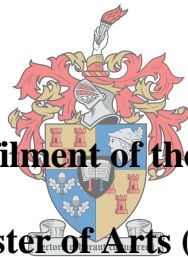


# **Civil Unrest in South Africa: Insights from Cognitive Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis**

**By**

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*I would like to thank my parents, Michael and Sannettha, for their unending support, encouragement, and advice in all my life's endeavours, and particularly in this one.*

## ABSTRACT

The critical investigation of political discourse has been of interest to philosophers, rhetoricians, political scientists, and linguists for centuries. Dating back to Aristotle, thinkers have been interested in the interconnectedness of politics and discourse, and the obvious implications thereof for democratic nations (Gastil, 1992:469). In more recent times, media representations of civil disorder, including protests, have received attention from Critical Linguists such as Fairclough (1992), Fang (1994), van Dijk (1993, 2003), Wodak (2002), Chan-Malik (2011) and Bennett (2013). These linguists adopted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a methodological tool, and in doing so, have highlighted how different news publications represent protest activity differently, and that these differences can be attributed to divergent ideologies regarding protest action and the social actors involved in such protests.

However, while such studies have produced fascinating results, there are numerous criticisms that have been raised against CDA as an approach to textual analysis. These criticisms threaten to invalidate both the conclusions drawn from these analyses as well as the field of research itself (see, for example, Breeze, 2011:503). In response to this, theorists have revised the methodology and put forward alternative approaches to CDA, including the cognitive linguistic (CL) approach and the incorporation of experimentation. More specifically, the CL approach to CDA (CL-CDA) attempts to resolve the issue of cognitive equivalence (Hart, 2013:403). That is, it attempts to investigate whether the features identified by CDA analysts as being psychologically persuasive are really construed as such by the intended target readership. In order to determine this, CL-CDA analysis focuses on conceptual features such as metaphor, action chains, and point of view (Hart, 2013:404).

With previous studies on protest action in mind, as well as the new methodological approaches to CDA, this study conducted a CL-CDA analysis of textual representations of the Fees Must Fall protests, which took place across South Africa in 2015 and 2016. 75 Online articles topicalising these protests were gathered and selected from a variety of publications whose target readerships typically differ with regards to class, socio-economic status, or race. The action chains and point of view encoded in these texts were analysed according to the CL-CDA framework. The results of this analysis highlighted the cognitive features or processes that are most prominent in South African media representations of the Fees Must Fall protests. The CL-CDA analysis revealed that the South African news publications

ideologically favoured the protesters in their coverage of the protests. In an effort to explain this deviation from typical protest discourse as outlined in the literature review, it was posited that South Africa's current political landscape and the legacy Apartheid imprinted in the seams of South Africa's society created a culture that is particularly intolerant of state oppression and tolerant of protests.

These findings were later used to determine the content of the experimental portion of the study. In this part of the study, a closed-ended survey was designed and distributed to over 300 participants online in order to investigate the cognitive effects of various linguistic constructions: specifically, their perception of blame placement and aggression rating. The results yielded a fair number of statistically significant outcomes, some of which support the CL-CDA approach to analysis, and some of which refute it. Crucially, the results supported the ultimate assumption of CDA: that readers' conceptualisations of events are influenced by subtle lexico-grammatical differences in texts. In doing so, this study makes a contribution to the field of Critical Linguistics and mainstream CDA by offering valuable insights into the way in which specific linguistic features are interpreted by the target audience.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1. Background to the problem

The critical investigation of political discourse has been of interest to philosophers, rhetoricians, political scientists, and linguists for centuries. Dating back to Aristotle, thinkers have been interested in the interconnectedness of politics and discourse, and the obvious implications thereof for democratic nations (Gastil, 1992:469). In more recent times, media representations of civil disorder, including protests, have received attention from Critical Linguists such as Fairclough (1992), Fang (1994), van Dijk (1993, 2003), Wodak (2002), Chan-Malik (2011) and Bennett (2013). This research has yielded interesting results that point to systematic differences in the news reports of political protests from publications which operate under different ideologies.

Fang (1994), for example, found that in Chinese publications, reports of protests differed markedly based on whether the country where the protest took place was considered hostile or friendly towards the People's Republic of China. In countries thought of as friendly to China, protests were framed as social deviance, but in countries deemed hostile towards China, the protests were framed as a valid response to state oppression.

Similarly, Chan-Malik (2011:113) found that American news coverage of the 1979 Iranian women's revolution was entrenched in American ideals and discourse regarding race, gender, sexuality, and class. The discourse was shown to be characteristic of typical understanding (and misunderstanding) of Iran and the Middle East today. Chan-Malik's analysis revealed that the women's rights protests were framed within the 'Poor Muslim Woman' narrative and distinctly American concepts of civil rights, freedom, and second-wave feminism; thereby reinforcing ideals of Western imperialism, notions of Islamic terror, and the still pervasive polarisation of Islam and feminism (Chan-Malik, 2011:116).

From within a Western context, Bennett (2013:41) analysed responses to the Occupy London protests and the London riots which took place in 2011. He looked at the difference in responses to these protests by leader of the Labour Party Ed Miliband and Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron as reported in the news. While Miliband superficially aligned himself with the movement in line with the Labour Party's efforts to differentiate

themselves from the Conservative Party, the analysis showed that both politicians still framed the protests as an issue of morality rather than of structural class inequalities, which can be regarded as a reflection of the almost identical neoliberal ideology underpinning both parties (Bennett, 2013:28).

Similar correlations between ideological foundations of publications and patterns in linguistic features have been found in numerous additional studies, where Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is often the chosen methodology. CDA is a field of linguistics in which analysts attempt to expose macro-level social phenomena such as prejudice and dominance by highlighting patterns in written and spoken language (micro-level social phenomena) (van Dijk, 2003: 354). In an analysis of the different ways protests are reported on in the news, for example, the micro-level would be the actual news texts (and the linguistic features therein) that describe the protests, violence, protestors, and the police. The macro-level would be the ideological foundation from which the publication house operates, such as being more right or left-wing. These ideologies might influence the choices that result in alternative descriptions and representations of the event. While such studies have produced fascinating results, there are numerous criticisms that have been raised against CDA, criticisms that threaten to invalidate both the conclusions drawn from these analyses as well as the field of research itself (see, for example, Breeze, 2011:503). In response to these criticisms, theorists have revised the methodology and put forward alternative approaches to CDA, including the cognitive linguistic approach and the incorporation of experimentation.

The cognitive linguistic approach to CDA attempts to solve one of the problems that critics find with CDA, namely the problem of cognitive equivalence (Hart, 2013:403). This critique points to the lack of evidence, or a 'missing link' between the micro and macro-level of discourse: While a researcher may *assume*, for example, that regular use of the passive voice indicates a reluctance to apportion blame or responsibility to the agent that is being omitted, it is unclear how one would know if the writer truly held this view, and further, if this view could be or is disseminated onto the readership. The cognitive approach attempts to solve this problem because, rather than analysing the features that would typically be analysed in mainstream CDA, such as nominalisation and transitivity, only features that are

manifestations of conceptual processes are included in analysis, such as metaphor, action chains, and point of view (Hart, 2013:404).

