"It's Barack Obama Who's Soft"

Political Bias on BBC, CNN, and Fox News:
A Critical Discourse Analysis of News Websites

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Tutkielmassa analysoidaan kolmen internetsivuston uutisartikkeleita kielitieteen näkökulmasta. Tavoitteena on selvittää esiintyykö internetsivustojen BBC, CNN ja Fox News uutisoinnissa politiikkaan liittyviä ennakkoasenteita tai puolueellisuuksia ja miten ne käytännössä näkyvät uutisartikkeleiden kielessä. Kriittiseen diskurssianalyysiin pohjautuen tutkielma esittelee jokaisen uutissivuston taustaan (esimerkiksi rakenteeseen ja rahoitukseen) liittyviä seikkoja sekä mediadiskurssiin ja politiikkaan liittyvät taustatiedot, jolla taataan Norman Fairclough'n kolmivaiheisen menetelmän mahdollisimman perusteellinen toteuttaminen.

Uutissivustoja analysoidaan kriittiselle diskurssianalyysille sopivan funktionaalisen kieliopin ja muiden lingvististen välineiden avulla. Koko aineiston (404 artikkelia) otsikot analysoidaan ensin, minkä jälkeen analysoidaan yhdeksän kokonaista artikkelia kolmeen eri aihealueeseen liittyen niin, että jokaiselta internetsivustolta analysoidaan yksi artikkeli jokaista aihetta kohden. Analyysikeinoina käytetään ensisijaisesti systeemis-funktionaalisen kieliopin tekstuaalisen metafunktion välineitä (*thematic structure*). Myös ideationaalisen metafunktion välineitä (*transitivity*), referenssiketjuja (*referential identity chains*) ja leksikaalista analyysia käytetään hyväksi. Lähtökohtaisesti tavoitteena on analysoida uutissivustoja vertailevasti, jolloin analyysin tulokset ovat paremmin havainnoitavissa ja perusteltavissa.

Hypoteesi aikaisempien tutkimusten ja yleisen mielikuvan perusteella on, että CNN uutisoi demokraattipuolueelle ja Fox News taas republikaanipuolueelle edulliseen sävyyn. Tutkimustulokset vaihtelivat hypoteesia tukevista ja sen vastaisista tuloksista niihin, jotka eivät olleet tarpeeksi tuettuja kumpaankaan suuntaan. Vahvimmat tulokset ovat kuitenkin hypoteesia tukevia, joten tässä tutkielmassa todetaan, ettei uutisointi ole puolueetonta ainakaan näiden kolmen internetsivuston kohdalla. Lisäksi muutaman aihealueen kohdalla uutisointi on niin toistuvaa tietystä näkökulmasta, että luonnollistumisteorian mukaista aatteiden luonnollistumista saattaa tapahtua. Tutkielmassa käytettyjen menetelmien menestyksen perusteella suositellaan, että tekstuaalisen metafunktion analyysivälineitä käytetään enemmän. Lisäksi suositellaan meta-analyysin harkitsemista, jotta voitaisiin selvittää, mitkä analyysimetodit parhaiten sopivat minkäkinlaisen aineiston analysointiin.

Asiasanat: BBC, CNN, Fox News, politiikka, uutiset, kriittinen diskurssianalyysi, kolmivaiheinen menetelmä, luonnollistumisteoria, CDA, systeemis-funktionaalinen teoria, tekstuaalinen metafunktio, referenssiketjut

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List of abbreviations

BBC   the British Broadcasting Corporation

CDA   Critical Discourse Analysis

CL   Critical Linguistics

CNN   the Cable News Network

FNC   the Fox News Channel

FOX   Fox News

NG   noun group

OWS Occupy Wall Street

PP   prepositional phrase

SFG   systemic-functional grammar

SPJ   the Society of Professional Journalists

U.K.   the United Kingdom

U.S.   the United States

VG   verbal group

1 Introduction

In the past two decades, the use and contents of the internet have grown exponentially. Today, the internet is an immense medium for many aspects of societal structures, such as commerce and news broadcasting. In fact, in just ten years from its early beginnings in the 1990s, thousands of news and magazine publications began publishing online (Deuze 2003: 204). As a medium for news broadcasting, the internet is one of its kind. As opposed to the limited space in newspapers and the costly airtime of television, the internet is practically limitless and very cost-effective compared to the other media. This has changed the nature of news production and availability: today, the news is to a much greater degree something that is widely known as *infotainment* (i.e. the entertaining delivery of information). This change can be at least partially attributed to the growth in the availability of news (Allan 2005: 90). News organizations have had to become more conscious of their commercial value as competition for advertisement revenue is fierce "at a time when interest in news is generally waning" (Thussu 2007: 2). Entertainment sells, so to say, and news organizations have had to adapt to survive in the ruthless new markets.

What is often overlooked about the news is that the agencies producing them constitute businesses (e.g. Fowler 1991: 2 and 121). They, too, promote and sell a product (i.e. the news) to the customers (i.e. the audience and the entities that purchase advertisement space). From the point of view of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), one consequence of the commercial nature of the news is that news agencies, consciously or subconsciously, reproduce ideologies of those powers that enable the process of news production (discussed at length in Fairclough 1989 and Fowler 1991) and, consequently, the existence of the news agencies. It is reasonable to conclude that since there are a plethora of news outlets and they all compete for the same audience, they aim to distinguish themselves from one another through appealing to the public as they best see fit - resulting in different slants in news.

As is the case with much of the scholarly research in the CDA vein, the purpose of this study is to uncover any potential hidden agendas or ideologies in language.

Specifically, CDA will be employed to analyze the online news content of three big news broadcasting organizations. The analysis, conducted through the use of aspects of systemic-functional grammar (SFG) and other linguistic methods (specified in section 7), will focus on topics which divide the political field in the United States (U.S.) into two opposing sides: the left, which consists of the typically more liberal Democrats, and the right, which consists of the typically more conservative Republicans. The study of three sources of news - in alphabetical order: the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the Cable News Network (CNN), and Fox News (at times referred to as FOX) - will facilitate the creation of a liberal-conservative continuum. Based on previous research (section 5), my initial hypothesis is that CNN positions itself further left and Fox News further right on the continuum. Because BBC can be considered less directly involved in U.S. related matters, it is an important addition to the comparative aspect of the analysis in this thesis.

This thesis will concentrate on the following research questions:

    1) Do the data exhibit any hidden agendas or ideologies?

        1a) If not, what implications does this have considering the present study as well as CDA generally?

        1b) If yes, how and in what contexts do these hidden agendas or ideologies manifest themselves in the data and what patterns emerge?

    2) What implications do the results have on the view of the news as well as the view of BBC, CNN, and Fox News in particular?

The theoretical foundation of this thesis is largely based on the work of Fairclough, Fowler, and Halliday. These and other scholars whose theories inspired this thesis will be further discussed in the appropriate sections, some of which will highlight the role and characteristics of the news media (section 2), provide an outline of CDA (section 3), and discuss the U.S. political field (section 4). A description of the data (section 6) will proceed an overview of the tools employed in the analysis (section 7), after which the analysis itself will begin. The results will be discussed and, finally, the conclusion will outline some of the implications of the study.

2 The news media

The news is often expected to be objective not only from the point of view of the news media and journalists who aim to be so (Fowler 1991: 1, also Allan 2005: 57) but also typically from the point of view of the news reader. The news both strives to be and often is viewed as a collection of facts, and this is at least partially so because they are represented as such by lacking forms that indicate modality (Fairclough 1989: 129). Also the existence of opinion pieces and editorials suggests to the readers that the hard news items are factual (Fowler 1991: 208). The seemingly unambiguous facts are presented to the readers who then presume the information provided is factual. Before discussing the issue of the objectivity of the news, it is necessary to comprehend some aspects of the production of news. In the following, I will briefly outline some similarities and differences of news online and in the printed press. I will continue with how a news story is created and what decisions affect the process, as these aspects are necessary to understand in the context of this thesis.

2.1 News in the online medium

Online news resembles the printed press in many ways. Firstly, hard news items largely follow the inverted pyramid model, meaning that the most important part of a news story precedes less important or additional details (e.g. Bell 1991: 168-9, see also Dunn 2003). The use of the inverted pyramid model is favored by many journalism experts such as Starr, professor at Texas A&M University (2005: 269, also Deuze 2003: 209 and Scanlan 2003). In my data, the articles that are analyzed in-depth follow the inverted pyramid model. Secondly, there exists a visible separation between news and editorials in the structure of news websites (e.g. separate link for opinion pieces) much like in the printed press. Furthermore, online news is no more free of commercial pressures than printed press or television news (Cohen 2002: 544), which is observable, for example, from the advertisement banners.

Similarities between printed and online news are, however, only one side of the coin. For example, while printed media is quite limited in its available space (Cohen 2002:

542), online articles can be longer and include more details. It appears, however, that very little research has been done on the format of online news. That is to say, while the aspects of multimedia, interactivity, and layout have been discussed (e.g. Ihlström 2004, see also Greer and Mensing 2004: 99-101), the articles or texts themselves have not been studied as much. For example, Weldon claims that the emerging narrative style in newspapers is not suitable for online news (2008: 103). It is clear, however, that some online news outlets have moved away from the inverted pyramid model toward a narrative style of writing, which is evident also in my data as regards soft news articles. In addition to the narrative style of writing, non-linear writing (i.e. writing in chunks that can be read and situated separately, even on different web pages, but which still form a complete story) has surfaced in online journalism (Deuze 1999: 381). While neither non-linear writing nor narrative writing affects the analysis in this thesis, it still remains important to acknowledge these characteristics that at times differentiate, rather significantly, print and online news.

The spread of news and journalism to the world of the internet has changed the nature of news broadcasting in important ways. For example, the pace and the volume of news production have increased immensely since the beginnings of cable television, continuing to today with the essentially limitless space online. As Cohen (2002: 537) explains, online news intensifies existing commercial pressures on various levels of the industry for many reasons, e.g. the faster pace of news production and the ease with which new news organizations can establish themselves. At the same time, however, branding has become increasingly difficult, creating a market in which only a few of the many novel news websites survive (ibid.). This combination creates the need to produce news that is even more marketable, perhaps at the cost of proper journalistic effort (e.g. Allan 2005: 93). Additionally, even though the internet houses many non-mainstream voices, their authority is usually insignificant in comparison to that of more prominent, commercialized entities (Cohen 2002: 539-540). That is to say, in spite of the variety of news sources online, mainstream, commercialized news sources constitute the majority of the authoritative ones, which makes it all the more important to analyze their contents for any political bias.

2.2 An outline of media discourse and related concepts

Since not everything that happens in the world is reported about on the news, what is it that makes a story newsworthy? Newsworthiness can be conceptualized as something that is profitable to the news organization as a piece of news. As mentioned in the introduction, the news is essentially a product (e.g. Allan 2005: 9, Bell 1991: 38, Fowler 1991: 222, and van Dijk 1988: 83) consumed by news readers or audiences, and, as with any commercial commodity, the goal is to produce what the consumer wants. Broadly speaking, there are two economic factors influencing the ideology of any news organization. One consists of pleasing advertisers through harmless and even beneficial topics of news in relation to the products advertised (Fowler 1991: 121, also Allan 2005: 93). The other concerns pleasing various corporate entities involved in news production (ibid.). That is to say, if a news organization's parent company has commercial interests beyond news broadcasting, those commercial interests may affect its policies in broadcasting news[1]. Also, affiliations with political and governmental agencies affect news production (Fowler 1991: 222, also Allan 2005: 93). For an overview of the forces at play in market-driven journalism, see Cohen (2002). These aspects of news production critically impact the news and are essential to acknowledge when engaging in CDA.

Following from the idea of news as something which has commercial value, the concept *news values* is one that concerns the selection of news from the available events. It is discussed briefly by Fowler (1991: 13) who expresses that news values are what define which event or information of the myriad of possibilities is regarded as newsworthy. For example, it is more likely that something out of the ordinary rather than something mundane is considered news. A framework was published by Galtung and Ruge which outlines the key aspects of news values (ibid., see also van Dijk 1988: 111-114 and 119-124). Because the focus in this thesis is on the potential ideologies the news may reproduce, what remains necessary to understand about news values is that they are socially constructed rather than in any way "natural"

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1 For example, the media company Gannett is linked to Continental Airlines (Project Censored 2011) and thus possibly reluctant to allow USA Today, which Gannett owns, to report about any potential mechanical problems experienced by the airline thus effectively censoring the news.

(Fowler 1991: 13, also van Dijk 1988: 2 and 119). That is to say, in addition to the commercial interests of news organizations, societies and communities themselves are what define the types of news their members watch and read. For example, when comparing a local newspaper and a larger circulation, national one, there will be a difference in their contents: the local paper will report about locally important or newsworthy issues, whereas the national paper will report about issues that its wider range, less localized readership is interested in. Therefore, newsworthiness is socially constructed because it can vary by culture as well as within one culture.

The concept of socially constructed news values can be approached through the widely acknowledged assumption that all texts have an *ideal reader* (e.g. Markley 1979 and DeMaria 1978) for whom the text is tailored. This concept, also known as *implied reader*, is utilized by the journalist so that they are able to write the text to fit "assumptions about the social world which they expect the readers to share" (Allan 2010: 103, also Bell 1991: 88-89 and Fowler 1991: 4). It is easy to see that since society can affect news values, it can also affect the product that the framework of news values helps create (i.e. news). To put it a different way, the author (or speaker) of a text is necessarily concerned with the function of the text (see Halliday 1985: xiii-xxxv for a discussion of language and function[2]) - after all, writing a letter, a poem, and a news article all require significantly different approaches because their functions are different. Therefore, the manner in which one writes a news article is influenced by the fact that what one is writing is a news article in a particular society.

The reason why the writer must conform to the features of the specific genre (i.e. news) is because there exist various social rules and restrictions which dictate how language is used (Fairclough 1989: 29-30, also Fowler 1991: 46). It is because language is socially restrained and structured (Fairclough 1989: 29-30) that the form (notably the inverted pyramid structure, see Deuze 2003: 209 and Jarman and McClune 2007: 44) and, to a lesser extent, content (theoretically factual information) of a news article are to a considerable extent predetermined. From this perspective it

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2   Two editions of Halliday's book are used because the 1985 edition includes irreplaceable descriptions of the main concepts (e.g. *language and function*) in the introduction which is not found in the later version. All references outside the introduction will be made to the 2004 edition.

becomes clearer how newsworthiness (as well as language in general) is influenced by the readership (or society) and, conversely, how the readership (or society) is influenced by the news (or language)[3]. In other words, all texts affect their interpreters who then not only expect a certain kind of text to conform to certain rules but also go on to reproduce the text type - if not through writing the news stories themselves then through the expectations about the features of news stories that the journalist then has to follow. This reciprocity is crucial in reinforcing unequal power structures imposed upon society by those in power (e.g. commercial entities).

In this and the preceding section I have argued that the news is a product of different profit-seeking news broadcasting entities and that this, in addition to the socially constructed restraints on news production and topics, affects the news as a product. News broadcasting that aims to make maximum profit changes news to what is easy to sell, but which is not necessarily the product of "'serious' journalism" (Allan 2005: 93), and affects the choice of what becomes news (ibid., also Fowler 1991: 121). Additionally, the aforementioned social restraints, through a different process, produce a similar result by providing news readers with what they expect (Fowler 1991: 13). What is more, news articles do not simply contain remnants of the ideologies held by the journalist: several editors typically modify articles before publishing (Bell 1991: 42-43), and news agencies typically have style guides that "deal with controversial, evaluative and loaded discourse which clearly exhibits both discursive and social traits these organizations prefer" (Barkho 2008: 135). That is to say, the organizations themselves, guided by their commercial and political interests, determine to a large extent how journalists write and what language is used. These issues continue to present themselves as essential as this thesis progresses.

2.3 Journalism and ethics

Based on the previous sections, it may seem as if news production is purely money-driven. There are, however, aspects to journalism which, at least in theory, act as a balancing force to the issues caused by the commercial nature of news production,

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3   For more on this type of reciprocity, see, for example, Fairclough (1989: 29-30 and 57-58 as well as [1995] 2003: 54-55).

and it is important to remember that journalists do not simply reproduce corporate and ideological propaganda. One of the main balancing forces are codes of ethics (e.g. Fico et al. 2008: 321). Codes of ethics in the practice of journalism date back at least to the 1920s when, in 1923 and 1926 respectively, the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) adopted the Canons of Journalism (Watson and Urofsky 2008: 24). Even though individual codes of ethics were adopted prior to the 1920s, the canons formed the basis of numerous variations of codes of ethics within the field of journalism for many years (ibid.).

The codes of ethics were originally created to "improve the quality of American journalism" (Watson and Urofsky 2008: 23). One of the basic messages of the canons which is still upheld is that journalism serves public interests (ibid.: 27, also Allan 2005: 55) instead of those of the individual or corporations, for example. Today, it is widely recognized that journalism and the news are to "maintain democracy" (Berry 2009: 76, also Allan 2005: 59 and 85). Other modern themes based on the canons include "seek[ing] truth and report[ing] it" and "[m]inimizing harm" (Society of Professional Journalists 2009). In relation to this thesis, codes of ethics in journalism are important because they both contribute to how journalists are viewed (i.e. ethical) and act as a counterbalance to the corporate and commercial interests in journalism.

What may erode the practice of ethical journalism is the fact that, for fear of losing free journalism, no enforcement of the codes could be implemented (Watson and Urofsky 2008: 23, also Berry 2009: 87). Codes of ethics are therefore upheld by the virtue of the journalists themselves and are not obligatory in order to practice journalism (Berry 2009: 97, also Schotz 2010: 30). As Casten (2003) reports, the Florida Court of Appeals confirmed this lack of rules by ruling in favor of the news organization that fired its two investigative journalists because they refused to report falsified information. Therefore, while journalists may aim to be ethical, there are no legal restrictions on how corporate and other powerful entities can influence the news, making endeavors such as CDA even more necessary.

3 Critical Discourse Analysis

In this section, I will outline Fairclough's approach to CDA and discuss CDA's connection to the media. Some criticisms against CDA will also be presented.

3.1 Overview and brief history

One of the main philosophies underlying CDA is Marxism. Particularly the sense of the word *critical*[4] in Critical Discourse Analysis is linked with Marxist critical theory (Hammersley 1997: 240, also van Dijk 1993: 251). In another sense, CDA also takes on aspects of social theory. Specifically, Foucault has been identified by many as the main influence behind the concepts in power and ideology related CDA research, such as *orders of discourse* (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 451, also Chilton 2005: 20 and Fairclough 1989: 12). Marxism and Foucault's power related research can be argued to be the driving force behind contemporary CDA and especially that of Fairclough: both contemporary CDA and Fairclough's CDA combine the Marxist critical view of society with Foucault's theories of, for example, how power is constructed through discourse (Foucault 1970: 51-56, see a further discussion of Marxism, Foucault, and Fairclough's CDA in Meyer 2001: 22).

Additionally, a more recent development preceding contemporary CDA is Critical Linguistics (henceforth CL; Hammersley 1997: 237), which denotes the earlier steps taken in the CDA field. It is because of this shared history that the terms CDA and CL are often used synonymously (Wodak 2001: 1). CL was born out of the cooperation of scholars, such as Fowler, Hodge, and Kress (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 453, see also Fowler et al. 1979 and Hodge and Kress 1979 for some of their early work on CL), who worked at the University of East Anglia in the 1970s (Wodak 2001: 5). Wodak goes on to list some of the main features that CL and CDA share. One important shared feature is the notion of critically analyzing discourse (ibid.: 2). Another is "the claim that discourses are ideological and that there is no arbitrariness of signs" (ibid.: 3) in the sense that "signs are always motivated...by the

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4 *Critical* in CDA denotes the "need for analysts to unpack the ideological underpinnings of discourse" (Teo 2000: 12) rather than merely describe its features.

producer's 'interest'...which determines the characteristics that are to be selected and to be represented" (Kress 1993: 173, see also Fowler 1991: 4). That is to say, the writer must always choose the words she uses, and, therefore, CDA's claim that all texts are ideological holds true.

The brief background provided in the previous two paragraphs clarifies why CDA is founded on two principle assertions. One, all discourse reproduces ideologies (Fowler 1991: 10) of some kind or another. Two, these ideologies or hidden agendas are viewed as being reproduced for the benefit of the dominant group(s) in society (Fairclough 1989: 22). In other words, discourses are structured in a way that reproduces those common-sense structures of society (i.e. ways of thinking or doing things) which benefit those with power, be it power through money, numbers, or authority. Consequently, for CDA it is crucial to expose the hidden agendas to denaturalize those common-sense conceptions of how the world functions (Fairclough 1995: 27). One of the aims in CDA research is, therefore, to reveal these ideologies to create transparency.

Despite the unifying features listed above, CDA is not known to be a single theory or method of analysis because it is neither. In fact, there are several theoretical standpoints that can be adopted within CDA to create a range of different approaches, ranging from those that highlight cognitive or socio-psychological theories to those highlighting discourse theories or even general social theories (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 450 and Wodak 2001: 18-20). This diversity of the field can be partially attributed to the variety of uses to which CDA has been applied. For example, some of the more popular topics in CDA research include political discourse, media language, ideology, racism, and gender. A more extensive list can be found in Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000: 450-1). Of these, instrumental to my thesis are the first three: political discourse (e.g. Fairclough 1989 and 1995), media language (e.g. Bell 1991 and van Dijk 1988), and ideology (e.g. Fowler 1991).

It was not until 1991 that practitioners of various different approaches to CDA found their way into the same room and an international network of researchers was formed

(Wodak 2001: 4). The key linguists who attended the symposium include Fairclough, van Dijk, and Wodak (ibid.). Other influential scholars include, in alphabetical order, Chilton, Chouliaraki, Kress, and van Leeuwen, to name a few. Since its institutionalization in the early 1990s, CDA has become one of the most influential branches of discourse analysis that, in addition to continued publication of a variety of books, enjoys a presence in a number of academic journals (e.g. *Discourse & Society*, *Critical Discourse Studies*, and *Journal of Language and Politics*) and websites.

3.2 Norman Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis

Within the CDA field, one of the most dominant approaches for analyzing discourse was developed by Fairclough in the 1980s (particularly Fairclough 1989), and it has been revisited in several publications thereafter (especially Fairclough 1992, 1995, and [1995] 2003 as well as Chouliaraki and Fairclough 2001). Fairclough's method is based on the formulation that the way people produce and interpret language is ultimately affected and controlled by power. This may not appear immediately logical. Fairclough explains it through the following process: the way people produce and interpret language is affected by their experiences of the world, and experiences are affected by social organization, which, in turn, is affected and controlled by power (1989: 25). To paraphrase, power dictates to a considerable degree how the world works (e.g. the news is shaped by commercialism and corporate interests), which, in turn, affects what kinds of experiences are had (e.g. the experience of what reading news articles is like), and the experiences affect aspects of language use (e.g. which point of view of an event is prominent in everyday discussions). Therefore, in order to analyze texts, one must analyze "the relationship between texts, processes, and their social conditions [i.e.] the situational context and...institutional and social structures" (ibid.: 26). This three-layer view of discourse is at the core of Fairclough's three-dimensional model.

The three-dimensional model is to a large extent sociologically based, which can be observed in the levels of analysis that directly involve societal structures, for

example. In my opinion, the following quote summarizes the model in the most concise and explicit manner:

> I see discourse as a complex of three elements: social practice, discoursal practice (text production, distribution and consumption), and text, and the analysis of a specific discourse calls for analysis in each of these three dimensions and their interrelations. The hypothesis is that significant connections exist between features of texts, ways in which texts are put together and interpreted, and the nature of the social practice.
>
> Fairclough 1995: 74

In other words, Fairclough's model of CDA divides discourse into three distinct aspects: the physical text (spoken or written), the discourse practice, and the social practice. Furthermore, Fairclough stresses the importance of analyzing how these three levels affect one another within any given discourse. The model, therefore, provides a complex framework for analyzing various aspects of discourse and language use.

The first level of analysis consists of the text itself. This level concerns, for example, the grammatical (e.g. modality and transitivity; Fairclough 1995: 134) and lexical choices of the writer (e.g. metaphors and synonyms; Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 448). The discourse practice level includes the analysis of the composition of the text, its readership or audience, and the manner in which the text may be interpreted (i.e. "production, distribution and consumption" of the text; Fairclough 1995: 74). Additionally, the second level involves considering a group of similar texts as a point of comparison. Particularly, speech acts, coherence, and intertextuality are important at this level because they "link a text to its context" (Blommaert and Bulcaen 2000: 448-449). The third and final level of analysis is referred to as the level of social or sociocultural practices, and it is concerned with the societal level structures and procedures that affect the discourse practice (ibid.: 449). That is to say, how societal rules and codes affect, for example, the reception of the text. For a more detailed discussion of the three levels, see Fairclough (1989: 144 and [1995] 2003: 57-62) and Garrett and Bell (1998: 11-12).

While not disregarding the social and discourse practice dimensions of the model, textual analysis will remain as the main focus of this thesis. The reason why a

grammatical and lexical analysis of a text can efficiently reveal ideological undertones of the writer or even the society is because:

> the link between sociocultural practice and text is mediated by discourse practice; how a text is produced or interpreted...depends upon the nature of the sociocultural practice which the discourse is a part of...; the nature of the discourse practice of text production shapes the text, and leaves 'traces' in surface features of the text.
>
> Fairclough 1995: 97

That is to say, the particular textual features and choices of the writer in terms of, for example, lexis and structure of the text are remnants of the discourse practice which in turn is determined by sociocultural practices. In other words, structures and practices of the social sphere (i.e. how the world works) affect the ways in which texts are created, distributed, and interpreted, and, additionally, through affecting the way texts are created and interpreted, social structures are in a way encoded in the features of the text (e.g. in the wordings or grammatical constructions used). This relationship is reciprocal, as has been discussed in an earlier section in relation to the media. Consequently, it is the grammatical and lexical features of the text on which the analysis in this thesis will mainly be based.

Finally, an important concept in terms of Fairclough's CDA is that of *naturalization*, as it plays an intricate role in understanding why it is necessary to analyze texts and uncover any possible ideologies or hidden agendas in them. Naturalization, as it is understood in CDA, is, very briefly expressed, the making natural of certain ideas and practices that "can often be shown to originate in the dominant class or the dominant block" (Fairclough 1989: 33, also Fairclough [1995] 2003: 54). In other words, perceiving a certain discourse as natural is to see it as common sense (Fairclough 1989: 33) - something that is considered normal to the extent that questioning its existence or function is not necessary or often even realized as a possibility. This kind of ideological power is "a significant complement to economic and political power" (ibid.) particularly because "it appears to be *neutral* in struggles for power" (ibid.: 92, emphasis as in original). Naturalized aspects of discourse practices include not only grammatical and lexical aspects (e.g. the *tu-vous* distinction in French where, in the simplest of explanations, *tu* is the informal *you* and *vous* the formal alternative), but also the "underlying interactional practices"

(Fairclough 1995: 23), such as conventions related to turn-taking, politeness (ibid.) or rules about who one is allowed to address (e.g. in patriarchal societies).

