spokesman Dmitry Peskov	Unmarked	Subject	Human
8. Russia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
9. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
10. [*Mr. Putin]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
11. Overnight	Marked	Circumstance time	Time
12. Russia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
13. An unnamed source at Russia's defence ministry	Unmarked	Subject	Human
14. Ukraine	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
15. As the second day of fighting began	Marked	Circumstance	Time
16. Mayor Vitali Klitschko	Unmarked	Subject	Human
17. On Friday afternoon	Marked	Circumstance	Time
18. Western intelligence officials	Unmarked	Subject	Human
19. Citizens in the northern Obolon district	Unmarked	Subject	Human
20. Obolon	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
21. The Ministry of Defence	Unmarked	Subject	Human
22. Overnight	Marked	Circumstance	time
23. Putin, we	Unmarked	Subject	Human
24. How we	Unmarked	Subject	Human
25. What should we think	Unmarked	Wh element	Non-human
26. Putin	Unmarked	Subject	Human
27. Earlier	Marked	Circumstance	Time
28. Mr Lavrov	Unmarked	Subject	Human
29. But it	Unmarked	Subject	
30. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
31. According to the information we have	Marked	Circumstance	Angle
32. My family	Unmarked	Subject	Human
33. President Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
34. There have already been	Unmarked	Process	Existential
35. President Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
36. Thursday	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
37. Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhaylo Podolyak	Unmarked	Subject	Human
38. On Friday	Marked	Circumstance	Time

39. A statement released by Russia's Ministry of Defence	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
40. Ukraine	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
41. Russia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
42. whilst both sides	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
43. President Vladimir Putin	Unmarked	Subject	Human
44. The UK, EU and other allies	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
45. But [*They] said	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
46. French President Emmanuel Macron	Unmarked	Subject	Human
47. The Kremlin	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
48. Mr Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
49. Like World War Two	Marked	Circumstance	Angle
50. But here	Marked	Circumstance	Place
51. many	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
52. For weeks	Marked	Circumstance	Time
53. For weeks	Marked	Circumstance	Time
54. [*I've]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
55. it	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
56. [*it]	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
57. And now	Marked	Circumstance	Time
58. A city where Ukrainians tell all of us to "call it Kyiv in Ukrainian, not Kiev in Russian", a city which feels so European	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
59. "A failure of imagination"	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human

News B – The New York Times			
Theme	Markedness	Function	Classification
1. Russia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
2. here	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
3. The most significant European war in almost 80 years	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
4. Early this morning in Ukraine	Marked	Circumstance	Time
5. and Russian planes and missile launchers	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
6. The attacks	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
7. Ukraine's government	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
8. blasts	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
9. At an airport outside Kyiv	Marked	Circumstance	Place
10. In the southern port city of Odessa	Marked	Circumstance	Place
11. In the southern port city of Odessa	Marked	Circumstance	Place

12. In Luts'k	Marked	Circumstance	Place
13. Ukrainians	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
14. In Kyiv	Marked	Circumstance	Place
15. and [*people]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
16. In eastern Ukraine	Marked	Circumstance	Place
17. It	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
18. They	Unmarked	Subject	Human
19. We	Unmarked	Subject	Human
20. There's	Unmarked	Process	Existential

News C – G1			
Theme	Markedness	Function	Classification
1. Russia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
2. 137 pessoas	Unmarked	Subject	human
3. 316 pessoas	Unmarked	Subject	Human
4. Kiev e Kharkiv, as duas maiores cidades da Ucrânia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
5. Em resposta a Putin	Marked	Circumstance	Angle
6. União Europeia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
7. Missil não identificado	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
8. A escalada de tensão entre Rússia e Ucrânia dos últimos dias	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
9. Dias após uma série de ameaças e de ter reconhecido a independência de duas províncias separatistas do leste ucraniano	Marked	Circumstance	Time
10. Cidades como Kiev e Kharkiv, as duas maiores do país	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
11. Tropas russas	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
12. Ao menos 137 pessoas	Unmarked	Subject	Human
13. Outras 316	Unmarked	Subject	Human
14. Bombardeios	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
15. Uma autoridade americana	Unmarked	Subject	Human
16. Os russos	Unmarked	Subject	Human
17. Em resposta Volodymyr Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human

18. O país	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
19. Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
20. O país	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
21. Nas ruas da Ucrânia	Marked	Circumstance	Non-human
22. Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
23. O líder ucraniano	Unmarked	Subject	Human
24. A mobilização	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
25. Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
26. As autoridades ucranianas	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
27. As forças russas	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
28. O assessor da presidência da Ucrânia, Mykhailo Podolyak	Unmarked	Subject	Human
29. O aeroporto militar de Hostomel, que fica a cerca de 23 quilômetros da capital de Kiev	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
30. Mais cedo	Marked	Circumstance	Time
31. Segundo informações do jornal ucraniano Pravda News	Marked	Circumstance	Conformity
32. Por volta das 11h desta quinta no horário local (6h no horário de Brasília)	Marked	Circumstance	Time
33. Seis dos feridos	Unmarked	Subject	Human
34. O estado de saúde dos profissionais	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human

News D - UOL			
Theme	Markedness	Function	Classification
1) Rússia de Putin	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
2) A Rússia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
3) A ofensiva	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
4) Dois dias depois de reconhecer a independência dos territórios separatistas ucranianos no Donbas	Marked	Circumstance	Time
5) [*eu]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
6) [*nós]	Unmarked	Subject	Human

7) [*nós]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
8) Ele	Unmarked	Subject	Human
9) e [*ele]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
10) Pouco depois	Marked	Circumstance	Time
11) Sirenes de alerta para bombardeios	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
12) a cidade para onde os Estados Unidos e vários outros países	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
13) O presidente ucraniano, Volodymyr Zelensky	Unmarked	Subject	Human
14) Os guardas de fronteira	Unmarked	Subject	Human
15) No metrô de Kiev	Marked	Circumstance	Place
16) [*eu]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
17) Carros cheios de famílias	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
18) [*eu]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
19) Eu	Unmarked	Subject	Human
20) O exército russo	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
21) E[*ele]	Unmarked	Subject	Human
22) enquanto Kiev	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
23) O embaixador da Rússia na ONU, Vassily Nebenzia	Unmarked	Subject	Human
24) Em um vídeo postado no Facebook	Marked	Circumstance	Place
25) A Ucrânia	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
26) Os voos	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human
27) O ataque russo	Unmarked	Subject	Non-human