However, while the cognitive approach theoretically provides a stronger link between the micro-and macro-levels of discourse, additional and definitive evidence should be insisted upon to support this theory, as well as to investigate the validity of previous claims that have been made in the field of CDA. This study thus aims not only to implement the cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis, but also to test its validity as a methodology and field of research by means of psycholinguistic experimentation.

### 1.2. Research questions

In light of the above, several research questions can be posited:

- (i) What are the dominant linguistic features used to represent events and actors in student fees protests?
- (ii) Do these linguistic features differ between publications, and if so, in what way?
- (iii) According to CDA theory, what influence might these differences in linguistic features and representations have on the target readers?
- (iv) When these features are isolated and presented in the form of a closed-question survey, do they *actually* create different perceptions of the same social event in the minds of the target readers as CDA assumes?

This research thus aims to answer one overarching question: do linguistic differences in news reporting significantly affect reader cognition?

### 1.3. Methodology and Research Design

The methodology and theoretical points of departure for this study will largely mirror that of Christopher Hart's 2013 - 2016 studies which looked at student fee protests and G20 protests in London in 2012. Hart's aim was to further develop the cognitive linguistic approach to CDA. As discussed above, this was to allow for a method of critical discourse analysis that addresses the problem of cognitive equivalence by using a framework that analyses representations at both the conceptual and the textual level. In addition, Hart points out that, while previous cognitive linguistic theories focus mainly on analysing metaphor, such as Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory, recent

developments in the field have allowed for additional conceptual processes to be included in analyses.

In particular, Hart investigated the cognitive effects of alternative event-frames in news reports of political protests. He looked at the differences in attribution of blame and perception of aggression of the readers in response to regular transactive or reciprocal verb constructions, as well as point of view shifts indicated by voice and information sequence. The present study will adopt this approach and focus on the same features.

The aim of this study is to conduct (a cognitive linguistic approach to) a critical discourse analysis of the student fees protests, also known as the “Fees Must Fall” protests, which took place across South Africa in 2015 and 2016. 75 Online articles topicalising these protests were gathered and selected from a variety of publications whose target readerships typically differ with regards to class, socio-economic status, or race. These texts will be analysed for the conceptual linguistic features outlined by Hart (2013:7). These include the structural configuration and positioning strategies that are present when an event of violence is reported on in the texts, all of which are explained in full in the following chapter. For example, questions that may be asked about each event could include: is the event construed in a reciprocal or asymmetrical action chain? Does any event coverage exclude possible precursors to the event or potential effects of the event that may affect how the event is perceived? Similarly, is any of the coverage extended to include additional information that may serve to legitimise or delegitimise the event? What degree of attention is awarded to certain actors? Which actor is introduced first in each action chain? Are any entities or actors left implicit or rendered abstract?

This analysis will reveal insights into the cognitive features or processes that are most prominent in media representations of the Fees Must Fall protests, which will in turn determine the content of the experimental portion of this study. The experiment will consist of a closed-ended survey that isolates the chosen linguistic features and tests the participants’ perception of violence as well as to whom they apportion blame. Approximately 300 participants will be presented with an online survey that consists of a short, one paragraph report about a violent protest. There will be multiple versions of this news report; each version will be manipulated to contain the alternative constructions of the linguistic feature under observation. Participants will only be allowed to read the

paragraph once, after which they will answer a series of follow-up questions. These questions will ask where the participants place the blame for the violence, and how violent they perceive both the protestors and the police to be, on a five-point Likert scale. Lastly, the participants will be asked to give demographic information about themselves, as well as indicate what their political views or stances are. The results of these surveys will then be subject to statistical analysis, and conclusions will be drawn about the effect of these linguistic features on cognition.

#### 1.4. The South African Context

As mentioned, this study draws on Hart's (2016) research by using the theory he advocates and by modelling this study on the experiment he performed. However, Hart's research centred on protests in the UK and news publications from the UK. Indeed, very little of the applied linguistic research conducted on political protests has focused on the South African context. South Africa is a diverse and unique country which, while partly characterised by its rich cultural and linguistic heritage, is also characterised by its sordid past of racial atrocities under the Apartheid government, and the race and class divides which permeate and structure South African culture to this day. There are vast political, historical, and social differences between South Africa and, for example, the UK, which need to be understood when performing a critical analysis of civil unrest. This study looks at media representations of the Fees Must Fall protests, so a clear understanding of the economic and political circumstances leading up to these protests is needed, as well as an idea of the individuals involved and affected by the issue at hand. The rise in fees was a main focus of the Fees Must Fall protests, but a range of other factors amplified and contributed to the movement, including other financial reasons as well as broader, societal-scale race and class issues (Munusamy, 2015: online).

##### 1.4.1. *The Fees Must Fall protests*

The Fees Must Fall protests (popularly known as #FeesMustFall as the movement gained significant traction and attention through its social media presence) is a student-led movement which emerged in response to a potential nationwide 10.5% increase in tuition fees despite the inflation rate being around 6% for the same year. The protests began in October 2015 at the University of Witwatersrand and quickly spread to numerous other universities across the country. Thousands of students mobilised across twelve universities

and engaged in mass rallies, sit-ins, blockades, raids, and take-overs for the remainder of 2015. The protests successfully shut down entire campuses, halting exam proceedings and in some cases, delaying the academic year. The protests, many of which became violent, resulted in the deployment of campus-wide private security, over 600 arrests, and over R600 million (approximately \$45 million) in damages; however, they also resulted in the president declaring a 0% fee increase for 2016, and inspired increased government funding for universities (Author Unknown, 2016a: online).

Over the past ten years, student fees have been rising continually above inflation rates, consistently furthering the disparity between household income and tuition fees (Viljoen, 2016: online). During this time, the government subsidy for tertiary education dropped from 49% to 40%, and the contribution from student fees rose from 24% to 31%. In 2012/13 the South African government allocated around R24 billion in total to universities, which makes up 2.3% of total government spending, and 0.76% of the GDP. This is lower than both the African average and the global average, which currently stands at 2.5% (Author Unknown, 2015c: online). In October of 2015 it was announced that the fees would be rising an additional 10%, and this sparked student protests across the country.

The chief financial officer of the University of Witwatersrand specified three main reasons for the increase in fees, including the weakening of the Rand and subsequent increase in costs of research materials and facilities, salary increases to retain valuable academic staff, and generic inflation. She further stated that the increase in student fees was necessary in order to remain sustainable and uphold the quality of their academics (Quintal, 2015: online).