The theory of naturalization includes an aspect relating to dominance. Fairclough explains that naturalization advances further and becomes more solidified in the minds of people according to how dominant that view is in the surrounding society (Fairclough 1985: 744 and 1989: 92). In addition to dominance, the aspect of frequency applies to cases of naturalization (for more information about the importance of quantity of input in ideological discourse, see Fairclough 1989: 37 and Fowler 1991: 121). For example, terrorism discourse by the police and various intelligence and government agencies not only originates from an authoritative source but is also extremely frequent, which, in and of itself, is an effective tool to forward naturalization of the idea of terrorists as a major threat. Therefore, repeatedly (mis)informed readers of online news will more easily consider the (mis)information as natural - how things are and should be - rather than question that which is repeatedly reported. The concept of naturalization will resurface when discussing CDA in connection to the media as well as when introducing the three websites chosen for analysis.

It is important to note, however, that common-sense structures tend to lose their influence when their role is realized in the process for "sustaining power inequalities at one's own expense" (Fairclough 1989: 85). That is, one rarely accepts that one's own actions are retaining those hierarchical structures that favor someone else. The importance of critical analysis of discourse becomes evident best in this quote from Fowler: "The ideological function of conversation is to naturalize the terms in which reality is represented, and the categories those terms represent" (1991: 57, see also Fairclough 1985: 739). Therefore, the importance of language in reproducing such ideologies and structures must be realized and examined in order to expose and better understand the hidden agendas. Because ideologies are reproduced rather through discourse (Fairclough 1995: 219) than any other medium, such as brute force, the employment of CDA becomes necessary.

3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis and the media

One of the major areas of interest for research in the CDA vein is media language. CDA is, in fact, the approach through which media language has been explored most (Garrett and Bell 1998: 6). This is partly because CDA views all language as reproducing an ideology of sorts and is interested in exposing and investigating those hidden agendas in language that may be ideological. This relates directly to the media. Because of (but not limited to) the reasons discussed in section 2.2, media language can be seen as dependent on various factors ranging from the society to corporate interests and the power of advertisers. In this view, the media functions as a kind of mirror of the society through which it reflects that image of the world which represents these outside interests and ideologies. In other words, "all news is always reported from some particular angle" (Fowler 1991: 10, also argued by McNair 1996 as quoted in Allan 2005: 57). CDA aims to uncover these ideologies and views critical analysis as the tool through the use of which it becomes possible to expose hidden prejudices and conscious or subconscious viewpoints of the writers, the particular language community, or even the entire society.

The quantity of input plays an important role in ideological influence. This idea has been visited by Fowler (1991: 121) and also Fairclough through the concept of naturalization. In the words of Fairclough, "the constant doses of 'news' which most people receive each day are a significant factor in social control" (1989: 37). To explain this idea of social control further, one must consider the kinds of people who are employed as sources in news stories - they are, for the most part, people with power (ibid.: 50, see also Covert and Wasburn 2007: 68-69, Fowler 1991: 22, and van Dijk 1988: 87). Politicians and heads of corporations are more likely to be referred to than someone who is not in a position of power. Even a news report about blue-collar auto workers is more likely to include quotes from the manager or supervisor than the people who physically assemble the cars. This issue has been widely researched by, for example, Fishman (1978), Gans (1979), Holstein and Gubrium (2000), and Sigal (1973).

In addition to who is referred to in the news article, what is more important - and less easy to detect - is to "whose *perspective*" (Fairclough 1989: 51, emphasis as in original, see also Fowler 1991: 23) the news report conforms. In other words, referring to the same group of people in different ways, for example, can reveal the perspective from which one views them. Words such as *protesters* (perhaps used by the group itself), *rioters* (possibly used by the industry or entity the group is protesting), and *criminals* (perhaps used in cases of extremely negative views against the group) all denote very different things. Both the people who are used as sources and the perspective that is adopted are important factors in reinforcing ideologies that benefit the powerful.

In 2.2, I discussed the circular idea that communities and societies affect the news through their assumptions about what the news should be like, and, conversely, the news affects people's ideas about the news. This reciprocity also applies to what point of view the news adopts: if the news is consistently reported from the point of view of the powerful (as can be argued they often do due to their corporate interests), these ideologies will become naturalized in the society in which these ideologies that benefit the powerful will then be enacted. Furthermore, due to the ideas becoming commonsensical, they are also the expected point of view to adopt, which reinforces how these issues are reported and talked about. The following quote summarizes the concept rather efficiently:

> [S]ocial structures not only determine social practice, they are also a product of social practice. And more particularly, social structures not only determine discourse, they are also a product of discourse.
>
> Fairclough 1989: 37

That is to say, social structures of power and influence are a direct determinant in how one lives in the world (e.g. how one greets another, what one considers moral or admirable, how the economic system functions). Conversely, social practices or how people live in the world also directly influence who gains or retains power[5].

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5 A concrete example comes from Fairclough (1989: 57-58). What is now considered standard English became standard due to its use by those with power and money. Through its use in commerce and the influence of the powerful elites, its position became commonplace. Even today those from middle- and upper-class backgrounds benefit from being brought up speaking the standard variety because many prestigious jobs consider fluency in the variety as a requirement.

In addition to the distorted view that the news provides of the world through its use of sources, its perspective on events, and its corporate connections, the news media are especially influential because of their position in society. It is this position as an important source of information which could be argued to also allow for its ideological influence. Due to the ability of the news to affect how people think, it is important to understand what forces go into constructing the news and what ideologies the news may produce. Thompson writes that "the way we normally talk about [our experiences in the world] (and the way we hear other people talk about them) influences the way we see them" (2004: 10). This, in the end, is what crystallizes the rationality behind employing CDA: one must understand the root of the ideas that influence the way one thinks. It is only through this understanding of the ideologies that one can begin to see the forces at play and make educated decisions about issues at hand.

3.4 Criticism

Criticism is a part of all scholarly effort that propels research forward by exposing weaknesses and vulnerabilities in theories and methodologies that can then be reviewed and refined. It is therefore clear that CDA, too, is not free of criticism, and it is essential to consider its weaker points before embracing its employment in any serious research. Widdowson is one of the most well known scholars criticizing CDA, but critique is also expressed by those who actively conduct research in the CDA vein, such as Chilton and even Fairclough himself. In the following paragraphs, I will review some criticisms against CDA in general as well as against Fairclough's three-dimensional approach.

The first issue to review is that which concerns terminology and concepts. For example, Widdowson expresses that there exists "confusion" about "concepts concerning discourse" (1995: 159) in CDA. That is to say, the use and meaning(s) of the word *discourse* are questioned as vague by Widdowson. It is true that often CDA scholars do not define this term and accept it at face value, which is problematic due to the many uses to which it has been applied. The issue of terminology and

conceptual obscurity, while necessary to review here because of its importance in the area of CDA critique, will not be further discussed. It is unnecessary in this empirical thesis to delve into what is essentially a philosophical issue because successful analysis of texts is entirely possible despite not engaging in such philosophical debates. Furthermore, due to the vagueness of the term *discourse,* it is not used in this thesis outside the discussion of CDA theories.

Another criticism presented against CDA is that it has an agenda - to expose ideologies and unequal power relations. Fairclough, for example, has declared that he writes "as a socialist" with a goal to free people from socially defined rules that empower others (Fairclough 1989: 5, see also Barkho 2008: 114). Fairclough's stance demonstrates well this particular problem in CDA research, and it has been discussed by many (e.g. Chilton 2005: 21, Meyer 2001: 15, Widdowson 1998: 136, and Wodak 2001: 5). At this juncture, it becomes necessary to acknowledge the fact that objectivity is not a given in any research: the researcher is often too close to the issue at hand to remain absolutely objective, no matter what the subject to be investigated is. In socio-politically flavored research, the issue of objectivity is perhaps heightened, but it still remains that by acknowledging CDA's agenda and consciously attempting to counteract any potential issues caused by it in the analysis and discussion, it is possible to remain as objective as every other researcher.

In addition to issues relating to terminology and CDA's agenda, critics have proposed that CDA researchers tend to precede directly from the theory to the results while disregarding the description of the analysis process. As Widdowson explains, analyses in CDA are often "ready-made interpretations which, in effect, serve as a kind of pretextual priming, designed to dispose us to read this text in a particular way" (2004: 142). This issue relates directly to another typical criticism against CDA, one which suggests that the analyst imposes her own views on the material being analyzed - a serious issue that has generated much discussion in the field. Chilton writes that if one's view of the world is truly generated through language use, as CDA claims, then that process must be internal, "taking place in the minds of (interacting) individuals" (2005: 23). Therefore, when an analyst processes her data,

it can be argued that her own interpretations will guide her analysis (ibid., see also Widdowson 1995: 164-165 and 1998: 143) - a criticism easily made in relation to much of CDA research.

The problem of interpretation has been addressed on a theoretical level. As discussed, Fairclough proposes in his three-dimensional approach that the reception and consumption of texts should be accounted for in analysis. In spite of this acknowledgment that the interpretation of the text by its actual consumers is important, few scholars have included it in their research (Chilton 2005: 22, see also Widdowson 1998: 142) - perhaps due to problems in collecting these consumer interpretations in practice. Fairclough, too, has noted in at least one publication that he does not consider the interpretation by consumers in his analysis (e.g. Fairclough 1995: 9). This thesis also finds that studying the reactions of the readers of the news articles is an insurmountable task in the confines of the limited space allotted - it would have been next to impossible to find and interview those online readers of BBC, CNN, and Fox News who read the exact articles analyzed in this thesis.

Finally, Fairclough's criticism of the three-dimensional approach centers around the extensive need for knowledge of the discourse type (Fairclough 1998: 161, also Wodak 2001: 4-5). That is to say, in order to analyze a text and be able to label it ideologically charged, one must consider a wide range of other comparable texts that provide the analyst a background against which to compare the text in question. This presents an issue especially to smaller-scale studies, including the current thesis, that do not have the resources to consider such a wide range of texts. The criticisms discussed in this section are valid to an extent, but they are not insurmountable. Techniques that facilitate the effective and objective analysis in the CDA vein are described in detail in section 7. Before moving on to discussing some of the relevant research concerning my topic of study, it is necessary to clarify some of the political concepts which are crucial for this thesis.

4 The liberal-conservative divide in the United States

In order to analyze the news for political bias, it is necessary to understand certain basic aspects of the political environment - that is, the politics of the U.S.. In the U.S., Democrats and Republicans are generally viewed to represent, respectively, the *liberal* and *conservative* ends of the political continuum (Grigsby 2009: 210, also Arnold 2009: 3). Because these terms are vague yet essential when discussing politics of the U.S., it is important to define them properly. Starting with the political parties themselves, the ideological and political stances of a party are outlined in the party platform (i.e. a document that discusses the various issues important to the particular party). Within the party, there exist various opinions, but the party platform is nevertheless considered the broader, overall view of most party candidates.

As regards the Democratic Party, one of the most important political talking points is government responsibility to help those less fortunate by giving them more "power and equality in their lives" (Grigsby 2009: 107). This is represented in their 2008 party platform in which Democrats express support for universal health care and equal opportunities (e.g. in schooling and for women; Democrats 2008: i). As for *modern liberalism*, its main argument can be summarized as follows: "state regulations protecting health, education, workplace conditions, and generally promoting the well-being of the less powerful sectors of society prevent exploitation and the denial of (positive) liberty" (Grigsby 2009: 105, also Arnold 2009: 6). The notion of equality is important on two accounts: modern liberals believe not only in natural equality but also economic equality (Grigsby 2009: 105). The former sees individuals as "born equally free and equally in possession of certain natural rights" (ibid.: 99), while the latter, according to Democrats, should be ensured through positive liberty. In other words, the government should provide a setting in which an individual can realize her full potential and, thus, be free to achieve it. This, too, is represented in the party platform through support for a progressive tax code, for example (Democrats 2008: i). The parallels between the overall stance taken by the Democratic Party and modern liberalism are clear, and issues such as the Democratic stance on taxes will be further referred to during analysis.

One type of conservatism, *classical liberal conservatism*, was born out of conflict within classical liberalism when "[m]any classical liberals started calling themselves *conservatives* because they did not wish to be identified with what was passing for liberalism" (Grigsby 2009: 106, emphasis as in original). One of the main issues was the size of government. While classical liberalism advocated for a small government (Arnold 2009: 3) - which involves the idealization of the independence of the states free of federal overreach - modern liberalism has moved toward advocating for government interventionism (ibid. and Grigsby 2009: 107), i.e. *big government*. Classical liberalism also provided classical liberal conservatism and the Republican Party the ideals of "freedom of conscience and personal choice (negative liberty)" (Grigsby 2009: 107) - which, too, play a role in the desire for a small government.

The ideas discussed in the previous paragraph are visible in the Republican Party platform. For example, it states that the control of the health care system should lie with the patients, "not *bureaucrats* in government or business" (GOP 2008: 36, emphasis added). Similarly, the platform proposes personal control of one's Social Security contributions (ibid.: 19). Both of these and numerous other instances demonstrate the shared principle of Republicans and classical liberal conservatism to decrease government control. This trend is also connected to the conservative push for free-market capitalism (Gross, Medvetz, and Russell 2011: 328), which can essentially be described as unregulated markets shaped by consumer choice. These issues play a central role in determining Republican bias.

Another type of conservatism, *Burkean traditional conservatism*, is also connected to the ideals held by much of the contemporary Republican Party and is thus important in the context of this thesis. The Republican Party is known for being particularly concerned with religion-based morality and traditional values, which can be seen in many Republicans' stance on abortion and views on the concept of *family unit*. These are represented in the Republican Party platform: "the unborn child has a fundamental right to life" and "we support...traditional family values" (GOP 2008: 52). This stems from traditional conservatism (Gross, Medvetz, and Russell 2011: 331) which posits that humans are not capable of employing logic to guide

themselves, and, therefore, limitations imposed by traditional values and morality are necessary, essentially, to restrict inappropriate freedom (Grigsby 2009: 110-111).

The two strands of conservatism, classical liberal conservatism and Burkean traditional conservatism, are in stark contrast with each other yet are often perceived under the same conservative label. For example, while the overall stance of the Republican Party is to limit government power and size, in certain aspects they often seek to use government power to control citizens on moral grounds, such as in connection to the issue of abortion (Grigsby 2009: 113, also Gross, Medvetz, and Russell 2011: 331). This contrast is a source of controversy within the Republican Party and also the reason why some ideas from classical liberal conservatism seem to be disregarded at times in the policies and ideologies of the Republican Party. Related issues, such as women's reproductive rights, will resurface during the analysis.

The descriptions in the previous paragraphs form a necessary basis for the overview of particular stances as well as the analysis of data that will follow shortly. The general descriptions function as a background against which it is more useful to position specific viewpoints of liberals and conservatives, of which some will be briefly presented in the rest of the section. Based on a study in which texts from two partisan publications, namely the *Progressive* (liberal) and the *National Review*[6] (conservative), were investigated, Covert and Wasburn created a four-tiered classification system that describes liberal and conservative attitudes towards crime, the environment, gender, and poverty (2007: 72-73). Covert and Wasburn review contemporary ideals held by liberals and conservatives. Therefore, their categories are at times more relevant and always more specific than the descriptions provided thus far. It must be noted, however, that in this thesis it was not possible to outline the liberal and conservative stance on all relevant topics individually, which is why it was necessary to review the general guidelines presented above.

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6   The *National Review* was founded to advance the creation of a more cohesive conservative ideology (Gross, Medvetz, and Russell 2011: 331) and can thus be considered an excellent source for stances taken by contemporary conservatives across the board.

In their study, Covert and Wasburn concentrate on four main categories and their subcategories of different divisive social issues which are described from both the conservative and liberal perspective (2007: 89-94). An example that Covert and Wasburn present of the differing views of liberals and conservatives is that while conservatives seek to end poverty with free-market economy and work programs, liberals propose government aid to the needy (ibid.: 93-94). This corresponds to the difference between classical liberal conservatism and modern liberalism discussed earlier and, incidentally, will also resurface during the analysis. Their study also accounts for different varieties of conservatism: in regards to poverty, conservatives seek less government control of the markets, but in relation to public policies regarding women (e.g. abortion), conservatives desire for a strong government that protects traditional values (ibid.: 92). A table was created to demonstrate more fully the four categories and was included in the appendices (Appendix 1) due to its size. For an additional overview of some of the differences between Democrats and Republicans, see Diffen (2012) and Messerli (2012).

In conclusion, while the idea that Democrats are liberal and Republicans are conservative is the general division made in the U.S. political scene (e.g. Grigsby 2009: 210), it still remains that these terms are difficult to fit into a simple mold. To conduct an empirical study, however, certain assumptions and generalizations must be made about the nature of things. Therefore, in connection with this thesis, it is presumed that generally Democrats and Republicans fall into the liberal and conservative categories respectively. It can be assumed that if any political bias or hidden ideologies favoring Democrats or Republicans are to be found in the data, the overall description of what it means to be liberal and conservative will apply.

5 Previous research

Having outlined the relevant political issues, it is now possible to proceed to discussing some important previous research. Because of the wide variety of research conducted in CDA and in the area of media bias, it was not feasible to review the existing scholarly efforts in the confines of any of the previous sections. Additionally,

despite extensive effort, no studies were found that correspond to the methods and framework used in this study (i.e. a study examining political bias in the news reporting of BBC, CNN, or Fox News through the use of CDA and, specifically, SFG). Instead, various studies are presented here that concern one or more of the following topics: CNN, Fox News, political bias in news media, CDA as an approach to text analysis, SFG as an approach to text analysis, and thematic structure analysis of texts. Together they will provide an overview of research conducted on a topic or in a manner that is relevant in the context of this thesis. Due to space constraints, bias on BBC is discussed in section 6.1 in connection with the organization's history.

It is widely recognized that **CNN** and **Fox News** are considered biased by the public. Furthermore, Democrats tend to turn to CNN and Republicans to Fox News for their news, a view which various studies have also confirmed, for example, via analysis of survey data (Morris 2005: 65) and by examining the choices of test subjects who were presented with randomly selected news stories with misleading labels attached to them (e.g. the CNN label on an MSNBC article; Iyengar and Hahn 2009: 19). Do readers and viewers of news, then, gravitate toward those outlets that cater to their particular taste and political viewpoint? That is to say, do these results imply that CNN is liberal and Fox News conservative? Due to the controversy surrounding Fox News, many studies have focused on it specifically, and many have, indeed, concluded Republican bias (e.g. Groeling 2008, Groseclose and Milyo 2005, and Morris 2007, see also Harris 2006 and Schoetz 2010). CNN has also been studied, and many studies have concluded liberal bias (e.g. Mixon, Sen, and Stephenson 2004 and Morris 2005, see also Bresnahan and Preston 2001).

To summarize two studies specifically, a Harvard study concerning the 2008 U.S. presidential elections found that CNN reported more negatively about Republicans than Democrats and the reverse was true as regards Fox News (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2007: 32). Another study focused on the coverage of the 2004 Democratic and Republican party conventions. Through content analysis of the reporting on both television channels, the study found that Fox News gave more airtime to quotes from the Republican speaker than the Democratic one (11 and 1

percent respectively; Morris and Francia 2010: 838). Also, "[general] negativity" remained under 10 percent during the Republican convention coverage and grew to 14 percent during the Democratic convention (ibid.: 837-838). The study did not find any considerable bias on the part of CNN (ibid.: 838). These results generally correspond with the hypothesis presented in this thesis.

Other studies, however, have concluded against the hypothesis presented in this thesis, and others yet have found inconclusive results. One study examining "partisan and structural balance" (Fico et al. 2008: 328) in the reporting about the 2004 presidential election found that Fox News had the most proportion of coverage with a liberal bias of all the news outlets studied, and that Fox News also had the least amount of pro-conservative coverage (ibid.: 334). CNN had the second most pro-liberal coverage but also had a notable amount of pro-conservative content (ibid.). Inconclusive results and results that indicated no or very little liberal or conservative television news bias (e.g. D'Alessio and Allen 2000: 149, also Domke et al. 1997: 732) are also abundant. At times, for example, the results vary according to the topic at hand (e.g. Iyengar 1991: 99-101). Therefore, it is clear that definitive answers to the question of political bias in the media have not yet been discovered. Thus, this thesis attempts to contribute to the existing research by employing a methodology some parts of which seem to have been followed by few others.

In terms of the methodology employed, **CDA** studies typically consist of a particular set of features even when the analysis may be conducted very differently. Some of the most common features include extensive descriptions of relevant societal and contextual information, the focus on wordings and lexis as well as wider topics in the material, and the interest in a political topic (see e.g. Barkho 2008, Bhatia 2006, Joye 2010, and Tapia, Kvasny, and Ortiz 2011). These features are also very prominent in this thesis, which will become apparent as the thesis progresses: background information is discussed in sections 6.1 through 6.3, the analysis itself will include lexical as well as wider topic analysis, and this thesis relates to political matters. Many CDA studies also incorporate some other methodology to complement CDA. For example, one study employs Chouliaraki's mediation of suffering theory (Joye

2010), and another finds ethnography to be of use (Barkho 2008). This thesis similarly utilizes some aspects of SFG as additional analytic tools.

An exceptionally fitting study was found in which both CDA and **SFG** are utilized and in which the methods and underlying purpose of analysis are very similar those in this thesis. For these reasons, it is necessary to review this study here. The aim of the study was to discover how racism related ideologies are embedded in "the structure of newspaper reporting" (Teo 2000: 7). In the study, the data is analyzed on both micro- and macro levels (ibid.: 13) - which is to say the focus is on both small details, such as lexis (especially in headlines; ibid.: 15), and the larger features of the articles, such as style of writing (ibid.: 34-39). For example, Teo considers lexical cohesion (ibid.: 31) and concludes that in relation to the word *youth*, cohesion "is used to evoke condemnation" (ibid.: 34). Lexis as well as larger areas of analysis, such as structure, play a role also in this thesis. Furthermore, Teo also considers whether the articles under review include more quotes from the ethnic minority or the elite majority (ibid.: 19). Proportions of quotes by different entities will also be considered in this thesis, for example, through reviewing the proportions of quotes approving or disapproving of a decision made by an Obama administration official.

In addition to lexis, larger features, and analysis of quotes, some of the other analytic tools used by Teo, such as *transitivity* (2000: 25) and *thematic structure* analysis (ibid.: 29), are also of considerable interest. In terms of the primary analytic method in this thesis, **thematic structure** analysis, Teo's study includes aspects concerning *thematic foregrounding* (i.e. the foregrounding of an element into Theme position creating a *marked Theme*), for example, to highlight the ineffectiveness of the police (ibid.: 29-31). Additionally, Teo examines the entities in Theme position and concludes that in one of the articles, the police overwhelmingly occupy the Theme position, which he determines enhances "the status and significance of the police" (ibid.: 31). Analyzing which entities occupy Theme position constitutes a major part of the analysis in this thesis, and, therefore, Teo's study is important in supporting such an approach. For example, the number of times the police occupy Theme position is examined when analyzing headlines in this thesis. The terms related to

transitivity and Theme are not defined here because both topics will be discussed in the analytic tools section. Before reviewing the tools, however, I will provide a general overview of the three websites as well as the material selected for analysis.

6 Data

The starting point for this thesis is that of an ordinary news reader. It is for this reason that a Google search was used to determine which three news websites would be analyzed: Google is one of the biggest online search engines and thus a viable candidate for how a prospective news reader would find her news online. At the onset of this study, a search on www.google.com for the word *news* resulted in BBC, CNN, and Fox News being the first three news websites listed in the search results. The popularity of these three websites is instrumental and relates directly to the aforementioned naturalization theory: the more popular the website, the more often its contents are read and, consequently, the more naturalized its view of the world becomes for the readers also. Additionally, this is an interesting mix of news websites because of the supposed political bias of at least CNN and Fox News, if not all three.

The subsections below provide background information on the three news websites analyzed. In alphabetical order, I will briefly provide a general history and a description of how BBC, CNN, and Fox News function today. This discussion includes information regarding the owners and financial contributors of each organization as well as who the organizations are affiliated with otherwise (i.e. other organizations and any possible political or social affiliations). This type of information is essential in CDA research, as noted by Jäger (2001: 53), because it provides information about relevant social structures.

6.1 BBC

BBC, or the British Broadcasting Corporation, is a public service broadcaster (BBC 2012a) and the world's biggest broadcasting organization (ibid. and Media Newsline 2009) with its operating cost for the 2010-2011 year at £4,602 million (or

approximately €5,252 million; BBC 2012b: F4). Of this, £350 million (or €400 million) has been reported as the annual budget for BBC News which employs 3,500 people (Boaden 2004). The original company was founded in 1922 and remained in private ownership until 1927 when it was granted a Royal Charter[7] (Media Newsline 2009). According to BBC, the organization, including its news coverage, is "independent, impartial and honest" (BBC 2012c), and the Royal Charter also specifically expresses this independence in its documents (BBC 2012d). To ensure that outside entities do not influence BBC's operations (e.g. by means of restricting content), advertising is not allowed on its public broadcasting channels and stations (BBC 2012e). Instead, the funding for BBC is generated through a license fee that each household in the United Kingdom (henceforth U.K.) must pay (BBC 2012a). The license fee is supplemented by BBC's commercial profits which are generated through, for example, BBC Worldwide - a branch of the organization which is separate from BBC's independent programming (ibid.). Public funding of BBC could be hypothesized to result in less biased content in the analysis.

Specifically related to this thesis is BBC Online (simply called BBC outside this section). It is directly associated with BBC and is similarly bound by BBC's independence and accountability provisions (BBC 2012a). Outside the U.K., BBC Online does, however, include advertisements (Media Newsline 2009) which could be argued to have an effect on its other contents as well. Additionally, specifically in relation to the news content of BBC Online, BBC Monitoring is in a key position: it provides some of BBC's news content by collecting data from mass media worldwide (BBC 2012f). Even though the U.K. government supplies BBC Monitoring with funds, it still claims to retain its independence in editorial practice (BBC 2012g). As for the expenditure of BBC Online, it makes up approximately six percent of the total U.K. public service expenditure (BBC 2012b: F7). BBC's online news was ranked the seventh most popular news website in 2010 (Net Top 20 2010).

BBC has been the subject of many claims related to objectivity and political bias. Previously, a large portion of the criticism against BBC has reflected the opinion that

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7 Royal Charter is a document issued by a monarch that can be used to establish a range of organizations (e.g. towns).

BBC is part of the establishment, an "upholder of the status quo" (Aitken 2007, also Wheeler 2009). Some examples are provided by Pilger through a speech he delivered at the Chicago Socialism 2007 Conference (held on June 16, 2007). He describes how the founder of the original British Broadcasting Company (i.e. not the current British Broadcasting Corporation), Lord John Reith, wrote anti-union speeches to be read on air by the conservative prime minister at the time when a general strike was gripping the U.K. (Pilger 2007). This pro-establishment mentality, Pilger claims, continues even today: he references a study which showed at the time of the Iraq invasion that only two percent of BBC's coverage was from the antiwar point of view (ibid.). This is only one side of the coin, however, as many also argue that today BBC is more liberal than conservative (Aitken 2007), and that it has been so since the conservative government of Margaret Thatcher (Holmwood 2009). An example of this is provided by Conlan (2005) who reports that BBC was accused of inciting heckling of conservative speakers at a rally. Despite these claims, BBC remains an important data source in this thesis where the focus is on the U.S.: it provides a non-U.S. point of view which can arguably be claimed to be less directly influenced by U.S. politics than that of CNN and Fox News.