While student fees rose in lieu of decreasing subsidies, the government's contribution to the National Student Funding Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has doubled since 2000 (Author Unknown, 2015c: online). NSFAS is an organisation funded by the government which provides financial aid for poor but academically eligible students. It aims to rectify the racially skewed graduate and student demographic in South Africa, another legacy of Apartheid (Jackson, 2002: 82). Only households earning less than R160 000 qualify for this aid scheme, however, and this excludes a (rising) number of households that still cannot afford tertiary education, despite being above this threshold (Viljoen, 2016: online). This group of students is known as the 'missing middle' as they are not poor enough to qualify for financial aid, but not rich

enough to afford tuition. While the government has increased support for students who fall below this poverty line, it has decreased support for those lying above it. It is also these students who would be most affected by the potential rise in fees, and the increase will likely result in an even larger missing middle. What is more, according to the South African Institute of Race Relations, data suggests that only 5% of South African families could comfortably afford tuition fees, indicating that the 'missing middle' makes up a significant portion of the population (Phungo, 2017: online). The institution further states that if the government were to shift its expenditure priorities (and approach global standards by contributing 2.1% of the GDP), they believe free education for all undergraduate students is possible; however, some other analysts disagree that this is neither possible nor helpful (Phungo, 2017: online).

Other factors to consider are the rising number of student enrolments as well as who is typically enrolling in tertiary institutions. While student enrolment has risen tremendously in the past ten years and with it, government contribution; the inflation of student fees has surpassed the consumer price index. University costs have been rising too quickly (Viljoen, 2016: online), and what is more, the average students enrolling in tertiary education in South Africa are significantly poorer than those enrolling ten years ago (Author Unknown, 2015c: online). Many have also received inadequate secondary schooling and as a result, require additional support at tertiary level. Importantly, these poorer students are overwhelmingly black and coloured students, and it is these students who are excluded from education when there is a stark rise in fees.

The issues outlined above are areas inevitably tied up with the race and class issues still evident in South African culture. Apartheid created a society in which there is a huge correlation between factors related to race and class. In this context, tertiary education is often identified as a critical factor in changing this status quo (Jackson, 2002:82). While NSFAS has succeeded in increasing the number of graduates of colour, the fact remains that 98% of the students who received help from the NSFAS are students of colour (De Villiers, Van Wyk and Van der Berg, 2013: 8), and the majority of those in the missing middle are students of colour too. Backgrounded by a history from exclusion from education, the fees protests echoed previous liberation struggles and became an issue not only of fees, but of race and class inequality too.



### 1.5. Chapter Outline

This chapter provided an overview of the context and background to the current study in an effort to offer a rationale for the social relevance of this linguistic research. The following chapter will provide an in-depth look into the theoretical points of departure for the study; namely the cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis (CL-CDA). Chapter 3 will provide an overview of protest discourse in particular, discussing the trends and tendencies which have been found in previous linguistic research on the same topic. Following this, Chapter 4 will describe the research process and methodology in more detail, offering the details of both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of this study. Chapter 5 will present the results of this analyses, and Chapter 6 will present the results of the experiment. Finally, Chapter 7 will discuss and evaluate the results in the context of the literature reviews, and offer possible explanations and conclusions.

## Chapter 2

### Theoretical Points of Departure

#### 2.1. Introduction

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a field of linguistics in which analysts attempt to expose macro-level social phenomena such as prejudice and dominance by highlighting patterns in micro-level social phenomena such as written and spoken language (van Dijk, 2003:354). The general aim of CDA is to show how inequality is enacted and reinforced through patterns of linguistic features in discourse. CDA spans a variety of disciplines, draws from varying methodologies, and CDA theorists use a number of different approaches. However, the overall aim of CDA remains more or less the same: it aims to understand, expose and resist social inequalities (van Dijk, 2003:352). By analysing patterns in discourse, analysts aim to shed light on how social power is reinforced (or challenged) through language. Critical discourse analyses are thus ultimately political in nature, as the definitive goal of CDA is to provide the critical insight that can serve to dismantle unequal power relations in society, and to empower marginalised and disempowered groups in society (Wodak and Meyer, 2009:7).

While critical discourse theorists acknowledge the necessarily subjective nature of this type of analysis, the field has nevertheless been subject to stark criticism. These criticisms revolve largely around the lack of objectivity or scientific rigor, as will be explained in more detail later in this chapter. An additional significant criticism to be discussed is the problem of 'cognitive equivalence', which questions the validity of the link between the macro and micro-level of discourse to begin with. The assumption in CDA that patterns of linguistic features at the micro level *do* reflect the macro-level worldviews of the discourse producer comes under scrutiny here, threatening to discredit the field of CDA to a considerable degree.

A proposed solution to these theoretical flaws is the implementation of a cognitive linguistic approach to CDA, where the link between the micro and macro-level of discourse is bridged by redirecting the analysis towards only conceptual processes such as the use of metaphor. Metaphor and other related conceptual processes bridge this gap because they are argued to be direct textual manifestations of our mental conceptualisations of events, actors, or

objects. Due to there being any number of alternative metaphors (or other conceptual features) to invoke at any time to *describe* the same event or actor, patterns in metaphorical language are seen as representative of how the speaker *conceptualises* that event or actor, more so than other features that have been typically analysed in mainstream CDA.

However, while this approach to CDA provides a stronger theoretical link with which to justify conclusions that are drawn, it still remains largely an abstract endeavour. Cognitive linguistics is grounded in plausible psychological theory which makes it a more empirically sound basis for critical discourse analysis (Hart, 20016:4), but the results it yields still need to be verified. One way of doing this is through psycholinguistic experimentation. This is the chosen methodology of Hart, and is the methodology that will be adopted in this research. This chapter will thus explore in more detail the development towards this new approach to CDA that has been outlined in this introductory section. In order to do this, Section 2.2 below will present an overview of the aims and approaches to CDA and provide an overview of the criticisms that have been directed towards it and which lead to the need for new approaches. Section 2.3 will describe some of these new approaches, with an emphasis on psycholinguistic experimentation. Section 2.4 will introduce and describe the cognitive linguistic approach to CDA as informed by various seminal theories in cognitive linguistics, concluding with an outline of the core conceptual processes that are to be analysed in this study.

## 2.2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The cognitive linguistic approach to CDA cannot be understood without first understanding what mainstream CDA is. A clear idea of standard CDA will not only make clear what is entailed in any kind of critical discourse analysis, but will also show where the need for a cognitive approach to CDA emerged. This section will characterise CDA as a discipline by discussing its central concepts and features, as well as the central criticisms that lead to a need for a new approach.

### 2.2.1. Key terms

The field of CDA is a social theory of language that draws on pragmatics, semantics, as well as social and political concepts and theory (Fairclough, 1992:1). While there are many approaches to performing a critical discourse analysis, there are a few concepts which are

central to any approach. These include the conceptualisation of language and discourse as *functional*; a specific conceptualisation of power and ideology, and a clear understanding of what is meant by ‘critical’. These points are elaborated on below.