6.2 CNN

CNN, or Cable News Network, was launched on June 1, 1980 as the first all-day, news-only television station (History.com 2011). Despite its rough start of losing money and being "ridiculed as the Chicken Noodle Network" (ibid.), today CNN is considered to have changed not only the model for news (ibid. and Taipei Times 2005) but also network television: its launch has been followed by the founding of more than 70 other news-only channels (Taipei Times 2005). CNN was founded by Robert Turner who began his broadcasting business in 1970 by buying an old TV station in Atlanta, Georgia (ibid.). Nowadays, CNN alone has over 4,000 employees and, according to some estimates, broadcasts to an international audience of up to 260 million people (Taipei Times 2005). Furthermore, CNN's parent company, Turner Broadcasting System, is comprised of numerous other TV stations including, but not limited to, TNT, TBS, Cartoon Network, and Adult Swim (Time Warner

2011). CNN's annual budget has been reported at approximately $850 million (or €630 million; Carlin 2006) or alternatively only at $500 million (or €370 million) for operating income (Weprin 2010), with the majority of the revenue coming from domestic subscriptions and advertisements (ibid.), which implies advertiser influence on content (see section 2.2). According to Time Warner, the parent company of Turner Broadcasting System, CNN "delivers the most comprehensive, nonpartisan news and analysis to global audiences across all platforms" (Time Warner 2011).

While CNN and its parent company both are important, what remains essential is CNN's news website. CNN.com (called simply CNN outside this particular section) was launched on August 30, 1995 and has since become "one of the most popular mainstream news websites" (The Humanitarian Foss Project at Trinity 2011). Major factors in its popularity are its user-based elements as well as blogs (ibid.). CNN.com claims to be "among the world's leaders in online news and information delivery" (CNN 2011). In 2010, CNN.com was rated the number one online news website (Net Top 20 2010) through the consideration of hits per page and most linked-to pages on the internet. CNN.com is a world-wide news website which includes content from many different areas of the world, and only one of its sections is dedicated to contents relating to the U.S.. This is similar to BBC's website with the difference being that BBC is U.K.-based and CNN U.S.-based. CNN.com was rated number one in 2009 in three categories: Total Time Watching Video, Total Usage Minutes, and Share of News % (All Things CNN 2010). In the case of the last, the study found that CNN.com is responsible for nine percent of online news (ibid.).

CNN has been reported to broadcast a liberal agenda (e.g. Bresnahan and Preston 2001, see also section 5). Some of the biggest controversies revolve around the former CNN executive, Rick Kaplan, who has been accused of being lenient on the Clinton administration (Media Research Center 1999, also Ponte 2004). In addition, a potential influence pushing CNN towards the liberal end of the left-right political continuum is provided by Turner himself. According to History.com, Turner is an "environmentalist and peace activist" (2011) who has made charitable donations to forward many causes (e.g. a $1 billion, or approximately €740 million, donation to

the United Nations in 1997; ibid.). Environmentalist notions have traditionally been linked to left-leaning political affiliations (see Appendix 1). Another source quotes Turner's similarly left-leaning sentiments: "Where would we be today if networks like CNN had not been there to capture '*people power*' as the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union collapsed?" (Taipei Times 2005, emphasis added).

6.3 Fox News

The Fox News Channel (FNC) began broadcasting on October 7, 1996 (News Corporation 2011). The 24-hour channel provides hard news items as well as opinion pieces and talk show type programs (Fox News Channel 2011). The beginnings of FNC's parent company, News Corporation, are based in Australia (Walker 2002). Soon after inheriting his father's business, Murdoch expanded its newspaper operations and began publishing the first national newspaper in Australia (ibid.). Today, News Corporation is the third largest corporation in the world (when measured by annual revenue), shadowed only by Time Warner (i.e. the parent company of Fox News' parent company) and Walt Disney, with revenue of approximately $33,000 million (€24,500 million; CNN Money 2009). The media empire includes the Sun, the Times, Twentieth Century Fox, and FNC (Walker 2002) as well as several other television stations and newspapers (News Corporation 2010a). News Corporation employs 64,000 people (ibid.), of which 250-1000 are reported to work directly for FNC (Jigsaw 2011). Equally imprecise information could be found concerning FNC's revenue: $500 million to $1 billion (€370 million to €740 million; ibid.). No information concerning FNC's annual budget could be found. The FNC is, however, "the most watched news channel in the [United States]" (News Corporation 2011), a claim which is corroborated by viewer ratings from 2008 (Gillette 2008) and 2010 (Ariens 2010), implying a considerable annual budget.

As far as Fox News' online website is concerned, a study of user statistics in 2009 found FoxNews.com (Fox News or FOX outside this section) to rank fourth in the category of Total Time Watching Video, behind CNN.com, MSNBC.com, and Yahoo.com (All Things CNN 2010). In the other two categories in this study, Total

Usage Minutes and Share of News %, FoxNews.com did not rank in the top five news websites listed (ibid.). Furthermore, in 2010, FoxNews.com ranked the tenth most popular news website (Net Top 20 2010). According to FNC and News Corporation, the Fox News television channel is "devoted to delivering fair and balanced coverage" (Fox News Channel 2011 and News Corporation 2011) of the news - a sentiment which is repeated also in their online slogan. With the funding of the News Corporation television channels originating "primarily from the sale of advertising and retransmission compensation" (News Corporation 2010b), it is fair to assume that programming is designed to be marketable (see section 2.2).

Fox News has been implicated as a right-leaning organization by many (e.g. Harris 2006 and Schoetz 2010, also section 5). Additionally, emails and testimonials from former employees have surfaced, providing evidence for those who consider Fox News a pro-conservative organization. In December 2010, an email was leaked in which a Fox News managing editor instructed reporters to use "government option" in reference to the proposed healthcare reform (Dimiero 2010). Furthermore, in February 2011, a former employee of Fox News spoke out against the organization, despite the non-disclosure agreement all employees must sign upon departure, with a message that has been paraphrased "Fox News is run as a purely partisan operation" (Boehlert 2011). As regards Murdoch himself, he is "known as a conservative" (Smith 2010), e.g by not recognizing workers' unions in the 1980s (Walker 2002). More recently, in 2010, Murdock donated $1 million (approximately €770,000) through News Corporation to the Republican Governors Association, sparking controversy due to the size of the donation (Kurtz 2010, also Kennedy 2010).

6.4 Description of data

The data collection from the websites discussed above was started on October 1, 2011 and continued for ten weeks. Both hard and soft news items were accepted, with hard news dominating on all three websites, and the data was cataloged and copied into individual documents. It was a difficult process to define the best methodology for selecting the data, but, after several trial runs and changes to the

initial methodology, an appropriate method emerged. The data was collected by looking for news concerning issues which divide the opinions of the U.S. political left and right (see section 4) on all three aforementioned websites simultaneously once a day. Furthermore, in order to find sets of three articles (one from each website), a three-day time frame was established. As a significant aspect of this thesis focuses on comparing the websites, it was instrumental to find corresponding news stories from each of the websites about the same issue: the similarity of the topic would aid in revealing any differences in the language used to describe it. In cases of incomplete sets, the third article was retrieved from the website's archives with the aim of finding an article which best matched the existing two in style of writing, length, and the point of view taken (e.g. immigration from the side of the families affected). In cases of unsatisfactory correspondence, the set was discarded.

During the data search, 457 individual news items were copied and cataloged. Of those, 139 were from BBC, 168 from CNN, and 150 from Fox News, of which some had to be discarded. Most necessary to discard were accidental copies or non-political news (e.g. about an apartment fire). Also necessary to discard were those topics that Democrats and Republicans would not disagree about (e.g. a presidential assassination attempt would not be condoned by either party). There were also news items which had to be discarded for not being political enough (e.g. one about a California chef who feeds children for free). The most problematic reason for discarding an item was the complexity of the topic. For example, an article about Harrisburg, PA being declared in fiscal emergency could have been considered for analysis, but it would have demanded a lengthy explanation of all the contributing forces in order to conclude any potential bias. Altogether 53 items were discarded. The search, then, provided altogether 404 usable news stories: 116 from BBC, 155 from CNN, and 133 from Fox News. This is the data used in the headline analysis.

After the discarding process, 15 sets of three articles were present. An additional 31 pairs of corresponding articles were also discovered, for which the third article was found from the archives. In total, 1 BBC article, 5 CNN articles, and 25 Fox News articles were retrieved in this manner. The considerable difference in numbers may

be due to the different structures of the websites (i.e. BBC and CNN both have a single page devoted to U.S. related news, whereas on Fox News those topics are briefly on the main page and are then moved to other web pages, such as *Economy* and *Crime*). Nevertheless, the process produced 46 sets of articles that were collected from the main U.S. page of each website.

In the following sections, the terms hard and soft news will be used. This division was made not according to topics (e.g. politics being hard news and religion being soft news) but instead according to the overall image composed of topic and style. All opinion and human interest articles were classified as soft news, and all those articles typically defined as hard news, such as politics and the law (Bell 1991: 14 and 147, Media Awareness Network 2012), were defined as hard news. Furthermore, topics such as religion were also classified as hard news if the discussion involved, for example, politics related issues (e.g. separation of church and state) and the article was written in a hard news (as opposed to opinion) style, which involves taking a "factual approach" (Media Awareness Network 2012). The division was necessary due to the focus on language form when analyzing the articles: soft news articles are written in a more informal style, which would have made it difficult to draw general conclusions during analysis. Table 1 demonstrates the final data fully.

	BBC	CNN	FOX	Total
Hard news	116 (+1)	121 (+5)	117 (+24)	**354** (+31)
of which videos	0	0	29 (+1)	**29** (+1)
Soft news	0	34	16	**50**
of which videos	0	2	15	17
Total	**116** (+1)	**155** (+5)	**133** (+25)	**404** (+31)
of which videos	0	2	44 (+1)	**46** (+1)

Table 1. Hard and soft news items by website
Note: Bracketed numbers indicate those found in the additional data search when completing sets of three.

What is immediately notable is that Fox News has a considerable number of videos (45), including hard news videos (30). In comparison, CNN only has two videos, both of which are soft news, and BBC has zero. Headlines of videos are considered

in the headline analysis when the style of reporting is appropriate. Otherwise, videos are not further analyzed in this thesis. Having now described the data, I will continue by discussing the methodology and the analytic tools.

7 Methods

As was discussed in 3.4, the reactions of the readership constitute an important part of Fairclough's three-dimensional theory, but they cannot be taken into account here due to the limited resources available. Other measures, such as detailed description of the analysis process, are taken to improve reliability. My analysis is built on the foundation of thematic structure and some statistical analysis as well as *triangulation* of data (i.e. comparing three different articles or sets of headlines, for example). The analysis is merely crystallized through lexical analysis and other observations. Repetition and patterns come to play a role as well, as was mentioned in connection with the discussion of naturalization. Additionally, when statistical and grammatical analysis and linguistic cues do not provide sufficient evidence of bias, alternative interpretations will be presented for a balanced view instead of attempting to claim my interpretation is the only possible one given the available information.

Fairclough's model also requires extensive background knowledge of social and societal structures that affect how the institutions in question operate and how the discourse being produced is structured (e.g. Fairclough 1989: 26 and 1995: 74). This, too, prevents me from fully complying with Fairclough's proposed methodology in this language-based thesis. Instead, I have modified his methodology to accommodate more linguistic analysis as the basis of argumentation. Such structures will naturally not be disregarded as they constitute a vital component of Fairclough's model. They will, however, be referenced only to the necessary extent, for example, through the review of the history of the news organizations. Additionally, through the analysis of articles from three websites, the second dimension of Fairclough's model is automatically included: the use of three sources provides a framework of the discourse practice against which individual texts must be evaluated.

7.1 Systemic-functional grammar: A toolkit for analysis

As regards the linguistic analysis that is the starting point for my argumentation, Halliday's functional linguistics provides many approaches to examining data in the type of research conducted in this thesis. As Fowler writes, SFG "is specifically geared to relating structure to communicative function" (1991: 5). The usefulness of SFG to CDA is, therefore, largely based on the similar premises of the two: both stress the connection between language structure and the social sphere as well as the functional view of language. As discussed, CDA proposes that language reflects social and power structures. For studying these structures, SFG provides a systematic, grammatical toolkit which not only decodes texts for their structure and meaning but also provides tools for examining the "motivations, purposes, positions, assumptions, and interests of text-producers" (Li 2010: 3446). In other words, SFG views language from the point of view of its function rather than form. In SFG, then, how language is *used* in social interactions is of most importance (Halliday 1985: xiii) because, as a "system of choices" (Thompson 2004: 35, also Halliday 1985: xiv), language is a tool for expressing and reproducing the social sphere through use.

In more detail, Halliday's SFG consists of three metafunctions: textual, interpersonal, and ideational. All three metafunctions contribute to the meaning of what is said but are usually represented by different parts of the message (Thompson 2004: 30). The *textual metafunction* is concerned with the organization of the message (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 30) and is realized in texts through features such as cohesion (e.g. ellipsis, substitution, lexical cohesion) and thematic structure. The *interpersonal metafunction* consists of language features aimed at interacting with others (ibid.). These features include asking for and providing information and expressing attitudes (ibid.: 29), which involve the mood structure of English (i.e. whether the clause is a declarative or interrogative clause, for example). The *ideational metafunction* is involved when people "talk about the world" (Thompson 2004: 86, also Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 29), be it the internal (i.e. thoughts, emotions) or external (i.e. people, places, happenings) world. Simply put, this aspect of language is investigated in SFG through the focus on who does what to whom.

The popularity of Hallidayan SFG particularly in CDA research becomes evident when reviewing the multitude of studies that utilize it - a fact which is highlighted by many (e.g. Teo 2000: 24 and Wodak 2001: 8). Therefore, the employment of SFG methods in this thesis warrants no further justification. Using parts of SFG as well as other linguistics tools, the data in this thesis is analyzed in a variety of ways. The following subsection outlines the main analytic tools, such as thematic structure analysis and referential chains, largely in the order of appearance in the analysis.

7.2 Analytic tools employed in this thesis

Thematic structure refers to the concepts of *Theme*[8] and *Rheme* which operate on the level of the textual metafunction. In English, Theme is in clause initial position and functions as a starting point to the rest of the message while simultaneously tying the message to what was said or written before (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 64 and 66). Due to the fact that Theme is always clause initial in English, it may not always be a nominal group (ibid.) - in fact, Theme can be equally realized by an adverbial group (e.g. <u>Slowly</u>[9] *she opened the door*; ibid.: 67) or prepositional phrase (e.g. <u>On Saturday</u> *she returns*; ibid.). Additionally, Theme can be realized by a single word or even a phrase complex (for further explanation, see ibid.: 68). The Rheme of a clause is everything that follows the Theme (ibid.: 65).

Themes range from unmarked to marked (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 73), or, in other words, from the typical to the unusual, and changing the Theme of a clause also changes its message (Thompson 2004: 143). Therefore, a Theme-Rheme analysis can uncover certain ideologies: Theme can be realized by almost any clause element, and, because in English what is considered given information comes first in the clause, the Theme can reveal differences of opinion through highlighting certain parts of the message as what is already known or obvious. Because the interest in this thesis is on the potential ways in which news agencies construct the news to contain hidden ideologies, Theme analysis is deemed the most suitable method instead of, for example, focusing on transitivity as do many typical studies of bias that utilize SFG.

8   Some terms will be capitalized due to customary procedures followed in SFG related texts.
9   Underlined parts indicate Theme here and all throughout the thesis.

Moving on to the ideational metafunction, **transitivity** in Hallidayan grammar does not refer to the ability of the verb to take on an object (as in traditional grammar) but rather it refers to the analysis of language as "a mode of reflection, of imposing order on the endless variation and flow of events" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 170). That is to say, transitivity analysis is used to describe what is happening; through the transitivity system, experiences can be classified as belonging to one of six *process types* (ibid.: 170-171), which are listed in Table 2.

Process type	Example
behavioral	*We all cried.**
existential	*There's no magic formula.*
material	*Republicans block Obama jobs bill.*
mental	*I believe they will reach an agreement by the deadline.*
relational	*Plan B One Step is safe and effective.*
verbal	*Judge tells Tennessee to stop arresting Occupy protesters.*

Table 2. Process types in systemic-functional grammar
* All examples besides the behavioral one are from the data.

All process types include their "own model or schema" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 170) that further assists in defining the event through certain features such as its *participants*, of which all process types have at least one (Thompson 2004: 87). When considering, for example, a mental process, at least a *Senser* (i.e. the entity that has the mind in which the mental process takes place) is necessary (e.g. *I am thinking*). Transitivity analysis can also include *circumstances* (e.g. Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 177), which extend transitivity analysis to examining who does what to whom in what situation. Some of the circumstances are familiar from traditional grammar, such as place and time (ibid.: 262), but others, such as degree and purpose (ibid.), are less so. While a process is realized by a verbal group, participants are typically realized by nominal groups, and circumstances by adverbial or prepositional phrases (ibid.: 260-261). In this thesis, transitivity analysis is used mainly to aid the Theme structure analysis of headlines and as an additional tool for strengthening the analysis. For example, attribution of agency and participant responsibility in processes as expressed by the writer (e.g. journalist) can be examined utilizing transitivity analysis.

Lexis in general as well as collocations can be revealing of bias. Lexis is widely considered to be an essential part of CDA because of the ability of vocabulary to reveal "socially shared beliefs" (van Dijk 2001: 99) of a community and because vocabulary "most directly influences...the opinions and attitudes of recipients" (ibid., also Fairclough 1989: 110-111 and Fowler 1991: 82). As for **collocations**, the use of, for example, *illegal immigrant* and *undocumented immigrant* in the *California Dream Act* articles highlights the different stances taken by the news organizations (further analyzed in section 8.2.2). However, lexis based analysis has received some of the most passionate criticisms in CDA, and, therefore, my aim is to analyze the data by other means first and only secondarily through lexis. It is interesting to note that certain aspects of lexical analysis are accepted, so to speak, even by Widdowson, one of the main critics of CDA. He posits that an acceptable method of lexical analysis is one which pinpoints all instances of a certain word and then analyzes the contexts in which they occur (1998: 148). This method is used in this thesis.

Referential chain or **referential identity chain analysis** refers to the type of analysis in which all instances of reference to a particular entity are separated from the body of text and analyzed (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 535, 554, and 579-82). For example, if analyzing articles about the big health care reform that took place in the U.S. during Obama's presidency, references could include *health care*, *Obamacare*, and *it*. If *Obamacare* were to appear in the BBC article more often than in that of the other two websites, it could be claimed that BBC's stance is more right-leaning than that of the other two because of the use of the right-wing term. This manner of analysis is used not only with entities that appear in Theme position but also generally with key terms specified for each topic separately (e.g. the potential users of emergency contraception in the *Morning-after pill* articles). Referential identity chain analysis is also very similar to the kind of lexical analysis that Widdowson approves of in the sense that the same entity is followed throughout a text. In certain referential chain analyses, then, the context is analyzed also.

Lastly, a method of analysis that is useful when comparing multiple texts is the **prioritization of information**. This method is especially useful when analyzing hard

news articles because, as discussed, hard news articles typically follow the inverted pyramid model, and the assumption that the important information precedes less important information is valid (e.g. Bell 1991: 168-9). Therefore, it can be assumed that the order in which facts are presented in the articles analyzed in this thesis carries some significance as to the journalist's view of how important that information is. That is to say, in articles about, for example, an economic summit, CNN and Fox News may prioritize, and thus place in a more prominent position in the beginning of the article, the information that Obama attended the summit, whereas BBC, being removed from the immediate U.S. context, may consider Obama's attendance less newsworthy and introduce the fact later in its article.

8 Analysis

The general structure of this section proceeds from surface features and quantitative analysis of headlines toward a more in-depth, qualitative analysis of articles. The analysis of the headlines is conducted on the data that was collected in the original data search, excluding discarded articles. In comparison, the analysis of the articles also includes articles which had to be recovered later to complete the sets for reasons explained on page 33. In order to maximize comparability and to be able to generalize, soft news items are disregarded due to the different style of writing and structure of the articles. At times, discussion of the results during the analysis is warranted (e.g. in cases where multiple interpretations are possible).

8.1 Headline analysis

Headlines are arguably the most important part of any news story as they raise the reader's interest and effectively aim to summarize the contents of the article (van Dijk 1988: 143-144). Therefore, I will first analyze the headlines. In this section, hard news headlines are first analyzed for thematic structure and some quantitative data is provided. I will then move to the qualitative analysis of the headlines. Before preceding, however, it is necessary to summarize the rules by which Theme will be identified so that the analysis is supported and can be replicated.

8.1.1 Theme in the headlines

The general rule followed first and foremost is that the Theme is the element in clause initial position (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 66) and includes either a process, participant, or circumstance to fulfill the need for an experiential element (ibid.). In examples (1) through (3), all three possible existential functions are demonstrated in the aforementioned order:

(1) <u>Expect</u> divisive social issues to take center stage

(2) <u>Occupy Los Angeles and Philadelphia</u> raided by police

(3) <u>In schools, towns and farms</u>, battle heats up over Alabama's tough immigration law

As examples (2) and (3) demonstrate, Theme can also be long. Example (1) is the only instance of process as Theme, and it is included here for demonstrative purposes despite being a soft news headline. Simultaneously, it shows that imperatives follow the same principle that the first element alone is the Theme (ibid.: 76-77).

In some cases, however, the analysis of thematic structure may seem to deviate from the rule that the clause initial element is Theme by extending from the nominal group (NG) to the prepositional phrase (PP).

(4) <u>Republican hopefuls</u> in TV debate

(5) <u>Block of OTC Morning-after Pill</u> Sparks Outrage

What is notable in examples (4) and (5) is that in the latter the PP is considered as a part of the Theme, whereas in the former it is not. The reason for this separation lies in the basic principle that the first experiential element is Theme. In the former example, a verbal group (VG) can be placed between *Republican hopefuls* and *in TV debate* (e.g. *<u>Republican hopefuls</u> appear in TV debate*), whereas in the latter example, no VG can be placed between *Block* and *of OTC Morning-after Pill*, and instead the VG follows the Theme which consists of both the NG and PP.

Following in line with existing literature, in WH-interrogatives the WH-element (e.g. *who*, *what*, *how*) is the Theme (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 75). Example (6) is a soft news headline for lack of a hard news example.

(6) <u>Why</u> repealing 'don't ask, don't tell' isn't enough

With yes/no interrogatives, the Theme is longer than simply the first element because the Finite marker (e.g. *is*) does not have an experiential function (ibid.: 76). Example (7) demonstrates this.

(7) <u>Is Consumer Spending</u> on the Rise?

Here the Theme extends to include the participant.

In the matter of clause complexes, two options are presented. On the one hand, Theme can be analyzed separately for both clauses because, as Halliday and Matthiessen explain, "[t]here is thematic structure...in all major clause types" (2004: 98). On the other hand, either the Theme from the independent clause carries over to the dependent clause or, when the dependent clause precedes the independent clause, the dependent clause functions as Theme for the whole headline (see the examples in ibid.: 101-103, also Thompson 2004: 155-156). The former option is selected:

(8) <u>As 'Occupy' protests</u> spread, <u>some politicians</u> rebuke

(9) <u>'Occupy Wall Street' protests</u> spread <u>as Obama</u> weighs in

Much like headlines with both a dependent and independent clause, headlines with reported speech involve two clauses, and a similar analysis ensues with both the projected and projecting clause analyzed for Theme (Thompson 2004: 161).

(10) <u>Third of US veterans</u> do not back wars, <u>says</u> Pew study

(11) <u>Student</u> Says <u>School</u> Held Him Back Because Of Religion

Reported speech is also known as indirect speech.

As the above examples demonstrate, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) provide a solid foundation for thematic structure analysis. Their account is, however, not entirely comprehensive since actual data is often more complex than the rules provided by a grammar book would suggest. This is also true in the case of my data: at times Halliday and Matthiessen's descriptions and rules are not sufficient to analyze Theme in headlines. It is for this reason that certain additional rules are discussed. One recurring characteristic of news headlines, not only in my data but across the board, is the extensive use of ellipsis (e.g. Wilson 2000: 71), an aspect which is only briefly and insufficiently discussed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 100). In many cases, however, it is uncomplicated to find the Theme in such headlines:

(12) <u>US and Nato</u> 'far from goals' in Afghanistan

(13) <u>Man convicted of killing cop, wife</u> put to death in Texas

In line with a common trend in my data, in example (12), the verb is omitted, and in (13), the comma indicates the omitted coordinator.

Continuing with the topic of ellipsis, the data also contain both partial and complete Theme and Rheme ellipsis. Partial Rheme ellipsis has already been mentioned in the previous paragraphs, and cases of partial ellipsis of the Theme are quite simple to analyze (the examples are soft news for lack of hard news ones):

(14) <u>[Is] Europe's Crumbling Economy</u> Sinking Our Own?

(15) <u>[Is a/the] Catholic University</u> Under Attack?

What remains is the full ellipsis of either the Theme or the Rheme. Example (16) is missing the Rheme, and example (17) is missing the first Theme:

(16) <u>24 days of Occupy Wall Street</u>

(17) Good for Business? <u>D.C.</u> Bucks Move To Crack Down On Protesters, Welcomes Occupy Crowd

To demonstrate the absence of the Theme, the question in example (17) could be reformulated as, for example, *[Is It / This] Good For Business?*, in which case the

finite verb and the participant would together form the Theme, as discussed in connection with yes/no interrogatives.

Halliday and Matthiessen devote one paragraph to the discussion of exophoric ellipsis (2004: 100) which can be applied to three headlines in my data. Their examples highlight spoken language situations via examples such as "*Thirsty?* ('are you thirsty?')" (ibid.), and they point out that these types of constructions consist of Rheme only. In relation to my data, headlines such as example (18) are common in tabloids but also at times in newspapers, whereas both (19), *My take*, and (20), *Rareview,* denote articles of two particular opinion series on CNN.

> (18) EXCLUSIVE: <u>ACORN</u> Playing Behind Scenes Role In 'Occupy' Movement
>
> (19) My take: <u>Why</u> Christians are embracing their LGBT neighbors
>
> (20) Rareview: <u>Bringing black voices to Occupy Wall Street</u>

Disregarding what comes before the colon in examples (18) through (20) is done on the basis that in all three the element before the colon is something which is systematically used to distinguish certain types of articles, and thus it could be claimed that they have little thematic value and consist of Rheme only. This logic is similar to that expressed by Halliday and Matthiessen in the case of exophoric ellipsis, and therefore my analysis here is supported.

Other headlines with a colon are more problematic as no existing literature could be found discussing Theme analysis of minor clauses[10] followed by a colon. Transitivity analysis is applied to help identify clause structure in these cases. Verbal processes, or processes that "cover any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 253), are easy to detect:

> (21) <u>Ginger White</u>: <u>Herman Cain</u> 'would be a bad president'
>
> (22) <u>Court</u>: <u>California same-sex marriage fight</u> can continue

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10 Minor clauses have "no mood or transitivity structure" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 100).

Verbal processes result in two Themes (i.e. one in each clause, see examples (21) and (22)). Other types of processes in my data, namely mental, (23), material, (24), and relational, (25), result in only one Theme in each headline:

    (23) <u>Occupy Wall Street</u>: Arrests in Nashville and San Diego

    (24) <u>Eviction Notice</u>: Police Order Out 'Occupy Wall Street' Protesters

    (25) <u>US economy</u>: US unemployment rate drops to 9%

Mental processes, example (23), are analyzed based on the structure of the headline as well as the context: if the insertion of the verb *see* in place of the colon is possible, the headline is analyzed as a mental process. Conversely, if the structure and context does not allow for that, it is analyzed as some other process. Material clauses are clauses of doing and happening (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 179), which can be seen in example (24) where the eviction notice causes what follows the colon. Finally, relational clauses are analyzed on the basis that what precedes the colon is general and what follows specifies it. That is to say, the relational headlines in my data are *attributive* (ibid.: 219-226), such as in example (25).

In comparison to colons, hard news headlines with a semicolon or a dash are very simple to analyze. In all hard news cases, they are considered to be compound headlines where all clauses have their own thematic structure. When comparing an actual compound headline in example (26) to the others, this becomes apparent.

    (26) <u>Occupy Los Angeles Deadline</u> Comes <u>But Protesters</u> Stay

    (27) <u>Few clashes</u> in GOP debate -- <u>Cain</u> fends of allegations, <u>Perry</u> stumbles on plan

    (28) <u>'Occupy' protests</u> swell nationwide; <u>scores</u> arrested

As mentioned earlier, a comma can indicate ellipsis. In the case of example (27), the ellipsis concerns the coordinator *and*. In example (28), the semicolon functions similarly to the coordinator *and*, and in example (27), the double dashes function almost as a colon or a full stop.

A final note regarding the Theme analysis of the headlines concerns cases of *multiple Theme* (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 79). As has been discussed, Theme must include an experiential element, but this does not restrict other elements from also being a part of the Theme.

(29) <u>Protesters</u> arrested, challenged <u>as police</u> confront Occupy activists

(30) <u>Occupy Los Angeles Deadline</u> Comes <u>But Protesters</u> Stay

Examples (29) and (30) demonstrate cases of multiple Theme where the words *as* and *But* are included in the Theme but have no experiential function. In these cases, only the *topical Theme* (ibid.), which is the part that expresses an experiential function (e.g. *police* and *Protesters*), is considered in further analysis.

8.1.2 Quantitative analysis

An analysis of the hard news headlines following the rules described in the previous subsection results in 128 Themes in the BBC headlines, 157 Themes in the CNN headlines, and 141 Themes in the Fox News headlines. Some of the main results of the statistical analysis can be found in Table 3.

	BBC	**CNN**	**FOX**
Number of headlines	116	121	117
in which words	900	1014	1025
words per headline	7.75	8.38	8.76
Number of Themes	128	157	141
in which words	304	340	347
words per Theme	2.37	2.16	2.46
Number of Themes per headline	1.10	1.29	1.20
Percentage of Theme words out of total words	33.77	33.53	33.85

Table 3. Statistical analysis of hard news headlines
Note: The final decimals are not rounded.

Even though the number of headlines is not extensive, some trends do seem to emerge. For example, the word length of the average headline is 7.8 on BBC, 8.4 on

CNN, and 8.8 on Fox News (numbers will be rounded to the first decimal place now and later in the running text). Also, on the one hand, CNN leads the way with 1.3 Themes per headline, Fox News follows with 1.2, and BBC with 1.1. On the other hand, the number of words in the Themes comprise 33.8 percent of all words in BBC, 33.5 percent in CNN, and 33.9 percent in Fox News headlines. These figures are very similar and, therefore, without significance tests, the only valid conclusion is that these measurements seem to be quite standard in online news.

Some quantitative aspects also need highlighting, specifically concerning those headlines that have a colon. Altogether the data exhibit 41 hard news headlines with a colon. BBC has 18, CNN 17, and Fox News 6. As discussed, when transitivity analysis is used to help determine Theme structure in headlines, verbal processes result in at least two Themes because a verbal process means that the headline is divided to two clauses (e.g. *Official* [says] *duties change for top Obama aide Daley* in which *says* replaces the colon). No other process types split the headlines into additional clauses. On BBC, only four verbal processes are identified, whereas on CNN, all but two headlines constitute verbal processes. On Fox News, three out of six headlines have a verbal process. This indicates that CNN utilizes indirect or reported speech in its headlines, which affects the number of Themes, whereas BBC does so less. Because Fox News has such a small number of headlines with a colon, let alone headlines that have a verbal process, its larger number of Themes per headline must result from other factors. Unfortunately, in the confines of this thesis it is not possible to delve into this phenomenon any further.

8.1.3 Qualitative analysis

To begin the qualitative analysis, the hard news headlines from each website are divided according to what topic is at issue, and four main categories emerge: topics concerning Cain, illegal immigrants, Obama, and the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement. To proceed in alphabetical order, headlines concerning **Herman Cain**, a Republican presidential hopeful, reveal an interesting phenomenon: fifteen of the 116 BBC headlines mention Cain (12.9 percent), whereas six of CNN's 121 (or 5 percent)

and zero (0 percent) of Fox News' 117 do. Based on this, it appears that, due to the sensitivity of the scandal[11] surrounding Cain, the U.S. based news organizations avoid the topic either entirely or partially. A closer look reveals that 11 BBC headlines and 5 CNN headlines concern the scandal specifically (73.3 and 83.3 percent respectively). Based on this, then, it seems that either BBC and CNN are more anti-Cain by including such a proportion of negative headlines or, alternatively, the available news about Cain center around the scandal and, therefore, by not reporting about it as BBC and CNN do, Fox News takes a pro-Cain stance.

The BBC and CNN headlines can be divided according to who appears in Theme position. Cain occupies the Theme position in nine (or 60 percent) of the 15 BBC headlines that are about him, whereas five have one of his accusers in Theme position. In the case of the six CNN headlines, Cain appears in Theme position twice (33.3 percent) and his accuser three times. One BBC and one CNN headline feature the accuser's ex-boyfriend in Theme position. As Halliday and Matthiessen explain, the Theme position co-occurs with the given information or *the Given* (2004: 93), and, therefore, a distinct pattern emerges. While BBC headlines position Cain in the Given, CNN prefers Cain in the new information or *the New*. This is a curious phenomenon considering the fact that Cain is a rather well-known candidate from his time in the race for presidential candidacy, whereas his accuser or the accuser's ex should, logically, constitute the New in the context of Cain because they became known much later. With so little data, however, this result is inconclusive.

A further division guided by the initial Theme analysis can be made based on whether the women accusing Cain are named or not, and, in this instance, also the headlines about the ex-boyfriend are considered to be reflective of the accuser (e.g. *Sharon Bialek's ex backs her claim against Herman Cain* does name the accuser). BBC has only two headlines in which the women are referred to as *accuser* or simply as *woman*, instead they are referred to by name four times. In two additional headlines, BBC names the women in Rheme position - that is to say, of the eight BBC headlines that mention the accusers, six (or 75 percent) name them. Conversely,

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11 Cain was accused by several women of sexual harassment that had taken place years ago. Also an affair was claimed by one woman.

all four CNN headlines refer to them as *woman* or *Cain accuser.* CNN has no instances of the women in Rheme. This tendency by CNN to not name the women may reflect an attempt to distance the reader from them, which suggests that CNN aims to dehumanize the women, perhaps to hold Cain in a better light. Such a conclusion may not, however, be made by all readers.

Further investigation reveals that perhaps other factors are also at play. For example, one CNN headline includes a reference to one of the accuser's son:

(31) <u>Cain accuser</u> says <u>her son</u> encouraged her "to tell on him"

It could be argued that the reference to the son and the deviation from the typical register with the child-like *tell on him* are attempts to bring the accuser closer to the reader by presenting her in the role of a mother. Another CNN headline, furthermore, seems to also suggest anti-Cain bias:

(32) <u>Woman</u> says <u>she and Cain</u> had 13-year affair; <u>Cain</u> denies accusation

Here the duration of the affair, 13 years, is extensive, which could be suggested to strike some readers as grotesque, highly morally questionable. It is also possible that a pro-Cain interpretation was the goal, in which case the writer may have aimed to highlight the absurdness of the accuser's claim.

As for BBC, the picture is equally vague. Two headlines can be said to be anti-Cain:

(33) <u>Sharon Bialek</u> accuses Herman Cain of groping her

(34) <u>Ginger White</u>: <u>Herman Cain</u> 'would be a bad president'

In example (33), the word *grope* may have the aim of shocking the reader into disliking Cain, although it can be claimed to also speak for the integrity of the woman as in the case of the CNN headline that mentions the duration of the supposed affair. In example (34), BBC is reporting White's direct words, but the decision to highlight *Herman Cain 'would be a bad president'* in the headline, the most prominent part of a news report, can be taken as a sign of the general view BBC

holds of Cain. Transitivity analysis, furthermore, supports this view. As the *Carrier*, Cain carries the *Attribute* of *bad president*. Other headlines are less interesting in terms of bias: one headline, for example, refers to *inappropriate behaviour* [sic], which is less striking than the word *grope*.

As for headlines about Cain directly, CNN has only two, whereas BBC has nine. Of these, one CNN headline (50 percent) and five BBC headlines (55.5 percent) can be suggested to be biased in one way or another. In the CNN headline, Cain's wife is quoted defending Cain's honor, which can be seen as an attempt to humanize Cain by presenting him as a married man. Additionally, one could claim that if the wife supports him despite her intimate connection to the scandal, so should the general public. Three BBC headlines are inconclusive about bias. For example, one BBC headline also determines the duration of the affair, 13 years, and the same conclusions apply as with the CNN headline. Two (or 22.2 percent of the nine) BBC headlines, however, can be suggested to be almost incriminating:

> (35) <u>Herman Cain</u> gave cash to Ginger White

> (36) <u>Herman Cain</u> 'gradually recalls' sexual harassment case

In example (35), the implication is that Cain paid White for her silence, and example (36) suggests that Cain may have lied concerning his knowledge of the incident(s). Considering transitivity, both headlines also implicate Cain as the *Actor* and Senser in the material and mental process, respectively. No similarly suggestive headlines are present in the CNN data. Considering also that no headlines about Cain are present in the Fox News data, it can be proposed that in this instance BBC may hold the most anti-Cain stance, while Fox News, based solely on the lack of reporting about Cain, can be claimed to be most pro-Cain due to the lack of negative reporting or, alternatively, passively anti-Cain in the sense that no headlines in the data discuss any aspect of him or his campaign. Considering the amount of possible negative coverage as seen in the headlines of BBC and CNN, Fox News' position as pro-Cain is more supported.

The topic of **illegal immigrants**[12], the smallest category, appears in the headlines of all three websites. The BBC data features four headlines concerning the issue (or 3.4 percent of the total 116) compared to CNN's nine (7.4 percent of 121) and Fox News' five (4.3 percent of 117). In the case of BBC, none of the four headlines feature families or undocumented immigrants in Theme position. Instead, a variety of authorities (e.g. *Mexico's Calderon* and *Jerry Brown*) and other entities constitute Theme. This suggests an attempt to dehumanize the illegal immigrants by focusing on the related administrative troubles and on the law itself. No patterns emerge from the BBC data, and no hint of bias can be detected beyond Theme structure. For example, BBC does not refer to *undocumented immigrants* or *illegal immigrants* - a choice of words that could suggest at least a liberal bias in the case of the former. In the case of CNN and Fox News, a slight liberal bias is detected.

Of CNN's nine headlines concerning illegal immigrants, all but one (or 88.9 percent) feature an authority or an entity other than the illegal immigrants themselves in Theme position. As with BBC, this suggests an attempt to dehumanize the illegal immigrants. Beyond the Theme structure, three headlines (33.3 percent) feature an authority that in some way opposes tough immigration laws[13] (e.g. *U.S. sues South Carolina over immigration law*). These types of headlines can be analyzed also as an attack on the law without just cause, and, thus, no definite bias can be determined. One headline, however, points to the ill-effects of designing tough immigration laws: *Author of tough Arizona immigration law loses recall election*. Another headline, furthermore, seems to take a stance through its wording:

(37) <u>Judge</u> denies motion to block Alabama immigration law

An alternative headline here could have been, for example, *Judge upholds Alabama immigration law*, but instead CNN opts to highlight the judge as the participant that *denies* the motion that would have blocked key portions of the law, effectively suggesting that the motion would have been a positive occurrence. In comparison,

12 Illegal immigrants are viewed less favorably by conservatives than liberals (see Appendix 1). For further reference, see Diamond (1996: 154-168) and section 8.2.2.
13 Tough immigration laws are those that most aggressively attempt to remove illegal immigrants from an area (e.g. a state).

upholding would suggest that the law is just and should be upheld. Furthermore, a lexical choice in a collocation also suggests at least slight liberal bias: CNN uses the phrase *undocumented immigrant students* instead of *illegal immigrant students*, which suggests they are unwilling to associate the often negatively viewed word *illegal* with the students. None of the other headlines suggest bias one way or another, and, in light of the current analysis, it seems that, in the case of illegal immigrants, CNN has a slight liberal stance.

Of Fox News' five headlines, two directly feature a party affected by the immigration law in Theme position. One headline highlights Hispanic students affected by the law, and the final two headlines feature the law itself and the Obama administration in Theme position. While not absolutely conclusive, the Theme choices imply focus on those who the law affects (60 percent) rather than those in positions of power (40 percent) and, as such, suggest a liberal bias. Beyond the Theme structure of the headlines, four (80 percent) highlight the ill-effects of tough immigration laws, which these three examples demonstrate:

> (38) <u>Families</u> Fear Deportation Amid Alabama Immigration Crackdown
>
> (39) <u>Immigration Law</u> Blamed For Reported Bullying Of Hispanic Students In Alabama
>
> (40) <u>Mercedes Honcho From Germany</u> Arrested Under Alabama Immigration Law

The focus on undocumented immigrant families in example (38) and students in example (39) draws on the reader's sympathy and humanizes the victims, whereas example (40) about the German businessman points to the weaknesses of the law in implementation. In terms of transitivity analysis, the first example shows *Families* as the Senser in the mental process - which highlights the personal aspect of families compared to a headline in the passive voice (i.e. <u>*Deportation*</u> *Feared Amid Alabama Immigration Crackdown*). The second and third examples do not identify the active participant - that is, the Senser in example (39) and the Actor in example (40) - which in both cases can be seen as avoidance of placing blame (on the police and those blaming the law respectively). Rather, in both cases it can be seen as an attempt to

highlight the connection between the innocent German tourist and the immigration law as well as the connection between the law and bullying without the presumably less important element of who is the active participant. Based on this pattern, Fox News' stance on illegal immigration can be taken as being the most liberal of the websites - or at least on par with CNN - whereas BBC remains the most distant and objective, perhaps due to its physical distance from issues of immigration in the U.S.. As the analysis of illegal immigrants is based on such few total headlines, the weight of the result may not be representative of the websites' stances in reality.

Headlines featuring either Obama, Barack Obama, the Obama administration, the White House, the president, or the Obama 2012 campaign are classified as being about **Barack Obama**. These headlines show a trend with numbers: while BBC has 19 (or 16.4 percent of 116) and CNN 14 (or 11.6 percent of 121) headlines about Obama, Fox News has only 4 (or 3.4 percent of 117), one of which co-occurs in the illegal immigrants category also. In terms of the Theme structure of these headlines, a pattern emerges. *Obama* or *Barack Obama* constitutes the Theme in twelve of the 19 BBC headlines (63.2 percent) and seven of the 14 CNN headlines (50 percent). Fox News has zero instances of *Obama* or *Barack Obama* in Theme position. Based on this, the argument that BBC considers Obama as a given while Fox News affords him no such status is valid. Considering that Obama is the president and thus could be argued to belong in the Given more often than not, these figures suggest that Fox News takes an anti-Obama stance in this instance with no occurrences of Obama in Theme, whereas BBC may be the most objective of the three websites with the most instances of Obama in Theme. CNN's stance is somewhat unclear, but, based on the same logic, CNN can be considered more objective than Fox News. Alternatively, it could be argued that the number of instances of Obama in Theme correlates with liberal bias instead of mere objectivity. Considering the Theme analysis from this perspective, it presents a valid argument in support of the original hypothesis that CNN is more liberal and Fox News more conservative.

Because no notable patterns emerge from the websites' headlines separately, they will be considered together. In this analysis, attention must be paid not only to what is

present but also to what is absent[14] in the headlines. When considering BBC's and CNN's Obama related headlines, both websites can be observed discussing what Obama has said and done. This kind of reporting is completely absent from Fox News' reporting, where instead metaphors and substitutes, such as *White House* and *Obama Administration*, are used in all four headlines. What is more, the BBC and CNN headlines feature Obama as the active participant (e.g. Actor) in clearly positive situations, of which the below examples are only a few:

(41) <u>Obama</u> orders action to address shortages of vital drugs

(42) <u>Obama</u> looks to cut costs by scrapping government 'swag'

(43) <u>Obama</u>: <u>Iraq war</u> will be over by year's end; <u>troops</u> coming home

(44) <u>Obama</u> pledges additional $50 million to fight AIDS

The reason these headlines can be defined as positive is that cutting government *swag*[15] and the return home of the troops, for example, would not be considered bad by either party. It is fairly reasonable to assume that at least a few pro-Obama articles would have been posted on the Fox News main page despite the different structure of the website in comparison to BBC and CNN. Even if most (pro-)Obama articles were directly posted on the topic-specific pages without an appearance on the main page, that practice in and of itself also speaks of anti-Obama bias. Therefore, the complete absence of these types of positive Obama related headlines in the Fox News data is taken as a strong sign of bias by Fox News against Obama.

Finally, a specific account of a few headlines is necessary. Two of the four Fox News headlines suggest a slight anti-Obama stance, of which the clearest example is a headline which features Gingrich, a Republican presidential hopeful:

(45) <u>Gingrich</u>: '<u>It</u>'s Barack Obama <u>Who</u>'s Soft'

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14 When the analysis reveals that two of the websites have a specific piece of information and the third does not, the third is suggested to have omitted the information. Conversely, when only one website has the information, it is suggested it has specifically chosen to include it. This practice is applied throughout on the basis that since the three websites constitute the relevant discoursal practice, then any nonconformity can be analyzed as having potentially biased undertones.

15 *Swag* is a term for merchandise such as Congress themed mugs or pens that are given away to promote a positive image of the government.

The fact that the headline includes a quote makes the effect less immediate, but, considering that neither BBC nor CNN includes a similar quote, it suggests that Fox News chose to present this view of Obama. Another Fox News headline is less clearly biased and, in fact, an alternative analysis must be presented. In the case of *White House's Push for Equality*, the word *push* can be analyzed as an aggressive tactic and, as such, a negative act by the White House. It can also be analyzed as a positive aggressive tactic considering that the push is for equality of homosexuals, which is generally considered a good cause. Compared to the corresponding CNN headline, however, the Fox News headline is less positive. Instead of the word *push*, CNN uses the word *promote* (*Clinton, Obama promote gay rights*). The choice of words can be argued to signal a positive view of Obama's actions and, thus, a more pro-Democrat stance than the Fox News alternative. Additionally, as per the conservative concern for traditional family values (section 4), it can be argued that Fox News may have aimed for the negative interpretation by implying such equality is undesirable. Thus, it is fair to conclude that in the case of Obama, the hypothesis of a liberal CNN and conservative Fox News is supported by not only the thematic structure analysis but also the other observations of patterns.

Finally, **the Occupy Wall Street movement**[16] is the most reported about topic on all three websites. Because of the large quantity of data on the subject, this segment is broken up into smaller parts: analysis of headlines where some rendition of *Occupy Wall Street* or *protesters* occurs in Theme position is done separately from those in which they appear in Rheme position. In the BBC data which has 26 (or 22.4 percent of 116) headlines about OWS, 18 (or 69.2 percent of 26) have some rendition of *Occupy Wall Street* or *protesters* in Theme position, whereas there are only six (or 23.1 percent) in which they appear in Rheme. Two headlines mention neither. In the case of CNN, there are 42 (or 34.7 percent of 121) headlines of which 24 (or 57.1 percent of 42) have at least one of the entities in Theme compared to 13 (or 31 percent) that have them in Rheme. Five headlines mention neither. Finally, of the 69 OWS headlines in the Fox News data (comprising 59 percent of 117 total), 34 (or

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16 OWS is generally considered to be a liberal movement that opposes free-market capitalism which from the point of view of Republicans is the founding basis of the economic system (for reference, see section 4).

49.3 percent of 69) have the entities in the Theme and 30 (or 43.5 percent) in the Rheme. Five mention neither. What is notable here is how often the entities appear in Rheme position (23.1 percent for BBC, 31 for CNN, and 43.5 for Fox News) because this suggests that the Occupy movement and the protesters are considered the New more often by Fox News than by the other two websites. It can be argued, then, that Fox News aims instead to highlight authorities such as the police in Theme position.

Most headlines with some version of either *Occupy Wall Street* or *protesters* occurring in the Theme position do not indicate any manner of bias. Of the 18 BBC headlines with the specified entities in Theme position, only two (or 11.1 percent) can be seen as tentatively biased:

    (46) <u>Occupy LA protesters</u> defy eviction deadline

    (47) <u>US Occupy protesters</u> clash with police at Oakland port

The former example includes the word *defy* which can be analyzed as a sign of anti-OWS bias because defying something can be considered negative, and the fact that the protesters are identified as the Actor in the process attaches this negativity to them. Defying can just as easily be considered a positive thing, however, if BBC aimed to highlight that the eviction deadline should have been defied. The latter example is perhaps slightly more revealing. Because the protesters are identified as the Actor in the process instead of saying, for example, *protesters and police clash*, it can be argued that the protesters are pointed to as the guilty party. In this instance, then, BBC seems to be slightly anti-OWS and, therefore, slightly right-leaning.

Progressing to the CNN headlines in this group, of the 24 headlines that have some rendition of the OWS movement or the protesters in Theme, five (or 20.8 percent) can be analyzed as biased - again in support of the hypothesis that CNN is liberal. These headlines include topics such as the movement's fight against foreclosures and support for an injured war veteran - both acts being viewed very positively in the U.S. context. Furthermore, one headline explicitly highlights the police as the Actor:

    (48) <u>Protesters</u> arrested, challenged as <u>police</u> confront Occupy activists

The lack of such explicit presence of the Actor in the first clause does weaken the impact of the analysis somewhat, but it can be argued that the identified Actor in the second clause also reaches the first clause due to the subordinating conjunction *as*.

As regards the 34 Fox News headlines in which OWS or the protesters appear in Theme, three (or 8.8 percent) can be considered pro-OWS:

> (49) <u>Wall Street Protesters</u> Energized By Park Decision
>
> (50) <u>Occupy Protesters</u> Disavow Oakland Violence
>
> (51) <u>'Occupy Wall Street' Protesters</u> To Be Forced Out Of New York Park During Cleaning

Headline (49) can be regarded as an encouraging one that may positively charge the readers to be happy for the protesters. Example (50) points to the protesters not condoning the violence that has been present at most Occupy encampments and protests. In both examples, the protesters are identified as the active participant in the process. These headlines suggest a liberal stance. Example (51) can be considered pro-OWS because of the verb *force*. The word choice may signify objection to the fact that they have to leave, describing it as a situation in which they are *forced* instead of, for example, one in which they *must* or *have to* leave. However, considering that the police are not implicated as the Actor in the process (which they must be because no non-authority could force the protesters out), it can be argued that the headline presents an anti-OWS view. Six other headlines further support the view of Fox News as anti-OWS, because the protesters are described as *angry* and the protests themselves as places *plagued by reports of sex attacks*.

What is also interesting about Fox News headlines as opposed to the other two websites is the repetitive mention of *violence* in the group where the protests or protesters are in Theme position. While CNN only has one such headline (or 4.2 percent of 24), *Oakland, NYC occupiers see violence, legal action*, Fox News has six (or 17.6 percent of 34), five of which imply that the protesters or the protests themselves are violent. Examples (52), (53), and (54) demonstrate this:

(52) <u>Angry 'Occupy' Protesters</u> Plan To Take It To The Streets, As <u>Some</u> Threaten Violence

(53) <u>'Occupy Wall Street' Protests</u> Turn Violent When <u>Demonstrators</u> Clash With Police

(54) <u>Occupy Protests</u> Plagued By Reports Of Sex Attacks, Violent Crime

The recurrence of *violence* and *violent* in connection with the protests can, at least in the most avid readers, aid the naturalization of the view that the protests are connected to violence. Specifically, transitivity analysis reveals that the protesters and the protests are the ones highlighted in these contexts. In examples (52) and (53), the protesters are the ones identified as the Actor in the processes of *threatening* and *clashing*. Conversely, in example (54), the protests are placed in Theme position and the Actor (i.e. *Reports Of Sex Attacks [and] Violent Crime*) is in Rheme, a decision which highlights the protests rather than the reports. Therefore, at this point in the analysis, it can be assessed that Fox News is right-leaning as regards OWS.

Considering the headlines with a rendition of *Occupy Wall Street* or *protesters* in the Rheme, a pattern also emerges. Of the six BBC headlines, only one (or 16.7 percent) has *police* in Theme position, whereas five (or 38.5 percent) of the 13 CNN and eleven (or 36.7 percent) of the 30 Fox News headlines do. The presence of *police* in Theme position in the CNN and Fox News headlines implies they consider police involvement in the protests as more expected than does BBC. Thus, the presence of the police at the protests is more likely to naturalize in the minds of the CNN and Fox News readers than those of BBC. Most of the headlines in which *police* is the Theme seem objective as only two Fox News headlines appear potentially biased:

(55) <u>Police</u> Arrest 'Occupy Portland' Protesters After <u>They</u> Refuse To Leave Park

(56) <u>Oregon Police</u> Fear <u>'Occupy' Protesters</u> Arming Themselves For Looming Confrontation

In example (55), the inclusion of the second clause can be questioned. For the most part in the data, the actions of the protesters or the events around them are not explained (e.g. *Over 70 'Occupy Wall Street' Protesters Arrested In New York City*).

Instead, when the police are identified as the Actor in the material process, Fox News considers it necessary to explain why the arrests took place (i.e. because the protesters refused to leave the park), effectively implying that the protesters were at fault. Two similar headlines strengthen this view. Furthermore, in example (56), the word *fear* is questionable. It is not a quote from the police, which a word search of the article confirms - *fear* only appears in the headline, never in the article itself. What is more, the same factual information could have been expressed differently, for example by using the word *suspect*, *expect*, or *presume*. The use of *fear* can be seen to imply that since the police fear the protesters, so should ordinary people. The alternative words would have limited the suspicions, expectations, or presumptions to the professional opinion of the police rather than their personal emotions.

Headlines without a rendition of *police* in Theme position are more plentiful in the data than those with *police*, and again a pattern emerges. As with the previous group of headlines, this group, too, consists mainly of headlines where no hint of bias can be suggested (e.g. <u>*Mass arrests*</u> *at Occupy Wall Street protests* and <u>*Iran calls Wall Street Protests 'American Spring'*</u>). A quantitative factor, however, does suggest slight anti-OWS bias on the part of Fox News. When considering those headlines in this group that report about the protests and protesters in a negative way beyond reporting about mere arrests, a distinction can be made. Only one (or 20 percent of six total) BBC headline can be tentatively considered in this category:

(57) <u>Two deaths</u> near Occupy camps in Oakland and Burlington

While not alarming as such, this headline has to be considered for lack of any other negative headlines. The implication here is that the Occupy camps may be dangerous. In the case of CNN, no headlines in this group are negative.

As for Fox News, nine (or 30 percent of 30) are negative as demonstrated below:

(58) <u>Small Business Owners</u> Fight Back Against Occupy Wall Street

(59) <u>Public Radio Host</u> Fired After Involvement In 'Occupy D.C.' Protest

(60) <u>Death At Texas 'Occupy' Camp</u> Suspected To Be Drug-Related

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Example (58) suggests that small business owners are being harmed by the OWS movement to the point of having to fight *back*. Furthermore, example (59) is only one of several headlines about hardship that has befallen an individual as a result of attending the protests, which suggests an attempt to scare readers out of participating in the protests themselves. A similar effect is produced by example (60): the protests appear unsafe because of drug use. It could be argued that Fox News is simply thorough by reporting these negative happenings. A transitivity analysis, however, reveals that examples (59) and (60) do not explicitly state the active participant in the process (i.e. the Actor and the Senser respectively), which example (58) does, which may indicate that Fox News aims to imply that the blame lies with the OWS protests. Furthermore, since BBC has only one and CNN zero negative headlines, it can be concluded that Fox News is more anti-OWS than the other two websites.