#### 2.2.1.1. *Discourse*

The first concept central to both the field and the name of CDA is “discourse,” a term which itself has many definitions. It should be noted that discourse in CDA refers to its definition from within a functionalist approach, which will be discussed at more length in Section 2.3.1. Discourse is defined as both a system and a tool for realising functions in linguistics (Schiffrin, 1994:21). It is a homogenous way of speaking about something that is organised both culturally and socially, in that the cultural and social structure of a social group will inform the way that group speaks about a topic. This in turn will reinforce cultural and social structures. As such, discourse can be seen as socially constructed knowledges of reality. For example, discourse surrounding political protests (or the way political protest are talked about in society) may be more positive in progressive and liberal cultures or societies, and negative in more traditional and conservative cultures or societies. The way that topics such as these are spoken about on a societal scale serve to reinforce the structuring of that society in which it is taking place. Speaking negatively about political protests, for example, reinforces the traditional and conservative culture of those who are speaking about it. Critical discourse analysts thus understand discourse as “relatively stable uses of language serving the organisation and structuring of social life” (Wodak, 2009: 6).

#### 2.2.1.2. *Power and Ideology*

In the context of CDA, power is seen as central to the structuring of society in that it dictates who has access to the most social resources such as wealth and status (van Dijk, 1993:254). Unequal power dynamics are legitimised and maintained through the (often institutionalised) language used to talk about the empowered and disempowered groups, respectively. Thus, to expose these unequal power dynamics, the language used to maintain them is critically analysed in CDA (Wodak and Meyer, 2009:10).

In line with this, ideology plays an important role in discourse analysis. Ideology in this context refers to world views that shape the holders’ social cognitions. These ideologies inform the way holders view the social world and react to its elements (Wodak and Meyer,

2009:10). Analysts are typically interested in the more covert ideologies that are assumed neutral and remain unquestioned. These ideologies can be brought to the surface by means of analysing speakers'/writers' representations of the social world through, for example, metaphor. Naturally, ideology is tied up with power and hegemony in society; reflecting the emphasis on the broader societal systems at play in discursive events.

#### 2.2.1.3. "Critical"

The term critical in this context makes reference to the Critical Theory popularised by Horkheimer in 1937. Horkheimer, along with other thinkers at the Frankfurt School, posited that all social theory should be directed towards critiquing and thereby changing society, rather than simply observing and understanding it (Wodak and Meyer, 2009:6). Critique in social theory refers to the linking of social phenomena or "making visible the interconnectedness of things" in order to expose social systems (Wodak and Meyer, 2009:7).

#### 2.2.2. Central Characteristics

Along with these central concepts are some core features that characterise CDA. These are its roots in systemic functional linguistics (SFL); its interdisciplinary nature; its specific incorporation of linguistic analysis, and its overtly political nature.

##### 2.2.2.1. Functional approaches to language

In order to understand discourse analysis (DA) and by extension CDA, it must be noted that the entire field is rooted in a functional approach to language, a realm of applied linguistics. In particular, CDA draws heavily on SFL, which broadly speaking focuses on the *functions* of language that follow the *forms* of language (Schiffrin, 1994:22). The functionalist paradigm holds that language is not simply an autonomous mental phenomenon, but a social one that cannot be removed from its social context and social functions. As the name implies, there is a specific focus on how language performs social functions, and how these functions in turn influence the internal structure of the linguistic system itself (Schiffrin, 1994:21-22). A CDA analysis is focused on the way discourse functions to legitimise, deny, transform, and maintain social practices.

#### 2.2.2.2. *Interdisciplinary with Varying Approaches*

A key characteristic of CDA is that it is interdisciplinary. As van Dijk (1993:253) explains, a critical discourse analyst needs to draw on knowledge from social and political sciences, as well as have the necessary linguistic knowledge to perform the analysis. Social problems such as racism and sexism are complex by nature, and therefore require historical knowledge of societal systems to understand them (van Dijk, 1993:253).

Furthermore, CDA does not adhere to one approach or methodology. There are a number of different methodologies that have been developed, the most salient of which include van Dijk's (2009) sociocognitive approach, Wodak and Reisigl's (2009) Discourse-Historical approach, and Fairclough's (1992) Dialectical-Relational approach (Wodak and Meyer, 2001:16; Wodak, 2002:7; Wodak and Meyer, 2009:5). CDA spans an array of disciplines, approaches, skillsets, and knowledge bases.

#### 2.2.2.3. *Incorporation of Linguistic Features*

Another prominent feature of CDA is that linguistic categories are specifically incorporated into the analysis. A range of linguistic devices are central to most mainstream analyses, including lexical choice, pronoun use, transitivity, modality, metaphor, politeness, intertextuality, and connectives. This speaks to the underlying belief of CDA theory that patterns in the linguistic surface of discourse, namely the grammatical and lexical features, reveal deeper meanings alluding to (sometimes harmful) ideologies (Wodak and Meyer, 2001:16).

#### 2.2.2.4. *Political Agenda*

CDA deals primarily with issues of power, ideology, and dominance, informed by the analyst's own political and social point of view. Ultimately, any work produced in CDA is political because it is inspired by a certain view of society and aims to achieve a certain goal in society. As mentioned above, CDA aims to affect social change through critical understanding of problematic societal structures (van Dijk, 1993:252). Therefore, it can be said that CDA is not neutral, and indeed rejects the idea that scientific investigation has to be "value-free", questioning the possibility of an entirely objective scientist to begin with (Wodak and Meyer, 2001:16). Due to its focus on dominance and power, it is clear that the main focus is to address social issues and achieve the political goals of the analyst.

### 2.2.3. Criticisms

As mentioned in section 2.1., CDA has been subject to thorough criticism. These criticisms of CDA can be sorted into three main categories: critique of its foundation, of its methodology, assumptions, and of its focus and outcome.

#### 2.2.3.1. *Shaky Foundations*

The first criticism surrounds the theoretical base from which CDA emerged. As Breeze (2011:496) explains, the origins of CDA can be traced back to the Frankfurt school's critique of Western rationality. The school's energies were focused on how capitalism, a direct result of the West's shift towards rationality, served to perpetuate oppressive and unequal societal structures. These thinkers, heavily influenced by Marxism, became what are known as "neo-Marxists" due to their restructuring of Marxist thought. Breeze (2011:498) picks up on this link, stating that Marxism has been discredited in recent times. She continues by explaining that neo-Marxist ideals cannot serve as a solid base for CDA because of their radicalism and, not to mention, their implications that emancipation is unachievable.

Furthermore, not only are its shaky Marxist foundations taken for granted, but CDA theorists also seem to have assumed that their understanding of society and how it functions is correct. The credibility of CDA relies on this assumption, and Breeze (2011:499) warns that analysts should take careful note of this problem and its implications for methodology. However, it may be noted that while these criticisms may allude to shaky foundations, they do not necessitate a collapse of CDA. An approach based on Marxism may present difficulties, but it does not rule out the possibility of a successful analysis or a grounded approach (Breeze, 2011:498).

#### 2.2.3.2. *Methodological Concerns*

The apparent methodological flaws in CDA arguably make up its most popular and significant criticism. Widdowson (in Breeze, 2011:503), a prominent linguist, has emerged as a strong opponent to CDA methodology, judging it as unsystematic and lacking in scholarly rigour. While CDA may aim for objectivity and rigorousness, in practice that does not always seem to be the case. Breeze (2011:503) describes an analysis of published critical discourse analyses in which many analyses made no reference to a theory of language from which their analysis was based. Further, a large number of these analyses spoke in very general

terms about CDA and related concepts. In short, there existed a distinct lack of solid theory and justification for the collection of published analyses.

This leads onto Widdowson's (in Breeze, 2011:503) main criticism of CDA; that it is arbitrary and unsystematic. As mentioned previously, CDA is open to a wide range of methods and procedures. He argues that as a result features are simply chosen according to which is most likely to fit the desired interpretation. He states that, because critical discourse analysts do not adopt the same method, sample size or approach, the result is that simply any technique is used as long as the correct results are achieved. This then leads to a lack of falsifiability (Breeze, 2011:503). Not only does this show a lack of impartiality, but it also allows for concepts that might contradict the results to be ignored, discrediting the exercise entirely. In sum, it is argued that there is no systematic approach to the size or method of analysis, and that CDA is prone to bias. However, Breeze (2011:505) states that not only does Widdowson not provide any scientific proof that CDA is arbitrary and unscientific, but holds that qualitative analysis should not be undervalued or ignored, and that both types of analysis can be illuminating.

A further related criticism is that CDA is very impressionistic or ideological. Both Verschueren and Widdowson (in Breeze 2011:514) voice this concern of the pivotal role given to the analyst's intuition. They hold that the analyses are results of solely the analyst's own interpretation according to his or her political ideology, neither of which are justified. Rather than observing all the linguistic features and coming to a conclusion (bottom-up approach), CDA begins with an ideological interpretation and finds evidence to support this claim (top-down approach). However, CDA theorists do state from the outset that they are explicitly political and that they are aware of the intrinsic bias in this (Wodak and Meyer, 2001:16).

#### *2.2.3.3. The Problem of Cognitive Equivalence*

Related to this, scholars have also questioned the overriding assumptions that CDA theorists make regarding the link between the micro and macro-level of discourse. Hart (2013:403) articulates this as the "problem of cognitive equivalence". This problem refers to whether or not the representations found at the textual level do in fact appear in the mental representations of the writers and whether these representations are transferred onto the readership. Furthermore, if these representations are equivalent in all parties, how would



we know? CDA theorists may assume, for example, that repeated use of the passive voice indicates a reluctance to apportion blame or responsibility to the agent that is being omitted. This assumption remains just that, however, and its correctness is taken for granted. The problem of cognitive equivalence thus alludes to the lack of objective proof that the analyst's interpretations are correct and actualised in discourse (Hart, 2013:403).

#### 2.2.3.4. *Questionable Focus and Outcome*

Another small yet significant criticism of CDA is that it is negative in essence. The significance of this criticism lies in its potential to position the entire effort of CDA as futile. Brought forward by thinkers such as Chilton (2011:8), and Luke (in Breeze, 2011:516), this argument holds that while CDA intends in theory to bring about change and initiate social action, there is instead a large focus on only *exposing* problems. As a result, CDA immerses itself in a negative paradigm, and an important opportunity for positive outcomes is missed. Critics hold that CDA should not only show what is wrong, but should also, ideally, show how things should or could be (Chilton, 2011:8). Without a conceivable outcome or solution, CDA is rendered an exercise of simply 'shouting into the void,' so to speak. Moreover, added focus on a solution would improve the accessibility of CDA to the masses. A definitive solution, or at least an idea of a solution, would broaden its audience of only a small number of academics by turning it from a discussion into a plan.

In response to this criticism, it should be noted that critical knowledge of inequality on its own is not something to be underestimated, especially when it is knowledge that can empower disadvantaged groups. Awareness is certainly the first step and a potential catalyst for inverting power dynamics and should not be undermined simply because it does not immediately cause wide-scale change. Social change is by nature a slow process, and the value of any contribution to a discourse that contradicts unequal societal norms should be recognised.

### 2.3. *Triangulation*

These criticisms inspired theorists to enhance their approaches to CDA by incorporating the principle of triangulation into their approaches. Hart (2013:2) describes triangulation as a way of verifying and validating your results by using multiple techniques or approaches to the analysis, which produce convergent lines of evidence. Examples of different approaches may include having several theorists perform the same analysis, including multiple data sets,

or using a variety of theories and methodologies and comparing the results. These examples of triangulation all speak to the trend among CDA theorists of employing a variety of methods to aid in reducing subjectivity and producing more systematic evidence from which stronger conclusions can be drawn (Hart, 2013:3).

### *2.3.1. Corpus Linguistics*

Corpus linguistics is frequently used within CDA studies as a method of triangulation (Marchi and Taylor, 2009:2). Corpus linguistics allows for the analysis of significantly larger data sets. The methodology and results of this approach are seen as more data-driven and objective, and supplement the theory-driven and interpretive nature of CDA (Marchi and Taylor, 2009:2). Corpus linguistics further complements CDA as the results of an analysis of a large corpus of data can verify that the linguistic features the analyst chooses to focus on are indeed prominent and recurrent in the broader discourse. The smaller scale, in-depth analysis of certain key features is thus justified, where previously the features chosen may have been criticised as arbitrary, unrepresentative, or as being ‘cherry-picked’ to suit the political stance or expectations of the analyst. In addition, a corpus linguistics approach is seen as more transparent as results can be replicated, and generalizations can be drawn (Marchi and Taylor, 2009:4).

### *2.3.2. Psycholinguistic Experimentation*

Another triangulation technique is experimentation, which has been a largely ignored method in the realm of CDA (Hart, 2016:4). Hart emphasizes the importance of empirical evidence in CDA, as it validates the link between discourse and cognition, thereby validating CDA’s focus on linguistic features. Hart (2013:403) points out that many approaches to CDA do not emphasise the role of cognition in their methodologies, however, which could explain the lack of interest in experimentation.

This lack of emphasis on cognition is puzzling, though, as most analysts do recognise in theory that cognition plays an important role in ideological reproduction and identity formation (Hart, 2013:403). This necessarily entails a vital link between text and cognition, making the inclusion of cognitive linguistics into the methodologies of CDA a logical step. Experimentation should then follow in order to validate the results as with any other psychological theory. The following section provides an overview of cognitive linguistics.

## 2.4. Cognitive Linguistics: Theoretical Points of Departure

The need for triangulation methods and the lack of emphasis on the role of cognition in CDA paved the way for the development of the cognitive linguistic approach to CDA (CL-CDA). This approach, as this next section will outline, is grounded in plausible and established psychological and linguistic theory.

Cognitive linguistics is a field of linguistics that investigates the link between language and cognition (Robinson and Ellis, 2008:3). It consists of various theories that are all underpinned by a set of shared beliefs or assumptions, including the assumption that language and cognition are wholly inseparable from one another and, indeed, create one another. What is more, our cognitions are rooted in and developed from our perceptions and experiences of the world. Cognitive linguistics thus asserts a reciprocal relationship between our language use, our cognitions, and our experience of the world. As such, grammatical choices become significant as they conceptualise the speaker's perspective, focus, understanding, and experience of the world (Robinson and Ellis, 2008:4).