All BBC and CNN headlines and three of the five Fox News headlines that mention neither the OWS movement nor its protesters are instead about the aftermath of a pepper-spray incident (e.g. *California campus police on leave after pepper-spraying*) that occurred at an OWS protest. These headlines do not indicate bias. Two Fox News headlines, however, are not about the aftermath and do indicate bias:

(61) Police Costs Continue to Rise in Oakland

(62) 'We Are the 53 Percent' Gains Steam

These headlines correspond to the trend observed in the rest of the analysis. Firstly, example (61) points to the ill-effects of the protests. Secondly, example (62), by referring to the conservative movement launched against the *We are the 99 percent*[17] movement, indicates conservative bias. The *We are the 53 percent*[18] movement is based on the idea that with hard work and effort you can make something of yourself instead of blaming your problems on Wall Street (as the members of the *99 percent* movement allegedly do). Since the two other websites do not mention this movement, it can be presumed that Fox News intentionally included it for some specific reason, which in this case can be claimed to be conservative-leaning bias.

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17 The 99 percent of US Americans that are not the richest 1 percent.
18 Modeled after the supposed statistic that 53 percent of US Americans pay taxes.

Finally, to provide a comprehensive view, all OWS headlines are analyzed based on whether they present OWS or the protesters in a positive or negative light. In this analysis, headlines that afford multiple interpretations are not considered. Also, mere arrests are again not considered negative due to how common they are in the data. BBC has two positive headlines (e.g. *George Soros' sympathy for Wall Street protesters*) and two negative ones (e.g. *Two deaths near Occupy camps in Oakland and Burlington*), both of which come to 7.7 percent of the total OWS headlines (26). CNN has six positive headlines (e.g. *Occupy Wall Street protesters support injured war vet*) and two negative ones (e.g. *Oakland, NYC occupiers see violence, legal action*), which come to 14.3 and 4.8 percent of the total (42) respectively. Lastly, Fox News has five positive headlines (e.g. *Occupy Protesters Disavow Oakland Violence*) and 20 negative ones (e.g. *Man Found Dead At Texas 'Occupy' Camp*), which come to 7.2 and 29 percent of the total (69), respectively. In the case of OWS, then, it can be concluded that Fox News falls furthest right on the political continuum with almost a third of its headlines being negative and that CNN places furthest left with the most number of positive and the least number of negative headlines, in concurrence with the hypothesis. Fox News' negative view of OWS, furthermore, can be presumed to naturalize in the minds of the readers due to its frequency.

8.2 Analysis of sets of articles

In this section, thematic structures are primarily considered. Based on the patterns revealed, referential identity chain analysis and lexical and other means, such as comparison of the texts, are used to further the analysis. To maximize the meaningfulness of the analysis, those sets where the articles did not match each other well (e.g. in length[19], style) were disregarded. Also, sets discussing a topic that was not politically highly divisive and topics that were too complicated were discarded. This method reduced the data to the top eight sets. Choosing only one set per topic, one set was selected because it concerned both illegal immigration and government aid (the *California Dream Act* set), another was chosen purely due to better correspondence in terms of the length of the articles (the *Super-committee* set), and

19 BBC articles were systematically shorter than both CNN and Fox News articles and, therefore, matching CNN and Fox News lengths was a priority.

the third was selected because it was the only one of the eight for which all three articles were found in the original search (the *Morning-after pill* set). The three sets chosen involve topics that represent a good cross-section of the main issues in the U.S. political field. Each topic will be briefly introduced in the relevant subsection.

Only the main body of text and the headline are analyzed for two reasons. Firstly, aspects such as layout, images, and graphics, despite their potential "significance in newspaper representation" (Fowler 1991: 8), are not strictly linguistic, and the decision to focus only on linguistic data had to be made for better correspondence of the articles and easier comparability of the websites. Secondly, all peripheral things, such as bullet point summaries, links to further articles, and analyses of the topic by a commentator, are disregarded because, while these aspects have potential to reveal hidden agendas, it is the goal to be able to analyze texts which resemble each other as much as possible. For example, Fox News articles rarely include links to other articles, whereas CNN articles often include bullet point lists of the important facts in the story before the body of text itself. These differences could steer the analysis in directions that would not have their basis in language use in the articles themselves.

8.2.1 Theme in the articles

Certain types of Theme were not present in the headlines that do occur in the articles themselves. The analysis of those structures will be demonstrated here to ensure that the study is replicable. The first to be discussed is the issue of Adjunct as Theme, which can be realized by, for example, adverbial groups or prepositional phrases (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 73):

> (63) <u>Sadly</u>, it appears that once again our leaders are putting political expediency ahead of reproductive health.

> (64) <u>In 2009</u>, a federal judge said the FDA had let politics, not science, drive its initial behind-the-counter age restrictions and said it should reconsider.

In declarative sentences, Adjunct functioning as Theme is an example of *marked Theme* (ibid.).

Another aspect of Theme to discuss in connection with the articles is that of existential *there*. As has been discussed, the Theme should contain an experiential element, one that represents the participant, process, or circumstance (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 79). While Halliday and Mathiessen point out that the existential *there* does not serve any of these functions (ibid.: 257), they still consider it to be Theme alone (ibid.: 73).

> (65) <u>There</u> could be a two-step process that would hopefully give us pro-growth tax reform.

An alternative view presented by Thompson is that in these kinds of cases, the process should be included in Theme (2004: 161). Theoretical arguments aside, the Hallidayan analysis is preferred here because the alternative is not any more revealing in terms of uncovering bias.

Finally, the issue of interpolations (e.g. *the panel's Republican co-chair* in <u>*Texas Rep. Jeb Hensarling, the panel's Republican co-chair*</u>*, told CNN's "State of the Union" that...*) are not discussed by Halliday and Matthiessen at any considerable length, and one of the few mentions of them is in the form of examples. Based on the examples, however, it appears that Halliday prefers to analyze interpolations as part of the Theme (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 102-103) in the following manner:

> (66) <u>The drug, Plan B One-Step</u>, is available behind the counter in pharmacies but girls younger than 17 require a prescription to obtain it.

Thompson provides a longer discussion of the matter and notes that, while interpolations can be analyzed as having a Theme structure of their own, it is often "more practical" to consider them as part of the Theme of the embedding clause (2004: 163). This is the principle followed also in this thesis.

In a few areas, Theme structure analysis of full articles must, in this thesis, differ from that of the headlines. The reason for such a decision lies in the fact that news headlines utilize much more ellipsis and are much shorter than the sentences in the full articles, which resulted in the need for a more detailed analysis of the headlines compared to the articles. Conversely, in order to find the predominant Themes in the

articles, only the very superficial thematic structures are analyzed. In other words, Theme analysis focuses on sentence level Themes:

> (67) <u>I</u>'m not as certain as I was 10 days ago, but I think that we can.

> (68) <u>As the secretary has stated</u>, Plan B will remain available to all women who need it, and the president supports the secretary's decision.

> (69) <u>Democrat James Clyburn</u> said he was hopeful a deal could be struck.

As examples (67) through (69) demonstrate, the analysis of sentences with several clauses, independent or dependent, as well as cases of reported speech result in different analyses than in the case of the headlines.

8.2.2 The *California Dream Act* set

The articles in this set are about the California Dream Act which made it law that illegal immigrants in California can apply for state funded student aid to attend college. This issue is politically controversial in two ways: firstly, the issue of illegal immigrants is highly relevant in contemporary U.S., and, secondly, the issue of state aid is traditionally a sore subject (e.g. in cases of Medicare and Medicaid). The typical stance taken by Democrats on the issue of illegal immigration is more lenient than that of Republicans. Democrats generally want to create a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants, whereas Republicans want stricter laws that would banish them. Evidence of the former is the previously discussed Democratic aim for equality for those who are disadvantaged, while evidence of the latter is the multitude of strict immigration laws propelled by Republican governments throughout the conservative states in the U.S. (e.g. Gharekhanian 2008). As for government aid, Democrats support redistribution of wealth and welfare programs, whereas Republicans would rather see free-market economy and work programs solve the issue of poverty (see Appendix 1 and section 4). Therefore, Democrats will presumably view the California Dream Act as an accomplishment, while Republicans will presumably criticize it. Additionally, the Act was signed into law by a Democrat providing further incentive for Democrats to support it.

Starting with the Theme structure analysis, certain patterns are discovered. The sentence-level Themes in the articles are divided into five categories: the critics of the law, its supporters, the illegal immigrants, the law itself, and some other topic. Table 4 demonstrates the number of each type of Theme.

Theme category	BBC	CNN	FOX
Critics	3	0	5
Illegal immigrants	1	4	1
Supporters	4	1	4
The law	0	6	6
Other	1	7	8
Total	**9**	**18**	**24**

Table 4. Sentence-level Themes in the *California Dream Act* articles

In the BBC article, the law itself is not mentioned at all. Instead, the focus is on its critics (e.g. *Opponents of the law*) and supporters (e.g. *Jerry Brown*). In the CNN article, the focus is on the law (e.g. *The California Dream Act*) and the illegal immigrants (e.g. *About 2,500 students*). Furthermore, in the Fox News article the focus is similarly on the law (e.g. *The bill*) but also on both the critics (e.g. *Many Republican lawmakers*) and supporters (e.g. *Supporters*) of it. It can be argued that, while BBC considers the supporters and critics of the law to be the Given, CNN considers the Given to be the law and the illegal immigrants, and Fox News considers the law, its supporters, and its critics to be the Given. It can also be proposed that, due to the lack of supporters in Theme position in the CNN article, CNN may lean further right than anticipated. A closer examination of the entities in Theme position reveals more. In the category *other*, for example, it must be noted that Fox News mentions both *illegal* and *illegally* once, whereas neither BBC nor CNN mentions either one.

Considering the issue of how illegal immigrants are identified, bias is revealed. While BBC refers to illegal immigrants only once in Theme position with *About 2,500 students* and Fox News once with *Illegal immigrants*, CNN refers to them twice with *Undocumented students*, once with *About 2,500 students*, and once with *Ana and Maria Gomez, Jaime Kim, David Cho, Pedro Ramirez -- and thousands of*

other students who are some of the best and brightest in California. This suggests a liberal bias on the part of CNN due to the personification of the illegal immigrants. A referential chain analysis of all the ways in which the illegal immigrants are referred to outside Theme also reveals further patterns that emerge from the data:

Reference includes:	BBC	CNN	FOX
a proper name (e.g. Pedro Ramirez)	0	5	0
the word *illegal*	1	1	4
the word *undocumented*	0	6	0
the word *student(s)*	3	6	8
of which *top student(s)*	1	2	1
the word *you*	0	3	0
some of the best and brightest in California	0	1	0
Total	**4**	**21***	**11***

Table 5. Referential identity chain analysis of *illegal immigrant students* in the *California Dream Act* articles
* One reference in both the CNN and Fox News articles is *illegal immigrant students* which results in the same unit being counted in two rows (*illegal* and *student*). In the total number of instances, however, this is remedied.

As Table 5 demonstrates, the students are referred to in the BBC article once (25 percent of total) using the word *illegal* and three times (75 percent) using *students*. In comparison, Fox News refers to them eight times (72.7 percent) using *student(s)* and four times (36.4 percent) using *illegal*. This difference is not alarming, but a clearer picture forms when one considers also the way in which CNN refers to the students: CNN refers to them five times (23.8 percent) by name (e.g. *Maria Gomez*), six times (28.6 percent) with *student(s)* (e.g. *top students*), another six times (28.6 percent) using *undocumented* (e.g. *undocumented immigrants*), and only once (4.8 percent) using the word *illegal* (e.g. *illegal immigrant students*). CNN also addresses them thrice (14.3 percent) directly (i.e. using *you*). Furthermore, *top student(s)* appears once in both the BBC and Fox News articles and twice in the CNN article, in which also the phrase *some of the best and brightest in California* appears. This pattern by CNN to avoid using the word *illegal* and instead personifying the students by using their names and by addressing them directly is a strong indication of liberal bias. Conversely, only slight conservative bias by Fox News can be suggested to exist.

When considering the way the law is referred to in Theme position, an additional suggestion of bias is revealed. While CNN modifies the noun using the adjective *new*, Fox News uses the word *contentious* (i.e. controversial). A referential identity chain analysis of the entities used to refer to the law reveals that the same pattern holds even beyond the entities in Theme position: BBC and CNN only modify the law using *new*, whereas Fox News only modifies it using *contentious*. This suggests at least slight right-leaning bias on the part of Fox News. However, with only one instance in each article, it is impossible to draw any clear conclusions. The analysis of the Rheme in this instance also does not reveal any patterns indicative of bias.

Moving away from thematic structure analysis, it is revealing of bias to examine how much the articles report about the positive and negative effects and reception of the law. For example, quotes and descriptions of the views of supporters are considered in this thesis to be positive descriptions, whereas negative descriptions include the views of the opponents. The most balanced article based on this method is that of BBC, which has two positive and two negative instances (i.e. paragraphs) of such descriptions. In comparison, the CNN and Fox News articles both are much less balanced. Firstly, the CNN article includes four instances of positive descriptions and quotes and zero negative ones. That is to say, the CNN article does not feature any comments from critics of the new legislation or any mentions of its potential adverse affects, such as that it may encourage illegal immigration to the state. Secondly, the Fox News article includes four positive instances (e.g. the expansion of *educational opportunities for all qualified students*) and six negative instances (e.g. the law is *an insult to people who have worked and played by the rules*). Based on this analysis, it appears that CNN is most clearly supportive of the legislation and thus takes the most Democratic stance on the issue, whereas Fox News veers slightly to the Republican side of the political continuum - in concurrence with the hypothesis.

An additional interesting aspect is the order in which facts are presented in the three articles due to the prioritizing of information by the journalist. Considering the lead, or the first paragraph, of the articles, all three contain a mention of Governor Brown of California, who signed the legislation into law, as well as a mention of what the

law entails. Thus this aspect reveals no bias. However, the placement of another fact is much more indicative of bias. The impact of allowing illegal immigrants to qualify for student aid is very small. That is to say, illegal immigrant students are expected to make up just one percent of the entire grant fund. This fact is presented by BBC halfway through the article, CNN presents it very early in the third and fourth sentences, and Fox News leaves it to the very last paragraph of its article. This suggests that CNN highlights the fact that allowing illegal students to apply for the aid would have a small effect on legal students, a liberal viewpoint, while Fox News perhaps hopes most readers do not finish the article, or at least the fact is much less prioritized by Fox News, which represents conservative bias.

The placement of the positive and negative content described in a previous paragraph (e.g. quotes from supporters and critics) may also imply a level of bias. For example, factual statements with no indication of bias dominate the CNN article until halfway through, at which point the reporting becomes positively charged. In comparison, the Fox News article includes positive content in the second quarter of the article, and thus in a more prominent position than CNN. Based on this, it can be argued that Fox News is more left-leaning than CNN because it places its pro-legislation content in a more prioritized position than CNN. The positive content, however, is followed by negative quotes and descriptions for the majority of the second half of the article, and, therefore, the argument that Fox News places more left than CNN is not a solid conclusion. This may in part be due to the "complex ranges of voices" (Fairclough [1995] 2003: 77) in media texts, which essentially means a text may comprise of several genres, affecting its composition and interpretation (ibid.). The BBC article is more balanced than the other two, with both positive and negative comments intermittently occupying most of the mid-section of the article.

8.2.3 The *Super-committee* set

The topic of this set of articles concerns the super-committee that was established to find a compromise on how to reduce the U.S. deficit. The 12-member panel consisted of six Democrats and six Republicans who were tasked with finding at least $1.2

trillion in savings over the course of 10 years. The main issues include tax reform and budget cuts, mainly regarding entitlement programs (e.g. Medicare) and defense spending. These issues greatly divide the U.S. political field. In terms of taxes, Democrats would increase taxes on the rich (e.g. through a progressive tax code; see section 4) and allow the working classes to spend more of what they earn (Hodge 2009), while Republicans would cut taxes across the board, especially for the rich due to the Republican belief that trickle-down economics[20] spurs job growth and strengthens the economy (Hodge 2009). Additionally, as discussed in the previous section, Republicans would reduce or end funding for entitlement programs, whereas Democrats would want to retain the programs. Finally, Democrats are in favor of reducing defense spending, whereas Republicans are against doing so (Newport 2011). Based on this, assessing bias in the ideas presented in the articles is possible.

The sentence-level Themes are separated into six categories based on the topic of the Theme, which include the committee, plans for deficit reduction, and repercussions for not coming to an agreement. Table 6 summarizes the Themes effectively:

Theme category	BBC	CNN	FOX
Committee	5	4	3
Democrats	3	6	0
Plans	4	10	4
Repercussions	2	1	5
Republicans	2	8	9
Other	5	8	14
Total	**21**	**37**	**35**

Table 6. Sentence-level Themes in the *Super-committee* articles

Some of the main points of interest involve the number of instances the plans are discussed as well as which party occupies Theme position. For example, in the CNN article, ten Themes consist of some reference to the plans to solve the deficit crisis (27 percent of total CNN Themes), whereas the BBC and Fox News articles only have four mentions each (19 and 11.4 percent respectively). Examples of such

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20 Trickle-down economics denotes the view that tax cuts for the rich result in wealth trickling down to the middle and lower classes (e.g. Hunt 2011).

Themes include *The Republican proposal* (CNN) and *This* (Fox News). Another notable category is that of Democrats. They are mentioned in Theme position three times (14.3 percent) in the BBC article (e.g. *Democrat James Clyburn*) and six times (16.2 percent) in the CNN article (e.g. *Democrats*) but zero times in the Fox News article. Conversely, Republicans are mentioned by BBC twice (9.5 percent), by CNN eight times (21.6 percent), and by Fox News nine times (25.7 percent), including instances such as *I* (BBC and Fox News) and *Hensarling* (CNN and Fox News). Notable here is the complete lack of Democrats in Theme position in the Fox News article compared to the nine mentions of Republicans. Therefore, Fox News seems to veer to the right on the political continuum, while CNN is eager to present possible solutions to the problem by presenting the most instances of plans.

When analyzing the Themes related to plans, no immediate patterns are detected even when considering the Rhemes. Therefore, all segments of text in which the plans are discussed are analyzed. Aside from bipartisan plans, the articles include seven segments of Democratic and Republican plans, two (28.6 percent) and five (71.4 percent) respectively. BBC presents only one plan, which is by Democrats. This plan is discussed in just two sentences, forming one unified segment, of which one notes the commission *is not obligated to accept the president's ideas*. The CNN article includes four segments of Republican plans and one segment of Democratic plans (80 and 20 percent respectively), of which one segment of Republican plans is not commented upon beyond mere description of the plan. The other three segments, however, are immediately criticized by Democrats. Once, a Republican counter-argument is presented after the Democratic criticism. Similarly, the Democratic proposal is followed by a Republican criticism. As for the Fox News article, it only includes one Republican and no Democratic plan. The Republican plan is followed by two lines of Democratic critique, which is followed by two Republican counter-arguments. Based on this, BBC seems to place itself furthest left due to the one instance of Democratic plans, whereas both CNN and Fox News place further right.

The issue of counter-arguments is interesting, however, in that while CNN's Republican counter-argument focuses on facts (e.g. *The Republican proposal would*

bring in more revenue by spurring economic growth), the Republican counter-argument to the Democratic critique in the Fox News article focuses on attitudes and blame (e.g. *with that kind of attitude, there's little chance a deal could be struck* and *there won't be a deal when the Democrats are being instructed not to make one*). Based on these isolated incidences, no definitive conclusions can be drawn. A slight suggestion of bias, however, remains - again in concurrence with the hypothesis mainly in the sense that Fox News seems to resort to immaturity in its attempts to present Democrats in a negative light. This analysis is speculative at best.

The number of Democrats and Republicans occurring in Theme position also warrants more investigation. Similar to Themes about the plans, Themes about the two political parties also contain no patterns, regardless of considering both the Theme and Rheme. Instead, the total number of references to and quotes by Democrats and Republicans are examined. The BBC article has 8 of the former and 5 of the latter (61.5 and 38.5 percent respectively), the CNN article has 20 and 21 (or 48.8 and 51.2 percent respectively), and the Fox News article has 6 and 12 (respectively, 33.3 and 66.7 percent). Based on this it seems that CNN is most balanced and objective, while BBC veers to the left and Fox News to the right on the political continuum.

When considering the political parties further, the concept of blame becomes of interest. By examining who is featured as the guilty party in the breakdown of negotiations, be it through quotes or other means of presenting such a viewpoint, bias may be revealed. The BBC article features only one relevant sentence, and in it the blame falls on both parties: *Republicans are reluctant to concede tax rises unless Democrats agree to reduce social entitlements, correspondents say*. This suggests objectivity and corresponds with the hypothesis. CNN's article twice indicates shared guilt, twice (28.6 percent) indicates Democratic guilt, and thrice (42.6 percent) indicates Republican guilt (e.g. *That was not a serious proposal* referring to the Republican proposal). This suggests marginal liberal bias. The Fox News article, furthermore, thrice indicates shared guilt (e.g. *the fault lies on all sides*), twice (33.3 percent) indicates Democratic guilt, and once (16.7 percent) indicates Republican

guilt, which again suggests only a slight conservative bias. This exhibition of bias, however slight, by both CNN and Fox News is in line with the hypothesis.

Returning to Theme analysis, certain key terms such as *taxes, entitlement programs, the deficit,* and *debt* appear in Theme position only 15 times, of which in eight (or 53.3 percent) they appear in a secondary role. For example, in *The continued political wrangling over how to reform the tax code and entitlement programs such as Medicare and Medicaid as part of a board deficit reduction plan*, taxes, entitlement programs, and the deficit are of less importance than *The continued political wrangling*. Thus, even though these issues are key to this particular topic in order to discuss it clearly and to the point, they appear rather infrequently in a prominent position. A referential identity chain following these key terms throughout the three articles reveals the following:

Key term	BBC	CNN	FOX
Debt	1	1	5
Deficit	6	7	1
Spending cuts	6	17	15
of which defense spending	1	0	1
of which entitlement programs	2	13	6
Taxes	3	33	11
Total	**16**	**58**	**32**

Table 7. Referential identity chain analysis of certain key terms in the *Super-committee* articles

As Table 7 demonstrates, the focus in the CNN and Fox News articles is on spending cuts (e.g. *reforms to entitlement programs*) and taxes (e.g. *the target level for revenue to come from taxes could be set now*), whereas the focus in the BBC article is on the deficit (e.g. *the best way to trim the US budget deficit*) and spending cuts.

Because tax increases and spending cuts represent the two opposite solutions to the deficit problem, they are of main interest here. The number of times taxes are mentioned in the CNN article (33) is particularly notable: taxes constitute over half of CNN's total key words (56.9 percent of 58 total). In comparison, Fox News

mentions taxes 11 times, which constitutes only little over a third (34.4 percent) of the total key words (32). Furthermore, of the 16 total key words in the BBC article, only three are taxes (18.8 percent). This suggests that CNN prioritizes the issue of taxes more than do the other two news outlets. When considering spending cuts, a similar pattern emerges with Fox News placing more focus on spending cuts than do the other two websites. While the Fox News article includes 15 mentions of spending cuts (46.9 percent of the total), the corresponding numbers for BBC and CNN are 6 (or 37.5 percent) and 17 (or 29.3 percent) respectively. This difference, too, is rather notable. It can be argued that the deficit reduction tactic gaining the most attention by each news outlet is the preferred one, a result which correlates with the hypothesis. For further investigation, a context analysis of spending cuts and taxes is conducted.

The occurrences of spending cuts form four categories: cuts as repercussions of failed negotiations, cuts as the only solution to the budget crisis, cuts in combination with tax increases as the solution, and a category of other. In some cases, the larger context contains multiple mentions of spending cuts and, therefore, the total number of segments (of uninterrupted discussion of the specific category of cuts) here does not correspond to the total numbers presented in the previous paragraph. Beyond BBC and CNN both having one segment of spending cuts as repercussions compared to Fox News' four, cuts as repercussions category reveals no bias. At best, the difference indicates that Fox News is eager to note the ill-effects of not cooperating.

The category of other, furthermore, is only slightly suggestive of bias. The BBC and CNN articles both include a mention of the Republican view that Democrats should agree to reforms of entitlement programs, but the style of reporting on the matter differs. Example (70) is from BBC and example (71) from CNN:

> (70) Republicans are reluctant to concede tax rises unless Democrats agree to reduce social entitlements, correspondents say.

> (71) Hensarling [a Republican] said Sunday that the process will fail unless Democrats are willing to accept significant reforms to entitlement programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, the government-run health care systems for the disabled, poor and elderly.

Several issues must be noted here. Firstly, while BBC refers to *Republicans*, CNN refers to them by name. This could indicate that CNN wants to single out the person responsible for such a statement rather than indicate the entire party, which could be argued to be a pro-Republican stance. Alternatively, CNN may simply name Republicans because of spatial proximity: BBC, based in the U.K., is removed from the immediate U.S. context and thus naming the individuals may not be necessary.

Secondly, the BBC article presents reduction of social entitlements as a condition of Republicans agreeing to rising taxes, whereas CNN simply notes that Democrats *must* accept reforms. This may aim to victimize Democrats and thus create sympathy for them. Furthermore, the CNN article includes an explanation of what the entitlement programs are: *government-run health care systems for the disabled, poor and elderly*. The fact that CNN specifies who the beneficiaries are indicates liberal bias in the attempt to arouse the reader's sympathies. Therefore, in this instance, CNN presents as more liberal than does BBC. Lastly, Fox News does not include the Republican demand in its article, which may indicate the aim to distance Fox News from the Republican stance. This may suggest left-leaning bias, or it may indicate that Fox News aims to retain Republicans in a better light, suggesting conservative bias. Therefore, Fox News' stance is inconclusive.

Notable points of interest do, however, appear in categories of cuts as the only solution and cuts in combination with tax increases as the solution. Firstly, only Fox News mentions spending cuts alone as the solution, and although the solution is presented as a bipartisan suggestion (i.e. *members of Congress from both parties*), neither BBC nor CNN mentions it. This indicates conservative bias by Fox News. Secondly, the category of spending cuts as an option alongside tax increases reveals more. One of the three segments of spending cuts in the BBC article falls into this category, whereas the CNN article has six and Fox News five similar segments. The BBC segment comprises of a report about a poll which supposedly indicates that Americans *see a mix of tax increases on the wealthy accompanied by some spending cuts as the best way to trim the US budget deficit*. This does not suggest any clear bias, although it can indicate support for the Democratic stance.

While the BBC article does not contain any suggestion of bias, the CNN and Fox News articles both tell a slightly different story. They both include two segments in which the problem of how to balance tax increases and entitlement reforms are discussed. Furthermore, the CNN article includes two mentions of previous bipartisan efforts to reform the tax system and entitlement programs, and the Fox News article includes one mention of the overall process. None of the above indicate bias. The CNN article, however, also includes two segments specifically of the Democratic standpoint (i.e. *Democrats, meanwhile, say any solution must be balanced with spending cuts, entitlement reforms and increased tax revenue*), which indicates liberal bias considering neither BBC nor Fox News includes similar mentions. Finally, the Fox News article also includes one mention of spending cuts in connection with the plan that would cut spending now and formulate the plan for tax increases later - a Republican viewpoint because it stresses the importance of spending cuts while avoiding the issue of tax increases. The Fox News article also includes a quote opposing this plan: *a deal that agrees to cuts now but taxes later is a nonstarter.* Thus, this method provides only marginal support for the hypothesis.

As for taxes, they are discussed in the three articles somewhat more often than spending cuts. Segments of taxes are categorized into the following groups: tax increases are not an option, tax increases are the only solution, and tax increases in connection with spending cuts are the solution. Naturally, the third category fully corresponds with one of the categories of spending cuts and the same arguments apply. The first of the other two categories is of limited interest as only one BBC segment is included: *Republicans are reluctant to concede tax rises*. The category of taxes as the only solution to the budget problem, however, is considerably more interesting. The Fox News article only includes 3 segments, whereas the CNN article includes 14, which can be argued to indicate liberal bias by CNN because of the disproportionate focus on tax increases as the solution.

A closer look at the category reveals that 11 of the 14 CNN segments (or 78.6 percent) consist of Republican quotes or description of the Republican plan for tax reform, whereas only three (or 21.4 percent) consist of Democratic comments or

counter-arguments. This suggests a Republican bias based on the focus being on the Republican point of view. Looking at not only the meaning but also the order of the 14 occurrences reveals that there is, in fact, a pattern that diminishes the effect of the initial conclusions. As discussed in connection with plans, Republican plans are followed by Democratic criticisms or counter-arguments, and, even though numerically the Republican plan is more prominent, it must be assumed that the base argument must always be properly presented before counter-arguments can be included. Regardless, twice the Republican plan is discussed without Democratic criticism and, thus, CNN remains slightly right-leaning in this manner of analysis.

A similar analysis of the Fox News article that thrice mentions taxes as the only solution to the deficit problem results in a much less ambiguous result than in the case of the CNN article. Two of the three segments (66.7 percent) in which taxes are mentioned discuss the Republican plan for implementing spending cuts now and discussing tax reform later. That is to say, two of the three segments in which taxes appear alone, the context reveals that what is really at issue is spending cuts - and possibly tax increases later - indicating a pro-Republican view. The third segment mentions the fight over *how much...revenue can be used for deficit reduction rather than tax rate reduction*. This is interesting on two accounts. Firstly, neither BBC nor CNN mentions this fight, but rather the fight they mention is over spending cuts and tax increases. This could indicate a conservative bias by Fox News because tax rate reduction is typically desired by Republicans. Secondly, the mention of the fight is followed by *liberal activists warned Democrats not to give in on the issue*, which may be offensive to liberals who do not consider themselves as *liberal activists* (i.e. a term at times used in a derogatory manner by conservatives) but still feel that Democrats should not *give in*. In this case, then, Fox News seems to be conservative.

8.2.4 The *Morning-after pill* set

The final set of articles concerns the morning-after pill and, more precisely, the overruling of the decision to make it available without a prescription for all women of reproductive age (i.e. even those under the age of 17). Democrats typically support

easy access to all types of birth control, which is evidenced by their liberal stances on issues related to sexuality (see Appendix 1 and Douthat 2012). The stance of Republicans is less unanimous. Generally, however, Republicans adhere to ideas from traditional conservatism - mainly that access to abortion should be limited (see section 4) and that abstinence is the only viable birth-control option (Douthat 2012). Based on this, the picture seems simple: Democrats are supportive of over the counter morning-after pills, whereas Republicans are against the idea. However, it was an Obama administration official who overruled the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommendation that Plan B One-Step should be made available over the counter for all women of reproductive age. This is interesting because it may affect the degree to which Republicans praise the overruling of the recommendation and also how fiercely Democrats criticize it.

Staying consistent with the previous analyses, the sentence-level Themes are analyzed and divided into categories, of which there are altogether six (e.g. the decision and critics of the decision). Table 8 demonstrates the categories.

Theme category	BBC	CNN	FOX
Critics	2	3	5
Decision	2	2	9
Pill	3	1	2
Supporters	11	4	6
Users	1	0	1
Other	3	6	15
Total	**22**	**16**	**38**

Table 8. Sentence-level Themes in the *Morning-after pill* articles

Very briefly, some of the main points of interest are the supporters category for BBC, which includes examples such as *Most parents* and *Critics of the drug*, and the categories of decision (e.g. *Sebelius' decision*) and other (e.g. *Teva*, which refers to Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, the maker of the Plan B drug) for Fox News.

The morning-after pill itself occupies Theme position quite rarely - thrice (13.6 percent of total) in the BBC article, once (6.3 percent) in the CNN article, and twice

(5.3 percent) in the Fox News article. The fact that BBC uses the drug's name (i.e. *Plan B* or *Plan B One-Step*), CNN refers to it by *'Morning after' pill*, and Fox News only uses the pronoun *it* may indicate bias. A referential identity chain analysis reveals more. Comparing the total number of references to the drug - 16 by BBC, 11 by CNN, and 26 by Fox News - to the number of times it appears in Theme position - thrice, once, and twice respectively - it becomes clear that BBC considers the drug as the Given more often (18.8 percent of total) than do the other two news outlets (CNN 9.1 percent and Fox News 7.7 percent). Therefore, it can be tentatively suggested that BBC may consider emergency contraception to be acceptable and the norm, making BBC the most liberal of the three websites on this issue, whereas CNN and Fox News may consider it less so. These figures and more are demonstrated in Table 9, in which generic references to emergency contraception are also considered to refer to this specific drug.

Reference includes	BBC	CNN	FOX
drug	6	3	1
of which *abortion drug*	1	0	0
emergency contraception/-ive	3	3	4
it / they	4	1	3
pill(s)	1	1	8
of which *morning-after pill*	0	1	4
of which *abortion pill*	0	0	1
Plan B	6	3	11
of which *Plan B One-Step*	2	2	1
Total	**16**	**11**	**26***

Table 9. Referential identity chain analysis of *Plan B One-Step* in the *Morning-after pill* articles
* One reference in the Fox News article is *Plan B morning-after pill* and is therefore counted in both the *morning-after pill* and *Plan B* rows. The total number of instances shows the corrected figure.

In addition, the CNN article includes the drug's name least often of the three articles, which may signify a conservative stance in that CNN may not want its readers to learn the name of the drug, thereby making it more difficult to acquire it. When considering the instances of *abortion drug/pill*, however, CNN is the only one that

does not refer to the drug in this manner. Regardless, it seems that in this instance CNN may be the most conservative of the three websites.

The potential users of the drug are even more rare in Theme position, as they appear only once in both the BBC and Fox News articles and never in the CNN article. The manner in which the potential users are identified, however, can reveal a great deal about each news outlet's attitude as regards emergency contraception. Thus, a referential identity chain analysis is conducted. It is likely that when reading about such a topic as emergency contraception, the reader may be shocked about references to *very young girls*, *12-year-olds*, and *minors*, for example. It is therefore a reasonable assumption that the more of these references an article includes, the less favorably the typical conservative American reader may view the issue of emergency contraception (i.e. the association of the drug with the negative idea of young girls having sex may be reinforced).

Reference includes a variation of	BBC	CNN	FOX
all women who need it	2	2	2
women who are pregnant	1	0	1
those of sexually active ages	0	0	1
17 or older	0	1	1
girls under 17	1	4	0
11-17-year-olds	0	0	1
11-13-year-olds	2	0	2
minors, adolescent(s)	1	1	2
(very) young girls/kids	2	1	4
they, them	1	0	1
Total	**10**	**9**	**15**

Table 10. Referential identity chain analysis of potential Plan B users in the *Morning-after pill* articles

As Table 10 demonstrates, six of the 10 total instances in the BBC article refer to young girls (60 percent). Corresponding numbers are two out of 9 total (22.2 percent) in the CNN article and ten out of 15 (or 66.7 percent) in the Fox News article. In the BBC and Fox News articles, the words *they* and *them* refer to young girls and are

counted as such. These numbers suggest that CNN is situated furthest left on the continuum, while Fox News places somewhat to the right of BBC.

The decision by Sebelius, an Obama administration official, to overturn the FDA recommendation is of most interest to Fox News, for which it constitutes the second largest category with nine occurrences (23.7 percent of the total number of Themes, see Table 8). In comparison, the BBC and CNN articles both include only two occurrences (9.1 and 12.5 percent respectively). One interpretation of this is that Fox News aims to highlight the conflict created by a supposedly liberal administration restricting the over the counter sale of emergency contraceptives. Indeed, Fox News discusses the ill-effects of the decision on the upcoming Obama campaign:

> (72) The move shocked women's health advocates, a key part of President Barack Obama's Democratic base

> (73) The move will anger many Democrats. ... But it could also serve to illustrate to independents, whose support will be critical in next fall's presidential election, that Obama is not the liberal ideologue Republicans claim.

This focus by Fox News may be an attempt to influence readers to view Obama in a negative light and can be seen as a pro-Republican act. Neither the BBC article nor the CNN article includes any mention such ill-effects. Quite the opposite: the first third of the BBC article discusses Obama's approval of the decision.

In addition to Obama, other proponents as well as opponents of Sebelius' decision are of interest since the proportion of space dedicated to the two sides may be revealing of bias. The BBC article includes 11 instances of supporters in Theme position (50 percent of 22 total; e.g. *Critics of the drug*) and only twice (9.1 percent) includes critics (e.g. *Margaret Hamburg, commissioner of the FDA*). Corresponding numbers are four (25 percent) supporters and three (18.8 percent) critics in the CNN article (e.g. *Proponents*) and six (15.8 percent) supporters (e.g. *some critics*) and five (13.2 percent) critics in the Fox News article - a much less notable difference. Based on these numbers, it would seem that all three news websites are right-leaning, based on their support for Sebelius' decision, with BBC the furthest right on the continuum.

Beyond the instances of supporters and critics of the decision in Theme position, proportions of positive and negative views[21] of the decision overall reveal the following results. The BBC article includes eight (72.7 percent) decision-supporting instances (e.g. *Republicans have praised the move*), five of which consist of support from Obama, and only three (27.3 percent) negative views of it (e.g. *overturning the agency's decision was unusual*). The CNN article includes two (33.3 percent) positive views (e.g. *I do not believe enough data were presented*) and four (66.7 percent) negative views of the decision (e.g. *emergency contraception can be safely used by adolescent women*). Finally, the Fox News article has six (40 percent) positive views (e.g. *the president supports the secretary's decision*) and nine (60 percent) negative ones (e.g. *Sebelius' decision is "medically inexplicable"*). Against the hypothesis, then, these numbers suggest that BBC is the most conservative website with CNN and Fox News placing further left on the continuum.

As hypothesized at the beginning of this section, however, the Obama-critical sentiments in the Fox News article skew the results in this case because one must criticize the decision that conservatives would typically applaud in order to be critical of the Obama administration. Additionally, the fact that one third of the BBC article consists of description of Obama's approval of the decision can also be considered pro-Democratic because it points to there not being an internal conflict in the Obama administration concerning the decision. That is to say, the BBC article may aim to highlight the strength and unity of the administration under Obama's lead despite the controversial decision. These two factors change the analysis somewhat, with BBC placing less right and Fox News less left on the continuum.

The final Theme category, other, is one of the most interesting ones numerically. While the BBC article only includes 3 such Themes (13.6 percent), the CNN article includes 6 (or 37.5 percent) and the Fox News article includes 15 (or 39.5 percent) that fall into that category. One reason is the introduction of a new entity, the maker of the Plan B drug, by Fox News (e.g. *A Teva-funded study* and *The company*). Overall, Teva is mentioned once by CNN and five times by Fox News. The CNN

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21 Positive and negative views of the decision are counted according to the number of paragraphs which were labeled either positive, negative, or expressing neither view.

instance simply reports that the company *had asked FDA to make the drug available without prescription to all sexually active girls and women*. The Fox News instances are a little more complex, including, for example, a paragraph about the Teva-funded study that tracked the use of Plan B by 11- to 17-year-olds. Fox News also notes that *Teva wouldn't say how many of the youngest girls were part of the study* and that *[Sebelius] said the maker Teva Pharmaceuticals hadn't proved that they very youngest girls who might try Plan B would understand how to use it properly*. It can be argued that the inclusion of this point of view is simply thorough reporting. It is also possible that the inclusion of the viewpoint aims to discredit the company and, consequently, presents the emergency contraception industry in a negative light.

Beyond the analysis of the thematic structure, the order of presenting facts is again of interest with this topic. Firstly, several features indicate no bias because of their similar placement in the articles. For example, both BBC and Fox News include a mention of the *abortion drug / pill* on the very last line of their respective articles, and both point to it being a label used by critics. That is to say, in neither article is the term used directly, but rather its use by others is mentioned. Furthermore, the current availability of Plan B (i.e. over the counter except for those under 17 who require a prescription) is similarly reported in all three articles - in the fourth, fifth, and sixth sentences in the BBC, CNN, and Fox News article respectively.

Certain aspects of the order do, however, seem to point to some existence of bias. For example, information about the proper use of Plan B (e.g. when it needs to be taken to be effective) is provided in the fourth to last and fifth to last paragraphs in the BBC and CNN article respectively but in the second to last paragraph in the Fox News article, indicating that Fox News deems the information to be of little importance. This suggests conservative bias by Fox News because by eliminating fast access to emergency contraception through the need to acquire a prescription makes emergency contraception a less viable option for those under 17 who need it.

Additionally, while the BBC and Fox News articles begin with a reference to Obama - albeit for different reasons as discussed - the CNN article does not mention Obama

at all. It could be argued that if the reader is not in tune with the structure of the U.S. government or familiar with the names of the members of the Obama administration, she would not know from reading the CNN article that Sebelius is an Obama administration official. This indicates liberal-leaning bias, as CNN may have aimed to conceal the fact that Obama was involved in such a conservatism-flavored move.

9 Discussion

In order to discuss the results and methods of the analysis, it is necessary to review the main objectives of the study. Firstly, the purpose of this thesis was to determine whether hidden agendas can be uncovered in the reporting of BBC, CNN, and Fox News. Indeed, such agendas were uncovered, and, while **the results** are not absolutely homogenous, overall they are in line with the hypothesis that CNN places left and Fox News right on the liberal-conservative continuum. Reviewing first those results that do not correspond with the hypothesis, one involves the headlines about illegal immigrants. Of Fox News' headlines, those affected by the immigration law occupied Theme position 60 percent of the time, drawing attention away from authorities, and, furthermore, 80 percent of the headlines centered around ill-effects of the laws. Another concerns the analysis that suggested CNN aimed to dehumanize the women accusing Cain of harassment by not naming them. The results that indicate against the hypothesis are some of the least conclusive ones, however, and were often based on very few occurrences (e.g. five total instances in the case of Fox News and illegal immigrants) or not well supported (e.g. avoidance of proper names in the case of CNN and Cain accusers may have been due to space constraints).

Some of the most convincing results are, in fact, in accordance with the hypothesis. For example, the Fox News data did not include any headlines that feature Obama in Theme position, whereas both BBC and CNN had many Obama headlines, including numerous positive ones. Furthermore, none of Fox News' four headlines mentioned Obama himself but rather entities such as the White House. Another of my key results in favor of the hypothesis also relates to the headlines. Fox News was found to report about OWS in a negative manner (29 percent of the time) compared to the

reporting on BBC and CNN (7.7 and 4.8 percent respectively). For example, Fox News repeatedly referred to *violence* at the protests or by the protesters (17.6 percent of all OWS-as-Theme headlines) and described negative outcomes of attending the protests (e.g. *Public Radio Host Fired After Involvement In 'Occupy D.C.' Protest*). This practice by Fox News to report about OWS in a negative manner can be argued to naturalize this negative view also in the minds of the readers.

The analysis of the full articles also resulted in strong support for the hypothesis. For example, in terms of the *California Dream Act* articles, CNN was revealed as holding a clearly liberal view. This was evident in many ways: how illegal immigrants were identified (e.g. by name, as *undocumented* instead of *illegal*), the positive description of the new law (i.e. no criticisms were presented), and through certain structural choices (e.g. highlighting the small effect the new law would have on the grant fund in terms of legal residents in the very beginning of the article). In the *Super-committee* articles, CNN highlighted the issue of taxes (56.9 percent of total key words) as well as the fact that entitlement programs are *for the disabled, poor and elderly*, whereas Fox News concentrated on spending cuts (46.9 percent of total key words) and the idea that spending cuts alone would suffice to fix the deficit. The *Morning-after pill* articles, furthermore, showed conservative bias on the part of Fox News through the focus on the difficulties that the decision would have on Obama's popularity in the upcoming re-election. CNN was also determined to be biased due to its reporting in the *Morning-after pill* article, where it did not mention Obama at all, perhaps with the goal of distancing the issue from Obama, and because of the focus on views presented against the decision (66.7 percent of total opinions reported).

These results support the findings of some of the previous work (e.g. Groeling 2008, Groseclose and Milyo 2005, Mixon, Sen, and Stephenson 2004, and Morris 2005 and 2007) that has been conducted in this area of study. That is to say, the main findings support the body of work that has found bias to exist in accordance with the hypothesis presented in this thesis. The existence of inconsistencies in the results, however, suggests that perhaps the results vary based on the analytic method chosen or the topic of analysis itself (such as in Iyengar 1991). In other words, while bias

was not expected to be present at all times, the fact that bias was not found in all cases may be due to the varied techniques used and topics researched in this thesis. The topics researched also involve the issue of genres and the hybridity of voices present in media texts (as discussed in the final paragraph of section 8.2.2), which may have influenced the results of the analysis to being inconsistent at times. Finally, it could be claimed that perhaps studies that have previously found there to be no bias in the reporting of CNN and Fox News have simply focused on topics that did not harbor much bias or employed methods that were not suited to uncovering it.

Before moving on to discussing the methods used in this thesis, the results from the analysis of the BBC data also need to be examined. Overall, the hypothesis that BBC is an outside source removed from U.S. matters and is, therefore, more objective in terms of traditional liberal and conservative values in the U.S. context is supported by the analysis. For example, the BBC article in the *California Dream Act* set was very impartial: equal time was given to positive and negative views of the law, and the views were intermittently placed throughout the article. At times, BBC would present some liberal and some conservative views - but in a balanced way. One example of this is the *Morning-after pill* set in which BBC appeared conservative in terms of the entities in Theme position (50 percent involved critics of emergency contraception) and the proportion of views presented in support of the decision to limit access to emergency contraception. However, most of the decision-supporting instances were quotes from Obama, highlighting the Obama administration as united behind the decision, which is a liberal view to present. At times, BBC's reporting veered either left (e.g. in the *Super-committee* article) or right (e.g. with the headlines about illegal immigrants), and it is difficult to pinpoint where on the continuum BBC falls overall, partially due to BBC's distance from U.S. related politics, which may at times have influenced the division of political positions that were discussed in section 4. Generally, of the three news websites, BBC's reporting was the most varied, ranging from seeming objectivity to both liberal and conservative bias.

The results of the analysis of bias on BBC raise the question of how useful **BBC** is **as the point of comparison** in this context. Choosing an outside entity as the point of

comparison does have its advantages. For instance, the claim that such a news source is less invested in political matters of the U.S. is justified. What remains, however, is that, even as an outsider, political views are present in its reporting - perhaps simply manifested differently - and, for that reason, making comparisons was difficult at times. A biased news source may have been more practical. In other words, if a news source publicly positions itself left or right on the continuum, its position would be clear and thus more useful for comparison. For this purpose, news websites such as *AlterNet* and *Daily Kos* on the left and the *National Review Online* and *WorldNetDaily* on the right would have been excellent choices in terms of political stance. It must be noted, however, that many of these fringe news websites follow a very different style of reporting from mainstream news. For example, *AlterNet*'s articles typically follow a narrative style of writing rather than the inverted pyramid model, which would have made certain aspects of comparison more difficult than when comparing to BBC.

Despite the issues that emerged from using BBC as the third news source, it still remains that a third website was needed. One of the aspects of CDA studies that has received much criticism is that many studies focus on one news source or, worse yet, on one single article. As discussed in the theory section, one of the main premises underlying CDA research is the extensive knowledge of the discourse type. Therefore, studies that utilize a very limited data set or do not delve very deep into similar texts are bound to invite criticism. This may very well be the underlying reason for much of the critique against Fairclough's work, as he has tended to provide educational analyses only of single texts instead of demonstrating CDA as a method through the comparison of several texts. In contrast, Tapia, Kvasny, and Ortiz (2011) as well as Barkho (2008) compare three sources and Teo (2000) compares two. What makes the use of three news websites so important in this thesis, then, is the fact that they create a miniature model of the relevant discourse practice via triangulation of data, making it possible to analyze the articles for bias more reliably.

Secondly, another purpose of this thesis was to analyze how and in what contexts the ideologies would manifest themselves and what patterns emerge. The contexts of

hidden agendas varied considerably, as the results demonstrate. As regards the patterns of *how* they were uncovered, a few things must be said about **the usefulness of the methodologies**. In CDA, often the data guides the analysis, and while it is always best to approach any topic with a clear set of potential tools, much like was done in this thesis, not every tool will be equally useful at all times. One of the most productive tools in this thesis was the triangulation of different data: in many cases the way bias was discovered would have been impossible - or very difficult - to notice if only one article or website was under investigation. For example, the lack of Obama related headlines in the Fox News data may not have been noticed had the headlines not been compared to those of BBC and CNN. Another notable example is the proportion of taxes in the key terms in the *Super-committee* articles. Without other articles to which to compare, CNN's focus on taxes may have been overlooked. These types of examples are numerous both in the headlines as well as the full articles. They show the importance of comparative analysis in CDA because of the way in which it helps identify patterns of missing or highlighted information.

Thematic structure analysis, the main analytic method that provided the starting point for most of the other methods, also proved to be quite efficient. In the analysis of both the headlines and the articles, thematic structure analysis revealed patterns in the entities that occupied Theme position, from which the analysis could move to examining those groups further. A clear example of this is the division of the headlines about Cain into those with Cain in Theme position and those with someone else in Theme position, which provided analyzable categories. In connection with the full articles, thematic structure analysis was irreplaceable, for example, in determining whether Democrats or Republicans occupied the Given more often in the *Super-committee* articles. At times, Theme analysis provided misleading information, however, and such instances must be noted. For example, in the *California Dream Act* articles, Theme analysis of the CNN article found very few supporters of the new law in Theme position, indicating a potentially conservative view. A strong referential identity chain analysis, however, discredited this initial Theme analysis, as will be discussed next.

In addition to the comparative style of analysis and the focus on thematic structures, referential identity chain analysis proved to be important. One of the most illustrative examples of referential chain analysis comes from the *California Dream Act* articles. Analyzing the way in which illegal immigrant students were identified in the articles revealed (e.g. through CNN's use of *undocumented immigrants* and proper names) that CNN's stance is very liberal. Similarly, by noting each instance of key terms such as *taxes* and *spending cuts* in the *Super-committee* articles, it was determined that CNN highlights taxes and Fox News spending cuts - preferences which correspond to the liberal-conservative difference. In the *Morning-after pill* articles, furthermore, a referential identity chain analysis of the potential users of the drug also revealed bias in accordance with the hypothesis: Fox News had the most proportion of references to young girls, whereas CNN avoided implying young girls would use emergency contraception. These results confirm that a referential identity chain analysis of certain key terms or persons in texts is very revealing of underlying ideologies.

The small amount of lexical analysis that did not concern the referential chains proved an inconsistent indication of bias. For example, in terms of the headlines about Cain, one of the few issues of lexis arose in the form of choice of register (i.e. the use of *tell on him* in one CNN headline) and, while indicating liberal bias like the rest of the analysis, its contribution was small. Investigating individual words also produced opposite results to the rest of the analysis, such as in the case of the headlines about illegal immigrants. The thematic structure analysis of the CNN headlines showed focus on authorities and other such entities in Theme position, implying a conservative slant, whereas some words, such as the verb *denies* in *Judge denies motion to block Alabama immigration law*, were taken to imply the opposite (in this case, a liberal slant due to *denial* of the motion as opposed to *upholding* it). Furthermore, while examining the full articles, lexical analysis revealed only relatively unimportant points. In the *California Dream Act* articles, for example, the collocations *new law* and *contentious law* appeared only three times total - the former once in both the BBC and CNN articles and the latter once in the Fox News article. Therefore, aside from the highly productive referential chain analyses which proved

irreplaceable, the additional support from the analysis of individual words was typically very small and could have been overlooked.

The structure of articles in terms of prioritization of information by the journalist also proved less useful for one set of articles than for the other two, and, as such, may not be suitable for analysis of all kinds of topics. The *Super-committee* articles mainly reported about the process of finding a solution for the deficit crisis with the focus on events instead of facts. In comparison, the *California Dream Act* articles provided multiple facts, the placement of which was telling of bias. For example, the small effect of the new law on the entire grant fund was prioritized by CNN but placed at the very end of the Fox News article - which corresponds with the hypothesis.

Another analytic method that must be noted is transitivity analysis. As a tool for strengthening specific existing analyses through analyzing journalist-expressed participant responsibility in processes, transitivity was very useful. For example, the entity highlighted as the Actor in a material process was at times very telling of bias (e.g. *US Occupy protesters clash with police at Oakland port* highlights the protesters as the party responsible for the clash with the police). It must be noted, however, that as transitivity was not systematically used throughout, but simply employed at times to strengthen the existing analysis, no comments can be made regarding the suitability of transitivity analysis in other contexts.

It was also the purpose of this thesis to examine how CDA and SFG could be used in this type of research and how successful their application would be. As the discussion above has shown, both thematic structure and transitivity analysis were highly useful and provided not only paths to further investigation (e.g. through creating categories and through exposing highlighted entities) but at times they also provided tangible results without much need for further analysis. Despite the lack of detailed descriptions about constructions often seen in headlines (e.g. the use of ellipsis and colons) by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) and Thompson (2004), who at times provides alternative or more in-depth descriptions than Halliday and Matthiessen (as mentioned, for example, in section 8.2.1 in relation to existential

there), Theme-Rheme analysis was demonstrated to be a viable primary method of analyzing texts for bias. In combination with the comparative analysis method employed, many criticisms directed at CDA research can be remedied, as has been discussed. Every study has both strengths and weaknesses, however, and having now outlined some of the ways in which the chosen analytic methods were a successful choice for this type of research, weaknesses must also be reviewed.

Some **limitations** of the methods used in this thesis have already been discussed and resolved. For example, the partial employment of Fairclough's model of CDA has been justified through the use of various methods, such as triangulation of data and explicit description of the analysis process, and, therefore, the issue will not be further discussed here. Other limitations, however, remain to be noted. This thesis considered only hard news items. This may be somewhat problematic because much of the tone of news websites is set by their soft news content. For example, Fox News is said to employ more conservative talk show hosts than CNN, and such tendencies speak volumes of political views. Furthermore, this thesis was not designed to consider any non-linguistic aspects of news reporting, such as layout and pictures, which can also be revealing. Despite these limitations, the results of the analysis do provide a supported indication of bias that validates the hypothesis and, therefore, considering also non-linguistic and soft news items may simply reinforce the result.