Four core theories that have contributed to cognitive linguistics include Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980), Langacker's Cognitive Grammar (1987), Fillmore's Frame Semantics (1982), and Talmy's Force-Dynamics (1988). Hart draws chiefly on the former two theories for his methodology, which will be described below.

### 2.4.1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980:453) Conceptual Metaphor Theory was developed in 1980 at a time where the investigation of figurative language was not considered a legitimate or useful academic pursuit. Their collaborative work aimed to show, however, that metaphors are pervasive in everyday life; in our speech, thoughts, and acts. They further aimed to prove that metaphors *structure* our conceptual systems; that the language we use to speak about things contributes to, or is influenced by, the way we conceptualise those things. Indeed, Lakoff and Johnson state that our conceptual systems, which govern the way we think and act, are fundamentally metaphorical by nature, and call for thorough analysis (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:454).

To illustrate this reciprocity between the metaphors used in speech and the way things are conceptualised, Lakoff and Johnson (1980:454) discuss the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. This metaphor is reflected in numerous everyday expressions such as *winning*, *shooting*

*down, defending, demolishing, or attacking* arguments, for example. This is not simply a turn of phrase, however, as they point out that we actually do see arguments as things that can be won or lost. The way we argue is at least partly structured by the concept of war, and argumentation as we know it seems to be inseparable from notions of winning and losing, defending and attacking, counterattacking and strategizing. This example points to the crux of Conceptual Metaphor Theory; that the metaphors we use to speak about things at least partially structure how we think about and enact these things (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:455).

A more illuminating example of how the metaphors we use reflect our conceptualisations can be seen in the commonly used conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY. This metaphor is reflected in everyday phrases such as *I don't have the time to spare, waste of time, it cost me an hour, I invested time in this, thank you for your time, put aside some time, and of course spending time* (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:456). Time as money is reflected clearly in modern Western culture where time is indeed a valuable commodity, and has become quantified as a result. Work in modern times is associated with and compensated according to the time taken, as seen in monthly salaries, hourly wages, interest, rent, annual budgets, and more. Moreover, these practices do not appear in all cultures and have only arisen in modern industrialised societies. The quantification of time is pervasive, structuring and regulating these societies at both broad and everyday levels. That this quantification of time is directly reflected in the metaphorical language used in these societies, then, cannot be disregarded as arbitrary or insignificant. Rather, metaphors should be regarded as linguistic manifestations of the way we truly see the world and by which our worlds are organised (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:457).

Another concept in Lakoff and Johnson's theory that is pertinent to critical discourse analysis is their idea of *highlighting* and *hiding* in metaphorical systematicity. They theorise that not only do metaphors allow us to understand one concept in terms of another, but that this necessarily highlights or hides certain features of the concept (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:458). The above metaphor TIME IS MONEY, for example, entails the subcategories TIME IS A LIMITED RESOURCE and TIME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY. The use of this metaphor thus highlights the features of being finite and being valuable in its conceptualisation of time, simultaneously hiding any other features of time that do not relate to money. What is

important to note in this respect, then, is that the metaphorical concepts we use (such as money) only give a *partial* understanding of the concept in question (such as time). A full understanding would imply that time quite literally *is* money, but instead time is understood *in terms of* money, where certain characteristics of money are drawn on to conceptualise time, thereby excluding features of time that are not evoked by the concept of money (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:460).

Metaphors do not always have to be as direct or obvious as the above example of TIME IS MONEY, however. Lakoff and Johnson (1980:462) point out that metaphorical language structures a wide range of concepts in everyday language. Many concepts are given a spatial orientation in language, such as up-down, forward-backwards, in-out, and more. The metaphor HAPPY IS UP is one such metaphor, and can be seen in phrases such as *I'm feeling down, I fell into depression, I am depressed, it cheered me up, high spirits, or my spirits rose*. This metaphor does have a basis in our physical world as low posture, for example, is associated with sadness and upright posture with happiness or positivity. Other orientational metaphors include HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP; SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN, GOOD IS UP; BAD IS DOWN, HIGH STATUS IS UP; LOW STATUS IS DOWN, VIRTUE IS UP; DEPRAVITY IS DOWN, and so on. What becomes clear is that these metaphors make up a coherent system that language adheres to (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:463). It would not make sense in English to say *things are looking up* when trying to describe a situation that is getting worse, because that metaphor is incongruent with the HAPPY IS UP system of orientational metaphors.

Further, these systems are also coherent with the culture in which they appear. For example, the idea that one can *look forward to the future* points to the metaphor FUTURE IS FORWARD, but the same orientational metaphors do not exist in all languages and cultures. It has been found that time is conceptualised in a large variety of ways across cultures, including as stationary or moving, horizontal and vertical, forwards to backwards, backwards to forwards, left to right and right to left, and more. In Mandarin, vertical metaphors are used to speak about time where PAST IS UP; FUTURE IS DOWN which would not be found in English or many other languages and cultures (Boroditsky, Fuhrman and McCormick, 2011:123).

Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory describes and defines many more concepts and sub-concepts than have been discussed here, and countless other examples

could be used to illustrate these concepts. The key of this theory that informed and founded the cognitive approach to CDA, however, is that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life in not just language, but thought and action, too. Metaphors are not arbitrary linguistic phenomena, but rather make up coherent systems of speaking and thinking, and are tied to the physical and cultural space in which they are uttered (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:486). In short, this theory aimed to prove that the metaphors used to speak about things *do* reflect how the speaker conceptualises those things. Thus, metaphor becomes a valid linguistic feature to analyse in critical discourse analysis, as the link is established between the textual dimension of discourse (the use of metaphors in texts) and the ideological dimension of discourse (the conceptualisations that these metaphors reflect).

#### 2.4.2. *Cognitive Grammar*

Langacker's theory of Cognitive Grammar (1986) further develops this idea of a link between language and conceptualisation, and is the theory that Hart applies to his own data in his analyses. The cognitive grammar model holds the assumption that language is not and cannot be independent from cognitive processing (Langacker, 1986:1). As such, grammatical structures are seen as intrinsically tied to symbolic conceptual content, rather than simply making up a formal, independent language system.

Semantic structures are said to be characterised relative to what are called "cognitive domains", or conceptualisations. To illustrate, Langacker (1986:4) uses the example of ELBOW. In order to understand the meaning of this word, a prior conception of ARM is required. In this example, ARM functions as the cognitive domain for ELBOW. Thus, a complete understanding of the meanings of words necessitates an understanding of their respective cognitive domains which will always include other related or fundamental domains such as JOINT, BEND, or HUMAN, for example. As a result, each term (or semantic structure) can be seen as a unique composition of various cognitive domains along with the various relationships that connect these domains (Langacker, 1986:4). Within the realm of discourse analysis, Langacker (2001:144) explains that two such cognitive domains intrinsic to every discursive event are the physical *ground* (G) and the more abstract *current discourse space* (CDS). He states that in all conceptualisations in discursive events, the interlocutor anticipates both the discourse itself, as well as the circumstances of the discourse event. The ground is thus the speech event, the speaker, hearer, and the immediate circumstances of the speech

event. The current discourse space, on the other hand, is the discourse itself; the mental space where elements and relations being shared by participants results in communication of ideas and information (Langacker, 2011:144).