Another limitation of this study comes in the form of data collection methods. As it was not possible to continuously monitor the output of the three websites, it may be that not all relevant articles were collected - possibly affecting the outcome of both the headline analysis and full article analysis. For example, it may have affected the coherence of the sets of articles: if not all articles were collected, then there remains the possibility that some sets of articles could have been a better match (e.g. in length or style) than the ones selected for the qualitative analysis. This limitation, much like the partial employment of Fairclough's CDA, was unavoidable in the confines of the limited resources available. In any larger scale studies, the data collection methods would be more all-encompassing and, thus, may alter the results somewhat. I

maintain, however, that the methods employed in this thesis are sufficient to result in a supported analysis, and, therefore, the results remain notable.

10 Conclusion

The main findings of this study indicate that CNN veers left and Fox News to the right on the political continuum. This result was concluded after meticulous and detailed analysis of various aspects of the data through the use of multiple methods, and, therefore, the personal pro-liberal worldview of the author is not at issue. Some of the strongest findings, such as the way in which CNN referred to illegal immigrant students and the lack of headlines about Obama in the Fox News data, support the hypothesis and provide well-founded evidence that CDA can be employed without interference from personal expectations. Based on this thesis, it seems that triangulation of data and referential identity chains are some of the more reliable and systematically useful methods of analysis for this type of study. Additionally, thematic structure analysis was highly revealing of bias, which was a positive discovery in the light of the fact that transitivity analysis is typically employed in this type of research. Some findings, however, indicated no bias or bias opposite to the hypothesis. These results may simply indicate hybridity of voices in the data, which is to be expected to a degree, but the results may also suggest that not all analytic methods are equally suitable to uncovering bias.

Based on this thesis, thematic structure analysis should be considered as a viable primary, or at least secondary, method in future research, as its value as a flexible and productive analytic tool has been demonstrated here. Comparison of multiple sets of data has also once again been proven highly important and should be considered more a rule than an exception in any future endeavor. What may be of interest in terms of future studies is the thought of a meta-study. One could be conducted to determine which methods of analysis are systematically the best at uncovering hidden ideologies and in what contexts and types of texts. In terms of context, future studies should aim to analyze a wider set of data, including not only hard news articles but also soft news, layout, and graphics. While hard news items carry perhaps

the most weight, soft news items, for example, have the ability to reveal a great deal about the underlying political stance of any news agency. After all, soft news is used to attract readers more than hard news is. Therefore, soft news may be more geared towards the specific types of audiences to which the news agency wishes to appear appealing.

The analysis revealed hidden agendas in the online reporting of BBC, CNN, and Fox News, and, since they could be uncovered in the reporting of three of the most popular news websites, it is likely that most other sources of news also exhibit bias. Thus, the premise of CDA that all language use embodies hidden ideologies has once again received more data to support it. Increasing knowledge of the ever-present hidden ideologies is essential in the quest for transparency in the power structures of our society, for it is transparency and access to information that allow for democracy to prevail. Many still question the validity of CDA and even the existence of hidden ideologies in the way language is structured and used. Therefore, it is crucial that work in the CDA vein continues to develop the methods used and continues to expose bias in language use.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Table detailing aspects of US liberals and conservatives.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="6">C R I M E</td><td rowspan="2">Drugs</td><td>C: Stricter laws/penalties are required to combat the threat to moral order and public expenses.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Treatment and selective decriminalization needed to end human suffering, minorities disadvantaged.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Street crimes (i.e. violent personal crime and property crime)</td><td>C: Better public safety requires stricter laws, no gun control and incarceration (mostly of minorities).</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Public safety improves through employment, racial/economic equality and gun control.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Public order crimes (e.g. gambling, prostitution)</td><td>C: Better law enforcement to sustain moral order.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Decriminalization of these victimless crimes.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">E N V I R O N M E N T</td><td rowspan="2">Depleting natural resources</td><td>C: Rising costs and foreign dependence must end via excavation, nuclear power, coal and new technology.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Government regulation and conservation needed to save environment and biodiversity.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Pollution</td><td>C: (Mostly unavoidable) public health and slight environmental problems are responsibility of individual companies and citizens.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Regulation, conservation and business responsibility are needed to combat industrial causes of public health and environmental problems.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Environmentalism / Environmental Movement</td><td>C: Exaggerated environmental fears based on faulty science cost jobs and deter economic growth.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Government implemented regulation is needed to improve public health and environment.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">G E N D E R</td><td rowspan="2">Public policies (e.g. abortion rights, sex discrimination laws)</td><td>C: Government needs to protect traditional values and the unborn's right to life.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Current policies supported.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Media representation of women</td><td>C: Traditional gender role representations help end demeaning images created for commercial interests.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Full-range representations of occupational, professional and social roles help [rest as in above].</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Feminism / Feminist Movement</td><td>C: Decline of traditional values cause attempts at inappropriate equality that incurs costs for women.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Current policies supported.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">P O V E R T Y</td><td rowspan="2">(no subcategories)</td><td>C: A genuine free-market economy and replacing welfare with work programs would solve crime, drug, gang and other poverty related problems.</td></tr>
<tr><td>L: Basic human needs via redistribution of wealth and community improvement and welfare programs. Blame falls on corporations, markets.</td></tr>
</table>

Table 11. Categorization of issues dividing liberal (L) and conservative (C) opinion (source: Covert and Wasburn 2007: 89-94)

Appendix 2. Example articles: *California Dream Act* set

[BBC] Jerry Brown signs 'California Dream Act' into law

The governor of California, Jerry Brown, has signed into law legislation allowing illegal immigrants to receive state aid to attend college.

Supporters of the California Dream Act, as it is called, say it will benefit the state economically.

However, critics argue that it condones entry into the US without proper documentation.

About 2,500 students are expected to qualify for grants under the new legislation.

Governor Brown, a Democrat, said the law would benefit the state by giving top students a chance to improve their lives and, he said, "the lives of all of us".

But, in a state with a huge immigrant population, critics say the law encourages the illegal immigration by granting access to state resources previously reserved for legal residents.

Opponents of the law add that it should not have been passed without major overhaul of America's immigration rules.

California's last governor, the Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger, refused to sign the legislation.

[CNN] Undocumented immigrant students will be eligible for California aid

Los Angeles (CNN) -- Undocumented immigrant students in California will be able to receive state-funded financial aid in 2013 to attend college, under a new law signed Saturday by Gov. Jerry Brown.

The law allows top students who are on a path to citizenship to apply and receive the state aid, the governor said.

About 2,500 students are projected to receive Cal Grants totaling $14.5 million, according to the California Department of Finance. That averages out to $5,800 per student.

The funding amounts to 1% of the overall $1.4 billion Cal Grant program, officials said.

The new law, AB 131, is one of two pieces of legislation known as the California Dream Act and will become effective January 1, 2013, officials said.

"Going to college is a dream that promises intellectual excitement and creative thinking," Brown said in a statement from Sacramento. "The Dream Act benefits us all by giving top students a chance to improve their lives and the lives of all of us."

Currently, illegal immigrant students in California must pay resident tuition rates if they graduated from a state high school and are actively seeking to legalize their immigration status, officials said.

The other half of the California Dream Act was signed into law by Brown in July and allows undocumented immigrant students to receive privately funded scholarships administered at public universities and community colleges.

That law, called AB 130, was needed because the University of California and California State University systems avoided giving the private scholarships to their undocumented students, citing vagueness in laws, said the legislative aide to California Dream Act's author, state Assemblyman Gilbert Cedillo (D-Los Angeles).

Cedillo called Saturday's signing "historic" and path-breaking for the United States -- coming at a time when many states such as Alabama and Arizona are passing aggressive laws targeting undocumented immigrants. Some of those laws are being challenged in court.

"The signing of now both parts of the California Dream Act will send a message across the country that California is prepared to lead the country with a positive and productive vision for how we approach challenging issues related to immigration," Cedillo said in a statement.

"Today, Ana and Maria Gomez, Jaime Kim, David Cho, Pedro Ramirez -- and thousands of other students who are some of the best and brightest in California -- have been told by our governor and legislative leaders that you are welcome here, that you have something to contribute, that you can be proud of what you have accomplished and that your talents and ambition will not go to waste," Cedillo said.

Under AB 131, undocumented immigrant students will be eligible for state Board of Governors fee waivers, student aid programs administered by a college or university, and the state aid Cal Grants program for state universities, community colleges, and qualifying independent and career colleges or technical schools in California, according to Cedillo.

The California Dream Act differs from a proposed federal bill called the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors -- or DREAM -- Act, which would create a path to citizenship for immigrants who entered the United States illegally as children under the age of 16 and have lived in the United States for at least five years, obtained a high school or General Education Development diploma, and demonstrated "good moral character," according to a White House fact sheet.

[Fox News] Governor Brown Signs Second Half of California Dream Act

SACRAMENTO – Illegal immigrants can now apply for state-funded scholarships and aid at state universities after Gov. Jerry Brown announced Saturday that he has signed the second half of a legislative package focused on such students.

AB131 by Assemblyman Gil Cedillo, D-Los Angeles, is the second half of the California Dream Act. Brown signed the first half of the package in July, which approved private scholarships and loans for students who are illegal immigrants.

Under current law, illegal immigrant students who have graduated from a California high school and can prove they're on the path to legalize their immigration status can pay resident tuition rates. The bill would allow these students to apply for state aid.

The contentious second half of the package requires that immigrant students meet the same requirements as all other students applying for financial aid at state universities but specifies that they only qualify for financial aid after all the other legal residents have applied.

"The signing of now both parts of the California Dream Act will send a message across the country that California is prepared to lead the country with a positive and productive vision for how we approach challenging issues related to immigration," Cedillo said.

The bills are different from the federal Dream Act, which includes a path to citizenship for the children of illegal immigrants.

Brown says the bill expands educational opportunities for all qualified students.

"Going to college is a dream that promises intellectual excitement and creative thinking," Brown said. "The Dream Act benefits us all by giving top students a chance to improve their lives and the lives of all of us."

Critics of the bills say it undermines immigration laws and encourages illegal immigration by granting access to state resources reserved for legal residents. Many Republican lawmakers say legal students have had their grants cut in light of recent budget cuts to higher education.

Assemblyman Tim Donnelly, R-Hesperia, said the bill's passage will the biggest mistake the Democratic Party makes.

"The polling indicates that 80 to 90 percent of Californians are against this, and it crosses party lines," Donnelly said. He said he hopes to get a ballot initiative overturning the law started as soon as the bill is officially included in state statutes.

"It is absolutely, fundamentally wrong and unfair and it is an insult to people who have worked and played by the rules, including those who have come to this country legally," he said.

Ginny Rapini, coordinator for the NorCal Tea Party Patriots, said there should be consequences for illegal immigrants and giving them an education funded by California taxpayers isn't fair to the legal residents who can't afford to pay for their own tuition.

"What part of illegal do we not get? When people come here illegally they need to come here with the same rules and regulations that other people came here with," Rapini said.

Supporters argue that children whose were brought to the U.S. illegally by their parents shouldn't be punished.

The state Department of Finance estimates that 1 percent of all Cal Grant funds, the state student financial aid program, will be affected by the legislative package when it goes into effect in January 2013. The department says that 2,500 students would qualify for aid under the bill and estimates the costs to equal $14.5 million of a $1.4 billion program.

Appendix 3. Finnish summary - suomenkielinen tiivistelmä

1 Johdanto

Internetin käyttö ja sisältö ovat paisuneet valtaviin mittoihin viimeisten kahden vuosikymmenen sisällä. Myös uutiset ovat valloittaneet internetin. Tarjonnan lisääntyessä myös kaupalliset paineet kasvavat ja uutisointi on muuttunut viihteellisemmäksi kuin ennen. Hyvin usein uutisorganisaatioiden kaupallinen puoli unohtuu. Kriittisen diskurssianalyysin näkökulmasta yksi seuraus uutisten kaupallistumisesta on se, että uutisorganisaatiot toistavat kaupallisten tahojen ja muiden valtaapitävien maailmankatsomusta. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena onkin paljastaa uutistekstien poliittiset taka-ajatukset kriittisen diskurssianalyysin välineitä käyttäen. Analyysin keskipisteessä ovat Cable News Network (CNN) ja Fox News (joskus lyhyesti FOX). Aikaisempien tutkimusten perusteella voidaan arvioida, että CNN uutisoi lempeämmin Yhdysvaltojen demokraattipuolueesta ja Fox News republikaanipuolueesta. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on mukana kolmantena, hieman Yhdysvaltojen politiikasta ulkopuolisena tahona.

Tämän tiivistelmän tarkoituksena on esitellä tutkimukseni teoreettisen taustan ja analyysin pääkohdat sekä analyysin tärkeimmät tulokset. Uutismedia, kriittinen diskurssianalyysi ja Yhdysvaltojen politiikka ovat kolme tärkeää teoreettista aihealuetta tässä tutkimuksessa.

2 Uutismedia

Uutismediaa pidetään yleisesti jokseenkin objektiivisena, mikä saattaa johtua siitä, että mielipideartikkelit erotetaan uutisista (Fowler 1991: 208). Näin on myös internetissä. Myös informaatiorakenne on yleensä samankaltainen internetin ja painetun median uutisissa (ylösalaisin käännetty pyramidi; Bell 1991: 168-9, Dunn 2003), ja internetissä uutisten ympärillä on mainoksia (Cohen 2002: 544). Internet on myös muuttanut uutisia: uutisoinnin tahti on paljon nopeampaa ja uutisia tuotetaan paljon enemmän kuin ennen (Cohen 2002: 537). Määrän kasvaessa uutisten laatu on kärsinyt (Allan 2005: 93). Tavoitteena onkin tuottaa uutisia, jotka miellyttävät yleisöä - eli uutinen on tuote (Allan 2005: 9, Bell 1991: 38, Fowler 1991: 222, van

Dijk 1988a: 83). Koska uutiset ovat tuote, niiden tuotantoon vaikuttaa mainostajien ja korporaatioiden miellyttäminen (Fowler 1991: 121, myös Allan 2005: 93). Myös poliittiset tahot vaikuttavat uutisten tuotantoon (Fowler 1991: 222, myös Allan 2005: 93). Koska tällaiset kaupalliset ja poliittiset tahot vaikuttavat uutisten tuotantoon, ne vaikuttavat myös uutisten sisältöön.

Sosiaaliset rakenteet voivat myös vaikuttaa uutisiin, koska uutisarvot on rakennettu sosiaalisesti (Fowler 1991: 13, van Dijk 1988a: 2 ja 119). Esimerkkinä toimii seuraava vastakkainasettelu: paikallinen lehti uutisoi eri asioista kuin kansallinen lehti. Lisäksi itse kielenkäyttö ja -muoto ovat sosiaalisista rakenteista johtuvia (Fairclough 1989: 29-30, myös Fowler 1991: 46). Yksi tapa lähestyä tätä ajatusta on ymmärtää, että lukija olettaa tiettyjä asioita lukemastaan uutisartikkelista (esimerkiksi ylösalaisin käännetyn pyramidimuodon), joita journalisti sitten noudattaa. Kun lukijat lukevat tietyssä muodossa olevia uutisia, vahvistuu käsitys siitä, minkälaisia uutiset ovat. Samanlainen vastavuoroisuus toteutuu myös aatteiden ja taka-ajatusten kanssa: uutisorganisaatioilla on usein lista sanoista ja tavoista, joita voi käyttää esimerkiksi kiistanalaisesta aiheesta kirjoittaessa (Barkho 2008: 135), ja useat henkilöt muokkaavat artikkeleita ennen julkaisua (Bell 1991: 42-43). Siksipä artikkelin rooli sosiaalisen eriarvoisuuden rakenteiden ylläpitäjänä ei ole pelkästään artikkelin kirjoittajasta kiinni, vaan koko uutisorganisaatiosta - kaupalliset ja poliittiset tahot mukaan lukien.

Journalismi saattaa vaikuttaa korruptoituneelta, mutta asiaan liittyvät myös journalismin eettiset säännöt (Fico et al. 2008: 321), joiden mukaan journalismin tulee palvella yleistä etua (Watson ja Urofsky 2008: 27, myös Allan 2005: 55). Eettiset säännöt eivät kuitenkaan ole lakiin kirjattuja (Watson ja Urofsky 2008: 23, myös Berry 2009: 87), joten niiden noudattaminen on jokaisesta toimittajasta itsestään kiinni (Berry 2009: 97, myös Schotz 2010: 30). Uutiset eivät siis ole millään vakuudella totuudenmukaisia ja kaupalliset intressit voivat vaikuttaa niihin.

3 Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi

Kriittisen diskurssianalyysin juuret johtavat marksismiin (Hammersley 1997: 240, myös van Dijk 1993: 251) ja Michael Foucaultista lähtöisin oleviin vallan ja

ideologian käsitteisiin (Blommaert ja Bulcaen 2000: 451, myös Chilton 2005: 20 ja Fairclough 1989: 12). 1970-luvulla kehitetty kriittinen lingvistiikka johti myöhemmin kriittisen diskurssianalyysiin, jonka luonteenpiirteisiin kuuluu kriittinen diskurssin analysointi ja väite, että kielenkäytön kaikki osa-alueet ovat valinnanvaraisia - eli siis kaikki merkit ja muodot ovat tuottajansa valitsemia (Kress 1993: 173, myös Fowler 1991: 4), minkä takia kaikki kielenkäyttö myös sisältää vihjeitä tuottajansa mielipiteistä (Fowler 1991: 10). Nämä mielipiteet tai taka-ajatukset ovat muokkautuneet sosiaalisten rakenteiden kautta ja siksi ne suosivat vallanpitäjiä (Fairclough 1989: 22). Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi tähtääkin siihen, että nämä vallanpitäjien aatteet tehdään näkyviksi.

Yksi kriittisen diskurssianalyysin johtohahmoista on Norman Fairclough, jonka kolmivaiheista menetelmää käytetään tässäkin tutkielmassa. Hänen teoriansa perustuu siihen ideaan, että kokemukset vaikuttavat kielenkäyttöön ja kokemuksiin vaikuttaa valta (Fairclough 1989: 25). Toisin sanoen, tekstejä analysoitaessa on huomioitava "tekstien väliset suhteet, prosessit ja niiden sosiaaliset olosuhteet eli tilanneyhteys sekä institutionaaliset ja sosiaaliset rakenteet" (Fairclough 1989: 26, oma suomennos). Fairclough'n kolmivaiheiseen menetelmään kuuluu itse tekstin sekä siihen liittyvien diskurssi- ja sosiaalisten käytäntöjen analysointi ja niiden keskinäiset suhteet (Fairclough 1995: 74). Tekstin analysointi on keskeinen osa tätä tutkielmaa, koska aatteet ja taka-ajatukset jättävät jälkensä juuri teksteihin (Fairclough 1995: 97).

Kriittiseen diskurssianalyysiin liittyy läheisesti luonnollistumisen käsite. Sen mukaan erinäiset aatteet, jotka ovat usein peräisin vallanpitäjiltä (Fairclough 1989: 33), voidaan luonnollistaa eli tehdä luonnollisiksi esimerkiksi niitä toistamalla (Fowler 1991: 121 ja Fairclough 1989: 37). Esimerkkinä tästä toimii ranskan *tu-vous* ero (sinuttelu- ja teitittelymuoto sanasta *sinä*). Mitä dominantimpi jokin näkemys on yhteiskunnassa, sitä vahvempana se esiintyy ihmisten mielessä (Fairclough 1985: 744 ja 1989: 92). Luonnollisiksi muuttuneet näkemykset voidaan kuitenkin paljastaa ihmisille itselleen epäedullisiksi, jolloin niiden valta häviää (Fairclough 1989: 85). Siksi kriittisen diskurssianalyysin käyttö onkin tärkeää. Uutisoinnin analyysiin tämä liittyy siksi, että uutiset toistavat kaupallisten ja poliittisten tahojen näkemyksiä ja tekevät niin auktoriteetin asemassa. Toisin sanoen, uutisilla on iso rooli sosiaalisen

kontrollin ylläpitämisessä (Fairclough 1989: 37), koska uutisissa käytetään lähteinä vallanpitäjiä (poliitikkoja, johtajia; Fairclough 1989: 50, myös Covert ja Wasburn 2007: 68-69, Fowler 1991: 22 ja van Dijk 1988a: 87) ja koska uutisointi tapahtuu vallanpitäjien perspektiivistä (Fairclough 1989: 51, myös Fowler 1991: 23). Nämä vallanpitäjien aatteet siis luonnollistuvat uutisyleisön mielessä ja niihin perustuvia käytäntöjä harjoitetaan luonnollisina osina jokapäiväistä elämää.

Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi ei ole säästynyt kritiikiltä. Esimerkiksi sanan *diskurssi* (*discourse*) epämääräisyyttä on kritisoitu (Widdowson 1995: 159). Toinen kritiikki kohdistuu analyytikkojen tyyliin edetä teoriasta suoraan analyysin tuloksiin ja siihen, että analyytikkojen omien mielipiteiden on sanottu vaikuttavan analyysin tuloksiin (Widdowson 1995: 164-165, 1998: 143 ja 2004: 142). Tämä ongelma on teoriassa ratkaistu siten, että kolmivaiheiseen menetelmään kuuluu tekstien todellisten lukijoiden mielipiteiden kartoittaminen. Kuitenkin niin harvemmin tehdään (Chilton 2005: 22, myös Widdowson 1998: 142). Fairclough'n oma kritiikki hänen kolmivaiheista menetelmäänsä vastaan keskittyy tarvittavan taustatiedon määrään (Fairclough 1998: 161, myös Wodak 2001: 4-5). Tämän tutkielman ratkaisut näihin kritiikkeihin käydään läpi myöhemmin.

4 Yhdysvaltojen politiikka

Jotta poliittisia taka-ajatuksia voi analysoida, pitää olennaiset poliittiset käsitteet ja asenteet ensin ymmärtää. Yhdysvalloissa demokraatteja pidetään yleisesti liberaaleina ja republikaaneja konservatiivisina (Grigsby 2009: 210, myös Arnold 2009: 3). Tämä näkyy niissä yhteneväisyyksissä, jotka voidaan todeta liberalististen ja konservatiivisten aatteiden ja yllä mainittujen puolueiden aatteiden välillä. Koska on mahdotonta läpikäydä kaikkia mahdollisia aiheita, joiden kohdalla näiden puolueiden mielipiteet ovat erilaiset, tiivistetään tässä vain muutama pääajatus.

Demokraattipuolueelle tärkeää on valtion vastuu vähempiosaisista (Grigsby 2009: 107), mikä näkyy esimerkiksi heidän ajamastaan terveydenhuoltouudistuksesta ja naisten tasa-arvosta (Democrats 2008: i). Myös liberalismi tähtää tasa-arvoon yhteiskunnan parempi- ja vähempiosaisten välillä (Grigsby 2009: 105, myös Arnold 2009: 6). Tämä näkyy esimerkiksi demokraattien ajamasta progressiivisesta verosta

(Democrats 2008: i). Konservatismiin taas liittyy ajatus vapauden tasa-arvosta: kaikille on taattava vapaus omaan päätösvaltaan (Grigsby 2009: 107). Siispä konservatiivit ja republikaanit haluavat lähtökohtaisesti pienen ja pienivaltaisen valtion, jolla ei ole monia oikeuksia säätää osavaltioiden ja ihmisten elämää (ibid.). Nämä aatteet näkyvät siinä, miten republikaanit kannattavat esimerkiksi yksilöiden kontrollia omasta terveydenhuollostaan (GOP 2008: 36) ja sosiaaliturvasäästöistään (ibid.: 19). Konservatismin toinen suuntaus näkee valtion tarpeelliseksi kontrolloimaan tiettyjä moraaliin ja uskontoon liittyviä aspekteja (Gross, Medvetz ja Russell 2011: 331 ja Grigsby 2009: 110-111), kuten aborttioikeutta ja käsitystä perheestä (GOP 2008: 52). Demokraattipuolueen ja liberalismin sekä republikaanipuolueen ja konservatismin väliset yhteneväisyydet ovat perustavanlaatuisia ja niiden ymmärtäminen on tärkeää tämän tutkimuksen puitteissa.

5 Aikaisemmat tutkimukset

Aikaisemmat tutkimukset, joissa on tutkittu median puolueellisuutta, ovat osoittaneet, että lisätutkimuksia tarvitaan. Vaikka monissa tutkimuksissa on todettu, että CNN uutisoi positiivisemmin demokraattipuolueesta ja Fox News republikaanipuolueesta (esim. Groeling 2008, Groseclose ja Milyo 2005, ja Morris 2007 sekä Mixon, Sen ja Stephenson 2004 ja Morris 2005), joissakin tutkimuksissa on todettu päinvastaisesti (Fico et al. 2008: 334). Joissakin tutkimuksissa on jopa todettu, ettei media ole puolueellinen tai että puolueellisuudesta on vain vähäisiä merkkejä (D'Alessio ja Allen 2000: 149, myös Domke et al. 1997: 732). Tulokset myös vaihtelevat aiheesta riippuen (Iyengar 1991: 99-101). Siksi tällä tutkimuksella halutaankin tuoda esille lisää tietoa tästä aiheesta.

Kriittiseen diskurssianalyysiin pohjautuvat tutkimukset yleensä sisältävät yksityiskohtaisia kuvauksia olennaisista yhteiskunnallisista seikoista, leksikaalista ja laajempiin aiheisiin liittyvää analyysia sekä poliittisen aiheen (Barkho 2008, Bhatia 2006, Joye 2010 ja Tapia, Kvasny ja Ortiz 2011). Nämä on sisällytetty myös tähän tutkielmaan. Usein kriittistä diskurssianalyysiä käytetään jonkin toisen metodin rinnalla (Joye 2010 ja Barkho 2008), ja näin on myös tässä tutkielmassa. Systeemis-funktionaaliseen teoriaan kuuluva Teema-Reema analyysi on tutkielmassa käytettävä päämetodi, jota vielä vahvistetaan transitiivisuusanalyysin avulla. Yhdessä

aikaisemmassa tutkimuksessa analysoidaan uutisoinnissa esiintyvää rasismia ja käytetään hyväksi juuri yllä mainittuja analyysikeinoja. Siksi Teo (2000) on tähän tutkielmaan liittyen tärkeä aikaisempi tutkimus, koska siinä esimerkiksi todetaan, että poliisin asemaa ja statusta voidaan korostaa asettamalla poliisi ensimmäiseksi lauseenjäseneksi useammin kuin muut artikkeleissa esiintyvät hahmot (ibid: 31).

6 Materiaali

Tässä tutkielmassa analysoidaan kolmea suosittua uutissivustoa, BBC, CNN ja Fox News, jotka valittiin hakemalla Google-hakukoneesta uutisia sanalla *news*. Näiden sivustojen suosio on tärkeää luonnollistumisteorian kannalta, koska voidaan olettaa, että näiden uutisorganisaatioiden välittämät aatteet ovat tärkeitä mielipiteiden luojia. Kriittiselle diskurssianalyysille tuttuun tapaan näiden uutissivustojen toimintatavat ja historia ovat tärkeitä, joten yhteenveto niistä on tarpeen.

BBC on YLE:n tapainen valtion tukema organisaatio, joka ei näytä kanavillaan mainoksia (BBC 2012e) vaan saa rahoitusta kansalaisilta (BBC 2012a). Organisaation uutisointi on organisaation itsensä mukaan "riippumatonta, puolueetonta ja rehellistä" (BBC 2012c, oma suomennos). BBC:n internetsivusto on myös riippumaton (BBC 2012a), mutta Iso-Britannian ulkopuolella sillä on lupa mainontaan (Media Newsline 2009), jonka voidaan väittää vaikuttavan sen uutisointiin. BBC:n on väitetty olevan puolueellinen sekä konservatiiviseen että liberaaliin suuntaan (Aitken 2007, Pilger 2007 ja Wheeler 2009). Näistä väitöksistä huolimatta BBC on tärkeä lisäys tähän tutkielmaan, koska se edustaa Yhdysvaltojen politiikkaan nähden ulkopuolista osapuolta, jonka uutisointia voidaan analysoida varsinkin vertailevassa mielessä.