According to this model, then, different descriptions or terms used to describe the same thing cannot mean the same due to the different domain compositions that would be evoked in each. For example, the terms *pork* and *pig meat* are intended to mean the same thing, but would have varying composite structures. Where *pork* and *pig meat* would both evoke the structure *pork*, *pig meat* would also evoke *pig* and *meat*, along with the additional conceptual relationships between these structures (Langacker, 1986:11). So, different expressions have different compositional paths, resulting in a difference in meaning. The implication of this for discourse analysis is clear: there are numerous grammatical constructions that a writer could choose to employ to describe the same actor, scene or event, and this model demonstrates the significance of these choices, however insignificant they may seem to an uncritical eye. Differences in grammatical choices thus always reflect differences in meaning, and because these differences are chosen by the writer, it can be concluded that these differences hold significant ideological implications.

## 2.5. The Cognitive Linguistic Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CL-CDA)

In light of these concepts that are central to cognitive linguistics, Hart developed a framework that applies them to CDA. As mentioned, metaphor is only one of the conceptual processes that can be analysed in discourse analysis. Hart (2013:405) proposes a categorization of the conceptual processes to be analysed. First, he describes three discursive strategies, including structural configuration, framing, and positioning. These strategies are then enacted by various conceptual processes, which will be the focus of a discourse analysis.

### 2.5.1. *Structural configuration strategies: schematisation*

The first discursive strategy is *structural configuration* which is realised through *schematisation*. Schematisation refers to when speakers project particular image-schemas upon the scene which defines the event type and the structure of the event. An image-schema is a mental knowledge structure that evolves from repeated experience to something, and makes up the basis of our conceptual system. They help link and identify

phenomena in order for us to make sense of our worlds in terms of whole (subconscious) constructs (Hart, 2011a:273). Structural configuration is thus rooted in Gestalt psychology.

An ACTION SCHEMA is one such image-schema, and has been particularly useful in analyses of protests in the past (Hart, 2014: 169). ACTION schemas represent the energy transfer that happens between actors in an event. Usually, this affects a change of some kind to the actor on the receiving end of this energy transfer. Different 'grammars' make for different action schemas, which make for alternative conceptualisations of the event. The grammar of the ACTION schema could portray the event as either taking an *asymmetrical* or *reciprocal* action chain. In an *asymmetrical* action chain, the flow of energy is one-directional, rendering one actor the 'agent' and one actor the 'patient'. In a *reciprocal* action chain, the flow of energy between actors is bi-directional, so neither can be demarcated as the agent or patient (Hart, 2014: 171). This naturally holds significance in portrayals of protest violence, where the ascription of blame and responsibility for the violence can either be shared between actors (reciprocal) or placed wholly on one actor (asymmetric). Schematisation thus provides the individual with information about the relations between and roles of events, scenes, or actors, as well as causation, and the sequence of events.

#### 2.5.2. Framing strategies: Conceptualisation and Metaphor

The second strategy is *framing*. While schematisation provides a broad and holistic but skeletal framework for conceptualising the event, framing strategies act to further expand this framework in terms of specific content. A frame in cognitive linguistics refers to culturally-specific knowledge that an individual has stored in their long-term memory about particular concepts. Frames act as the background information necessary for understanding a concept, and attribute certain characteristics or features to the entities involved (Hart, 2014: 173). Crucially, these frames each carry specific evaluations and entailments which are evoked when a frame, or even one feature of a frame is presented in discourse. As such, when frames are invoked in discourse, the writer will make certain features conceptually salient, and suppress other features. Framing strategies are thus grounded in humans' ability to compare domains of experience.

If, for example, a writer refers to protestors as *rioters*, characteristics relating to the frame of rioting will be evoked, such as aggression, criminality, or danger. On the other hand, if the writer refers to the protestors as *demonstrators*, different characteristics may be brought to



mind, such as political activism, passivity, or ideas of a common cause. This example of framing is referred to as *categorization*, which refers to when an entity, event, or actor is judged as belonging to the same category or collection of experiences that has previously been termed something else, such as categorising protestors as rioters (Hart, 2014:174).

*Metaphor* is the second type of framing strategy. Utilising metaphors involves a cognitive mapping of one domain onto another. Usually, a more abstract domain of experience (such as ARGUMENT) is compared to a simpler or more concrete domain of experience (such as WAR), where this comparison is encoded in imagery (such as *I shot down the argument*). Thus, the abstract domain is understood in terms of the more familiar and simple domain. Similar to categorisation, metaphors necessarily carry entailments and evaluations which reflect the ideology of the writer and shape the conceptualisation of the reader (Hart, 2014:175).

### 2.5.3. Positioning strategies: Panning and Zoom

The final strategy is *positioning*. Positioning strategies have to do with necessary perspective each construal must take, and the way entities are positioned in the metaphorical space of the event (Hart, 2014:177). This includes the point of view from which the event is construed, as well as the placement and distance of entities in relation to the speaker and other entities. Positioning strategies also include identification strategies, which refer to the degree of attention that is placed on actors in terms of representation and importance in relation to other actors (Hart, 2013:406). There are numerous operations involved in point of view creation that can be investigated, but Hart (2014:177) focuses on two main operations: *panning* and *zoom*.

The concept of *panning* ties in with the action schemas discussed in section 2.5.1. Panning refers to point of view shifts based on alternative grammatical constructions, such as the shift from reciprocal to asymmetrical transactive constructions. These point of view shifts are conceptualised as running along (or ‘panning’) the horizontal axis of the event that is being described, coming to a halt at different points (Hart, 2014:178). In reciprocal constructions, for example, the point of view would be at the middle ground between the two agents, resulting in a more neutral stance. In asymmetric constructions, the point of view is conceptualised as being anchored as either at the head (agent) or tail (patient) of the vector along which the energy transfer occurs.

Hart (2014:179) explains that information structure and voice are what determine where the point of view is situated. In line with the body-specificity hypothesis, it is argued that various left-right positioning of agents confers negative or positive evaluations. Historically, left has been associated with bad and right with good (Hart, 2016:11). Even in reciprocal constructions, then, the information sequence results in particular points of view. This can present certain entities as unusual or negative and others as normative, for example.

The use of passive or active voice is how point of view is enacted in asymmetrical constructions. In asymmetrical constructions, with the active agent and the passive patient, it is significant which voice is used to describe the agent. If the agent is introduced in the active tense, the agent's point of view is taken. If the agent is introduced in the passive voice, the patient's point of view is taken.

This take on use of passivity differs from conventional or mainstream CDA analyses. In the past, analysts would interpret use of the passive voice as attempting to omit blame or responsibility from the agent. In the cognitive linguistic approach to CDA, however, voice is simply seen as a means for encoding the event from a particular vantage point. The significance of this is that the reader is placed literally and conceptually on the side of either the agent or the patient. As such, when the patient's point of view is taken, the action will be directed towards not only the patient, but the reader as well. It is theorised, then, that passive constructions will result in the reader interpreting the agent as more violent or aggressive.