CNN lanseerattiin vuonna 1980 ensimmäisenä televisiokanavana, joka näyttää uutisia vuorokauden ympäri (History.com 2011). Turner Broadcasting System omistaa CNN-kanavan lisäksi monta muuta televisiokanavaa (esimerkiksi TNT ja Cartoon Network; Time Warner 2011). Suurin osa kanavan liikevaihdosta koostuu tilausmaksuista ja mainoksista (Weprin 2010), jonka vuoksi on oletettava mainostajien vaikuttavan myös uutisten sisältöön, kuten aikaisemmin on mainittu. Tästä huolimatta Time Warner vakuuttaa, että sen tytäryhtiö CNN "toimittaa

kaikenkattavimpia, puolueettomimpia uutisia ja analyyseja" (Time Warner 2011). CNN.com on yksi suosituimmista uutissivustoista (The Humanitarian Foss Project at Trinity 2011), ja se uutisoi maailmanlaajuisista asioista. Tästä syystä sen rakenne on samanlainen kuin BBC-sivuston: molemmilla on yksi sivu, jonne kaikki Yhdysvaltoihin liittyvät uutiset kootaan. CNN-kanavalla on liberaalin uutisorganisaation maine (Bresnahan ja Preston 2001), jota vahvistaa omistaja Robert Turner ympäristönsuojelijan maineellaan (History.com 2011).

Fox News Channel aloitti toimintansa 1990-luvun puolivälissä (News Corporation 2011) ja sen ohjelmisto sisältää sekä uutisia että keskusteluohjelmia (Fox News Channel 2011). Robert Murdochin mediaimperiumi koostuu useista lehdistä ja televisiokanavista kuten the Sun ja the Times (Walker 2010a). Iskulauseensa mukaan, Fox News "on omistautunut toimittamaan oikeudenmukaisia ja tasapainoisia uutisia" (Fox News Channel 2011, oma suomennos iskulauseesta *Fair and Balanced*), ja tämä iskulause toistuu myös kanavan uutissivustolla. Organisaation rahoitus on kuitenkin peräisin mainos- ja kanavatilaustuloista (News Corporation 2010b), jolloin on oletettava ulkopuolisten voivan vaikuttaa uutisten sisältöön. Fox News onkin saanut osakseen paljon kritiikkiä puolueellisuudestaan, jonka sanotaan olevan edullista republikaaneille (Harris 2006 ja Schoetz 2010). Viime vuosina muutama entinen työntekijä on myös paljastanut organisaation sisäisiä sähköposteja (Dimiero 2010) ja muita liikesalaisuuksia (Boehlert 2011), joista kriitikot ovat saaneet lisämateriaalia väitöksiinsä. News Corporation esimerkiksi lahjoitti miljoona dollaria republikaanien yhdistykselle (Kurtz 2010 ja Kennedy 2010).

Analysoitava materiaali kerättiin näiltä internetsivustoilta kymmenen viikon ajan alkaen lokakuun ensimmäisenä päivänä vuonna 2011. Uutiset, jotka koskivat poliittista eripuraisuutta aiheuttavia aiheita, kerättiin jokaiselta sivustolta kerran päivässä. Yhteensä hyväksyttiin 404 uutista, joista 116 oli BBC-sivustolta, 155 CNN-sivustolta ja 133 Fox News -sivustolta. Lisäksi joitakin artikkeleita haettiin arkistoista, jotta voitiin koota samaa aihetta käsittelevä artikkeli jokaiselta sivustolta. Tällaisia kolmen artikkelin joukkoja muodostui 46 kappaletta. Tutkielmassa päädyttiin tutkimaan vain niin sanottuja *hard news*, joihin eivät kuulu esimerkiksi mielipideartikkelit (Bell 1991: 14 ja Media Awareness Network 2012). Päätös perustui siihen, että esimerkiksi mielipideartikkeleiden kielenkäyttö on hyvin

erilaista verrattuna siihen, miten poliittisista asioista uutisoidaan, ja koska tarkoituksena oli juurikin kielenkäytön tutkiminen, oli tarpeellista keskittyä aineistoon, jossa mahdolliset erot eivät johdu käsiteltävästä aiheesta vaan poliittisista taka-ajatuksista.

7 Metodit

Kuten mainittiin kriittisen diskurssianalyysin kohdalla, Fairclough'n kolmivaiheiseen menetelmään kuuluu todellisten lukijoiden mielipiteiden kartoittaminen. Niin ei kuitenkaan voitu tehdä tässä tutkielmassa. Sen sijaan esimerkiksi analyysin tarkkaa kuvausta hyödynnetään objektiivisuuden ylläpitämisessä. Analyysi perustuu kieliopilliselle analyysille ja materiaalin triangulaatiolle tai kolmiomittaukselle eli sille, että analysoidaan kolmea eri uutislähdettä. Kun analyysi ei ole tarpeeksi vahva, annetaan useita perusteltuja analyysivaihtoehtoja. Toinen Fairclough'n mallin kohta, jota ei voitu toteuttaa tässä tutkielmassa, on valtavan taustatiedon määrän tarve. Tässä kielenkäyttöä tutkivassa tutkielmassa ei ollut mahdollista analysoida sosiaalisia rakenteita Fairclough'n mallin vaatimalla tavalla, mutta esimerkiksi kolmen uutislähteen sisällyttäminen analyysiin auttaa osaltaan tämän heikkouden paikkaamisessa.

Kieliopilliset analyysivälineet saatiin M.A.K. Hallidayn systeemis-funktionaalisesta kieliopista, joka kriittisen diskurssianalyysin tavoin näkee kielen muotojen ja käytön peilaavan sosiaalisia rakenteita (Fowler 1991: 5). Hallidayn systeemis-funktionaalinen kielioppi koostuu kolmesta metafunktiosta: Tekstuaalinen metafunktio keskittyy viestin organisaatioon (Halliday ja Matthiessen 2004: 30), ja siihen liittyy esimerkiksi Teema-Reema analyysi. Interpersoonallinen metafunktio koostuu kielen piirteistä, joiden avulla kommunikoidaan muiden kanssa (ibid.). Ideationaalinen metafunktio on taas kyseessä, kun "puhutaan maailmasta" (Thompson 2004: 86, oma suomennos) - esimerkiksi tunnemaailmasta. Systeemis-funktionaalinen kielioppi on suosittu kriittisen diskurssianalyysin harjoittajien keskuudessa (Teo 2000: 24 ja Wodak 2001: 8), joten sen käyttö on perusteltua.

Teema-Reema rakenteen analyysissa tarkastellaan käytännössä lauseen rakennetta. Teema on lauseen ensimmäinen elementti ja Reema kaikki sen jälkeiset elementit

(Halliday ja Matthiessen 2004: 64-66). Teema voi olla tyypillinen eli ei lauserakenteellisesti erikoinen tai se voi olla epätavallinen (ibid.: 73). Jos Teema vaihtuu, myös lauseen viesti vaihtuu (Thompson 2004: 143). Tästä syystä Teema-Reema rakenteen analyysi voi paljastaa poliittisia taka-ajatuksia. Transitiivisuusanalyysiä käytetään myös hieman, mutta vain silloin tällöin tukemaan muilla tavoin saatuja päätelmiä. Transitiivisuusanalyysiä käytetään kuvaamaan tapahtumia luokittelemalla ne kuuteen eri prosessityyppiin (Halliday ja Matthiessen 2004: 170-171). Kaikki prosessityypit kuvailevat tapahtumia eri tavalla esimerkiksi osallistujien (*participants*) mukaan (ibid.). Transitiivisuusanalyysi voi paljastaa kirjoittajan eli journalistin näkemyksiä siitä, kuka on vastuussa prosessista.

Leksikaalinen analyysi on hyvin yleistä kriittisessä diskurssianalyysissä, koska se voi paljastaa yhteisön "sosiaalisesti jaettuja uskomuksia" (van Dijk 2001: 99, oma suomennos). Kollokaatiot ovat myös tärkeässä roolissa (esimerkiksi *illegal immigrants* ja *undocumented immigrants* eroavat toisistaan huomattavasti). Referenssiketjut liittyvät leksikaaliseen analyysiin siten, että niitä analysoitaessa seurataan samaa sanaa (tai henkilöä) ja sen eri muotoja koko tekstin läpi (Halliday ja Matthiessen 2004: 535, 554, 569-82). Tämäntapaista leksikaalista analyysia pidetään hyväksyttävämpänä myös tiettyjen kriitikkojen, kuten Widdowsonin (1998: 148), mukaan. Materiaalin triangulaation ansiosta myös artikkeleiden sisällön järjestystä voidaan analysoida. Koska uutiset etenevät rakenteeltaan tärkeistä asioista vähemmän tärkeisiin (Bell 1991: 168-9), voidaan olettaa, että analysoitavissa artikkeleissakin on tehty päätöksiä informaation tärkeydestä. Siispä tietojen esittämisjärjestys saattaa paljastaa poliittisia taka-ajatuksia.

8 Analyysi ja tulokset

Analyysin pohjustusta ja itse analyysia ei voida tiivistää tähän lyhennelmään, koska ne ovat niin yksityiskohtaisia. Sen sijaan tiivistelmässä kuvaillaan analysointiprosessia yleisellä tasolla ja joitakin tuloksia tarkemmin.

Tutkielmassa analysoitiin ensin kaikkien 404 artikkelin otsikot, jonka jälkeen analysoitiin kolme kolmen artikkelin joukkoa. Otsikko on tärkein uutisartikkelin osa, joten sen huomioiminen oli tärkeää. Otsikot analysoitiin Teema-Reema-

rakenteeltaan, jota varten Hallidayn Teeman analysoinnin kuvausta piti paikoin täydentää uutisartikkeleiden otsikoiden tavanomaisten piirteiden kuten ellipsisyyden vuoksi. Analyysia vahvistettiin transitiivisuusanalyysilla. Joitakin leksikaalisia ja triangulaatioon liittyviä aspekteja huomioitiin myös. Artikkelijoukkojen analysointi perustui myös Teeman analysointiin, jonka lisäksi tärkeässä roolissa ovat artikkeleiden vertailu (esimerkiksi sanaston ja informaatiorakenteen osalta) ja referenssiketjut.

Otsikoiden kvantitatiivinen analysointi osoitti, että otsikoiden rakenne on hyvin samankaltainen kaikilla kolmella uutissivustolla. Vertailussa otettiin huomioon esimerkiksi otsikoiden sanamäärä, Teemojen lukumäärä otsikkojen määrään verraten sekä Teemojen sanamäärä kokonaissanamäärään verraten. Kvalitatiivinen analyysi jakautui neljään osaan otsikon aiheen perusteella. Aiheita olivat Herman Cain, laittomat maahanmuuttajat, Barack Obama ja Occupy Wall Street -liike. Ensimmäisessä ryhmässä ilmeni, ettei Fox News uutisoinut republikaaniehdokkaasta (Cain) lainkaan, kun taas BBC ja CNN uutisoivat hänestä enemmänkin (12,9 ja 5 prosenttia kaikista otsikoista). Tämän pääteltiin osoittavan Cain-myönteisyyttä Fox News -sivuston osalta häneen liittyvän skandaalin takia. Myös se, että Cain esiintyi Teemassa 60 prosenttia ajasta BBC-sivustolla mutta vain 33,3 prosenttia ajasta CNN-sivustolla pääteltiin osoittavan Cain-vastaisuutta CNN-sivuston osalta.

Laittomien maahanmuuttajien kohdalla analysoitiin esimerkiksi Teemassa olevia henkilöitä siltä kannalta, kuinka moni on auktoriteetin asemassa ja kuinka moni on esimerkiksi laiton maahanmuuttaja. CNN näyttäytyi konservatiivisena, koska sen otsikoissa oli paljon auktoriteetteja. Toisaalta yksityiskohtaisempi analyysi paljasti merkkejä liberaalimyönteisyydestä. Fox News osoittautui liberaalimyönteiseksi sen otsikoissa esiintyvien henkilöiden osalta: perheet ja maahanmuuttajat olivat Teeman paikalla useasti (60 prosenttia kaikista laittomiin maahanmuuttajiin liittyvistä otsikoista). BBC-sivuston otsikot eivät näyttäneet puolueellisuuden merkkejä.

Obama-otsikot osoittivat sen, että uutisoinnin vähäisyys voi olla merkki puolueellisuudesta. Fox News uutisoi Obamasta neljä kertaa (3,4 prosenttia kaikista Fox News otsikoista), eikä kertaakaan kutsunut Obamaa hänen nimellään, vaan otsikoissa näkyi metaforia kuten *White House*. BBC ja CNN sitä vastoin uutisoivat

Obamasta enemmän kuin Fox News (16,4 ja 11,6 prosenttia). Uutisointi BBC- ja CNN-sivustoilla oli myöskin paljon positiivisempaa kuin Fox News -sivustolla, joka ei uutisoinut Obamasta missään positiivisessa asiayhteydessä. Tämä toistuva kaava analysoitiin osoittamaan Obama-vastaisuutta Fox News -sivuston osalta.

Occupy Wall Street (OWS) -otsikot olivat isoin ryhmä: BBC-sivustolla tällaisia otsikoita oli 22,4 prosenttia kaikista otsikoista, CNN-sivustolla niitä oli 34,7 prosenttia ja Fox News -sivustolla 59 prosenttia. Analyysissa huomioitiin ensin näiden mielenosoituksien ja mielenosoittajien sijainti otsikoissa. BBC-sivuston otsikoissa mielenosoitukset ja mielenosoittajat olivat Reemassa 23,1 prosenttia kaikista OWS-otsikoista, CNN-sivuston otsikoissa ne esiintyivät Reemassa 31 prosenttia ajasta ja Fox News -sivustolla ne olivat Reemassa 43,5 prosenttia ajasta. Tämä osoittaa, että Fox News käsittää OWS-liikkeen uutena eikä suinkaan päivänselvänä asiana, koska Teema-Reema rakenne liittyy kiinteästi uuden ja jo tiedetyn tiedon jäsentelyyn.

Yleisellä tasolla OWS-otsikoiden analysointi keskittyi triangulaatioon sekä leksikaalisiin ja transitiivisuuteen liittyviin aspekteihin, joita ei valitettavasti voida tiivistää tässä. Tärkein tulos liittyy triangulaatioon ja siihen, miten paljon sivustot uutisoivat mielenosoituksista positiivisesti ja negatiivisesti. Esimerkiksi Fox News uutisoi paljon mielenosoituksiin ja mielenosoittajiin liittyvästä väkivallasta. Lisäksi analyysissä paljastui, että Fox News uutisoi kolmesta uutissivustosta negatiivisimmin (29 prosenttia kaikista sivuston OWS otsikoista verraten 7,7 prosenttia BBC-sivuston otsikoista ja 4,8 prosenttia CNN-sivuston otsikoista). Tämän kaavan mukaisen uutisoinnin voidaan todeta luonnollistavan negatiivisen mielipiteen OWS-liikkeestä Fox News -sivuston lukijoiden keskuudessa.

Artikkelijoukkojen valinnassa kriteereinä käytettiin käsiteltävän aiheen tärkeyttä Yhdysvaltojen politiikkaan sekä sitä, miten paljon eripuraisuutta aihe aiheuttaa. Myös artikkeleiden pituus ja kirjoitustyyli otettiin huomioon artikkelijoukkojen valinnassa. Lopulta kolme joukkoa valittiin. Ensimmäinen joukko artikkeleita käsittelee California Dream Act -lakimuutosta, jonka johdosta laittomat maahanmuuttajat voivat hakea osavaltion tukea yliopisto-opiskelua varten. Asia on tärkeä, koska se käsittelee sekä laittomia maahanmuuttajia että (osa)valtion tukea

vähäosaisille. Demokraatti- ja republikaanimielipiteiden tulisi jakautua niin, että demokraatit tukevat lakimuutosta ja republikaanit ovat sitä vastaan. Yksi tärkeimmistä tuloksista liittyy referenssiketjuanalyysiin, jonka kautta voitiin todeta, että CNN kutsuu laittomia maahanmuuttajia positiivisemmin tavoin kuin BBC ja Fox News. CNN esimerkiksi kutsuu heitä dokumentoimattomiksi maahanmuuttajiksi (*undocumented immigrants*) sanan *laiton* sijaan. Lisäksi CNN ei uutisoi lainkaan lakimuutoksen mahdollisista haittavaikutuksia. Myös artikkeleiden rakenne paljastaa puolueellisuuksia: esimerkiksi Fox News sijoittaa artikkelinsa viimeiseen kappaleeseen sen tiedon, ettei lakiuudistus vaikuta suuresti laillisiin kansalaisiin, jotka hakevat kyseistä tukea.

Toinen joukko artikkeleita käsittelee sitä, miten valtion budjettialijäämän selvitystä varten koottu superkomitea (*super-committee*) on edistynyt prosessissa, jonka päämääränä on vähentää valtion velkaa. Tähän aiheeseen liittyvät kiinteästi verot sekä valtion tukiohjelmat kuten Medicare, joista demokraatit ja republikaanit ovat perinteisesti eri mieltä. Demokraatit lisäisivät verotusta progressiivisen verotusmallin mukaisesti, kun taas republikaanit leikkaisivat veroja eritoten rikkailta. Lisäksi demokraatit haluavat säilyttää ja vahvistaa valtion tukiohjelmia, kun taas republikaanit haluavat leikkauttaa tai jopa lakkauttaa ne. BBC mainitsee demokraattipuolueeseen kuuluvan henkilön Teemassa 14,3 prosenttia kaikista Teemoistaan, CNN-sivustolla sama luku on 16,2 prosenttia ja Fox News -sivustolla luku on nolla prosenttia. Toinen hypoteesin mukainen tulos on esimerkiksi se, miten monta kertaa verot ja valtion tukiohjelmien uudistukset mainitaan kullakin uutissivustolla. CNN mainitsee verot 33 kertaa (56,9 prosenttia kaikista avainsanoista), kun taas Fox News mainitsee verot vain 11 kertaa (34,4 prosenttia avainsanoista). Fox News myös mainitsee tukiohjelmissa säästämisen 15 kertaa (46,9 prosenttia avainsanoista), kun taas CNN mainitsee ne 17 kertaa (29,3 prosenttia avainsanoista). Molemmat mainitsevat siis sen valtion velan vähentämisstrategian, joka on kullekin uutissivustolle mieluinen.

Kolmas ja viimeinen artikkelijoukko koskee päätöstä pitää jälkiehkäisypilleri, Plan B One Step, vain reseptillä saatavana alaikäisille. Tämä päätös tehtiin vasten elintarvike- ja lääkeviraston (*Food and Drug Administration*) suositusta, jonka mukaan jälkiehkäisypillerit ovat turvallisia ja niitä osataan käyttää alaikäistenkin

keskuudessa. Yleisesti ottaen demokraattien voisi olettaa olevan tätä päätöstä vastaan ja republikaanien kannattavan sitä, mutta koska päätöksen teki Obaman hallituksen jäsen, voi olla, että demokraatit kritisoivat päätöstä vähemmän ja republikaanit puolestaan ylistävät sitä vähemmän. Plan B -lääke esiintyy Teemassa 18,8 prosenttia kaikista Teemoista BBC-sivuston artikkelissa ja kahdessa muussa artikkelissa alle puolet siitä (9,1 prosenttia ja 7,7 prosenttia). Tutkielmassa todettiin tämän olevan mahdollinen merkki siitä, että BBC pitää jälkiehkäisyä enemmän päivänselvyytenä kuin CNN ja Fox News. Se, miten mahdollisiin Plan B -käyttäjiin viitataan oli myöskin viittaa antava analysointitapa. Referenssiketjuanalyysin kautta todettiin, että CNN viittaa käyttäjiin nuorina tyttöinä (esimerkiksi *young girls*) vain 22,2 prosenttia ajasta kun taas BBC viittaa nuoriin käyttäjiin 60 prosenttia ajasta ja Fox News 66,7 prosenttia ajasta. Tästä taasen pääteltiin, että CNN on liberaalein sivusto, koska se ei halua muistuttaa lukijaa siitä mahdollisuudesta, että hyvinkin nuoret naiset saattavat käyttää jälkiehkäisyä. Fox News -sivuston konservatiivinen kanta vahvistui tarkastellessa sitä, miten paljon sen artikkelissa raportoidaan päätöksen negatiivisesta vaikutuksesta Obaman uudelleenvalintakampanjaan, jota BBC ja CNN eivät mainitse.

9 Johtopäätökset

Edellisessä osiossa tiivistettiin analyysin vahvimmat tulokset. Suurimmaksi osaksi ne tukevat hypoteesia, jonka mukaan CNN on liberaali ja Fox News konservatiivinen uutisorganisaatio. Nämä tulokset tukevat niitä aikaisempia tutkimuksia, joissa on todettu median olevan puolueellinen yleisesti sekä myös puolueellinen tässä tutkielmassa esitetyn hypoteesin mukaisesti. Analyysi tuotti myös tuloksia, jotka eivät olleet hypoteesin mukaisia, mutta nämä olivat usein heikommin tuettuja tai vähäisellä datamäärällä todettuja. Tuloksien vaihtelevuus on kuitenkin merkki siitä, että analyysikeinojen sopivuus analysoitavaan materiaaliin (sekä aiheen että datamuodon osalta) vaihtelee. Voikin olla, että niissä aikaisemmissa tutkimuksissa, joissa ei ole löydetty median olevan puolueellinen, on käytetty metodeja, jotka eivät soveltuneet hyvin puolueellisuuden löytämiseen analysoitavassa datassa.

BBC näyttäytyi hypoteesin mukaisesti objektiivisempana kuin kaksi muuta uutisorganisaatiota, mutta analyysin tulokset olivat samalla kaikkein

arvaamattomimmat. Esimerkiksi jälkiehkäisyartikkelin osalta BBC todettiin sekä konservatiiviseksi että liberaaliksi riippuen analysointitavasta. Tämä nostaa esiin kysymyksen siitä, miten hyvin BBC toimii vertailukohtana tässä yhteydessä. Yhdysvaltojen politiikan ulkopuolinen taho osoittautui hyväksi vaihtoehdoksi, koska sen vähäisempi yhteys käsiteltyihin aiheisiin on varma. Toisaalta tutkielman tulokset osoittivat, että ulkopuolisellakin taholla on uutisoinnissaan puolueellisuuteen viittaavia piirteitä, jotka tulivat esille hieman eri tavalla ja hieman eri yhteyksissä kuin kahden toisen sivuston kohdalla. Vertailu olikin osittain tästä syystä hankalaa. Vaihtoehtoisena vertailukohteena voisi harkita täysin puolueellista uutissivustoa, jolloin sivuston kanta olisi selvä. Tähän tarkoitukseen esimerkiksi vasemmistolaiset *AlterNet* ja *Daily Kos* sekä oikeistolaiset *National Review Online* ja *WorldNetDaily* olisivat olleet mainiot. On kuitenkin todettava, että tällaiset uutissivustot myös uutisoivat eri tyylillä, esimerkiksi käyttäen narratiivista mallia, jolloin vertailussa olisi esiintynyt muita hankaluuksia.

Kolmannen uutissivuston analysointi oli kuitenkin tärkeää, koska se takasi objektiivisemman ja perustellumman analyysin triangulaation kautta. Myös uutisoinnin puutteet ja tiettyjen asioiden korostukset sekä artikkeleiden rakenteelliset erot oli helpompi havaita triangulaation kautta. Muita korvaamattomia analysointitapoja olivat sekä Teema-Reema -rakenne että referenssiketjut. Nämä kolme yhdessä miltei eliminoivat muiden analysointitapojen tarpeellisuuden. Esimerkiksi erillistä leksikaalista analyysia referenssiketjujen analysoinnin lisäksi ei olisi tarvittu tässä tutkielmassa, koska sen antamat lisäykset olivat usein hyvin pieniä. Transitiivisuusanalyysin soveltuvuutta ei voida tämän tutkielman perusteella kommentoida sen enempää, kuin että se antoi hyviä lisäperusteluja otsikkoanalyysissa.

Jokaisessa tutkielmassa on myös omat puutteensa, joista osa onkin jo käsitelty tämän tutkielman osalta (esimerkiksi Fairclough'n mallin osittainen käyttö). Tässä tutkielmassa analysoitiin vain perinteisiä uutisia eikä esimerkiksi mielipideartikkeleita, jotka kuitenkin voivat paljastaa kovinkin paljon uutisorganisaation mielipiteistä. Lisäksi tässä tutkielmassa ei voitu ottaa huomioon mitään ei-kielellisiä aspekteja kuten sivujen sommittelua ja kuvia. Myös datakeräysmetodien olisi hyvä olla perusteellisempia, mutta se ei valitettavasti ollut

mahdollista tämän tutkielman puitteissa. Tulevat tutkimukset saisivatkin siis huomioida nämä aspektit, joita ei tässä tutkimuksessa voitu.

Tutkimuksen puutteista huolimatta useat tulokset olivat niin vahvat, että hypoteesi on tuettu ja tulokset ovat merkityksellisiä. Siispä tämän tutkimuksen perusteella todetaan, että CNN on liberaali ja Fox News konservatiivinen uutisorganisaatio. Säännöllisesti parhaimmiksi analysointimetodeiksi osoittautuivat triangulaatio, Teema-Reema -rakenteen analysointi sekä referenssiketjujen analysointi. Tämän tutkielman perusteella suositellaankin triangulaation perusteellisempaa käyttöä kriittisen diskurssianalyysin alalla, koska se antaa analyysille luotettavuutta ja painoa. Myös Teema-Reema -rakenteen analysointia suositellaan transitiivisuusanalyysin rinnalle tai jopa sen sijaan, koska sen kautta saadut tulokset ja vihjeet lisäanalyysia vaativista alueista olivat korvaamattomia. Referenssiketjujen analyysi sen sijaan paljasti kiistattomasti erinäisiä puolueellisuuden merkkejä, josta voidaan todeta sen olevan tärkeä analysointimetodi. Koska tulokset olivat vaihtelevia, voisi tulevaisuudessa harkita meta-tutkimuksen tekemistä, koska sen avulla voitaisiin selvittää, mitkä analysointimetodit ovat käyttökelpoisimmat minkäkinlaisen materiaalin analysoinnissa.

Kriittisen diskurssianalyysin väite, että kaikessa kielenkäytössä piilee taka-ajatuksia, on tässäkin tutkielmassa todettu paikkansapitäväksi. On myös oletettava, että koska kolmen näinkin suuren uutisorganisaation uutisoinnissa löytyy vahvoja merkkejä puolueellisuudesta, on uutisointi laajemmaltikin puolueellista eikä läheskään niin objektiivista, kuin voisi olettaa. Siispä onkin tärkeää jatkaa kriittisen diskurssianalyysin työtä ja paljastaa näitä taka-ajatuksia, jotta kielen todellinen luonne ideologioiden kantajana selviää mahdollisimman monelle. Kriittisen diskurssianalyysin työ onkin edistää tietoa vallan muodoista ja tehdä vallankäytöstä läpinäkyvämpää, jolloin ihmisillä on enemmän mahdollisuuksia tehdä omat päätöksensä.