The second positioning strategy is *zoom*. Zoom is another type of point of view shift, but instead of occurring on a horizontal plane as with panning, the shift takes place on a distal plane. In terms of event representation, zoom refers to how much of the scene or event is 'captured'; or which parts of the scene or event are focused or 'zoomed in' on. This mainly refers to the amount of background information that is given which describes previous events that may have lead up to the present event, along with potential consequences of the event. Zoom is thus largely concerned with the amount of causative information given. In protest discourse, this is usually seen most clearly in the descriptions of how injuries occur.

Hart (2014:182) describes three potential points of view on the distal plane: long shot, medium shot, and close-up. A medium shot is a representation of an event that captures the

full action chain. In a representation of an event where an injury occurred, a medium shot would inform the reader about the agent, the patient, the action, and the result (an injury). A close-up shot, on the other hand, would only include a description of the result of the action (the injury). In a close-up shot, the reader is given no information as to how the injuries were sustained or who caused the injuries. Causation (and blame or responsibility) is thus omitted. A long-shot, conversely, gives information that goes beyond just the action chain of the event, usually to include a mitigating or causal circumstance (Hart, 2014:182). Ideologically this can be seen as a justification or validation of actions that were performed. Injuries that were sustained by protestors can be justified by mentioning previous provocation by the protestors, for example.

These different points of view hold ideological significance in terms of blame assignment and validation for violence that occurs in protests. A close-up shot may serve to omit blame from the agent, or alternatively could present the violence as unprovoked and unwarranted. The information that is chosen to be included in long-shots may demonstrate efforts on the speaker's part to validate either the agent or the patient, or imply causation to the agent, patient, or other entity.

## 2.6. Conclusion

This chapter described the development of the cognitive linguistic approach to CDA. In the process, the main tenets of CDA were explored, along with significant criticisms that have arisen. It was proposed that triangulation methods can combat many of the criticisms against CDA, including corpus linguistics and psycholinguistic experimentation which are to be used in this study. Seminal theory in the field of cognitive linguistics was explored, followed by a description of Hart's application of this theory to a discourse analysis. Here the main features to be examined in a CL-CDA (and the present study) were outlined, including structural configuration strategies, framing strategies, and positioning strategies.

## Chapter 3

### Protest Discourse

#### 3.1. Introduction

Political demonstrations and protests have served, and continue to serve, an important role in the development and enhancement of democracy. In democratic societies, demonstrations are viewed as a vital line of communication between the public and the government, particularly when a disconnect emerges between the two (Cottle, 2008:853). In non-democratic societies, mass protests remain the most instrumental tool in striving towards democracy and human rights. However, while these protests aim to occupy public spaces, their causes are always demonstrated through the media as well. The media seeks out protests to make headlines, and protesters seek media attention to spread the word to its far-reaching audience and ideally gain traction for their cause (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993:115). Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993:116) argue that the interconnected relationship between the media and protesters is unequal, though, as the protesters need the media much more than the media needs the protests. Movements rely on the media to mobilise more people, to validate their cause, and to widen the scope of conflict by including third parties. Simply put, protesters need the media to garner public sympathy and support for their cause (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993:116). This creates a power dynamic, where the media becomes central in determining the success of the movement. How the media chooses to represent these protest in the media, then, determines whether the movement will fail or not, making the study of protest representation in the media a crucial endeavour.

This chapter will provide an overview of protest discourse in general by discussing seminal work on the topic as well as describing similar studies within the field of applied linguistics. This will be done in an attempt to understand, isolate, and exemplify the general trends that persist in protest discourse in the media, so that these trends can be compared with those that emerge in the present study.

#### 3.2. Trends in Protest Discourse

Protests and civil unrest have long since captured the attention of discourse analysts, and as a result much theory has been published on the subject. This has allowed for the identification of trends in themes, argumentative strategies and linguistic devices, which will

be outlined in this section. These general trends include: frequent siding with police, consistent creation of an 'us vs. them' dynamic, emphasis on violence, the delegitimisation of protests, and the tendency for race and class discourse to become intertwined in protest discourse.

### *3.2.1. Partiality towards police*

Firstly, research has found that in general, media coverage of protests tends to favour the perspective of the police rather than that of the protesters (Greer and McLaughlin, 2010:1041). This means that reporting of protests is likely to condemn the protesters by construing them as violent or as deviants, for example, whereas the police would be construed as upholders of social order (Hart, 2013:401). Similarly, violence enacted by police would be more likely to be justified as necessary or acceptable, as opposed to violence enacted by protesters that would be deemed unacceptable. Indeed, police are often represented as the victims of protester violence (Stamou, 2001:654)

### *3.2.2. Invalidation of protests as political action*

In line with this, protests as political action tend to be delegitimised in protest discourse. They are often criticised as being futile, or condemned for their inconvenience to the general public (see Section 3.3., for example). Particularly in cases where the protests turn violent, protesters are resented for the destruction they cause and for not attempting to find alternative solutions that do not disturb the social order. The invalidation of protests is also achieved through stereotypical treatment of protesters. Research shows protesters are likely to be construed as aggressive, immature, misinformed, disorganised, and selfish, among other things. The frames activated in discussions of protesters are often 'the Enemy Within,' 'the Deviant Other,' or 'the Marginal Oddity' frame; all of which invalidate protests in general (Stamou, 2001:654).

### *3.2.3. Emphasis on violence*

Another trend that has been noted is the emphasis on violence in protest coverage (Hart, 2013:402). This naturally ties in with the media's focus on providing the most newsworthy content. For example, in an analysis of coverage of the 1968 anti-Vietnam war protests, it was found that the protests were stubbornly conceptualised through a violent frame despite the protests being largely peaceful. The media warned the public that these protests were likely to become violent and, although they did not, the inconsequential and minimal

acts of violence that did occur were focused on in coverage (Greer and McLaughlin, 2010:1043). Stamou (2001:654) echoes this, stating that it is the actions in the protests rather than the causes behind them that garner the most media attention, as well as violence or unusual acts.

Hart (2013:402) points out the problem with this emphasis on violence, stating that this usually means the cause behind the protests is ignored. Further, it means that the protest is reduced to a spectacle rather than legitimate political action, and opportunity for serious discussion about the causes behind the protests may be lost.

#### *3.2.4. 'Us vs. Them' dynamics*

Another prevalent trend in protest discourse is the creation of an 'us versus them' dynamic. This is common in any media discourse, and protest discourse is no different. Fowler (2013:16) explains the ideology of ethnocentrism, which underlies us versus them constructions. Ethnocentrism refers to the focus on (or preoccupation about) people or groups who are perceived to be similar to oneself, and by which one identifies oneself. Those perceived to be different are viewed as a threat to one's own identity, and the differences between 'us' and 'them' are delineated by certain strict boundaries such as birthplace, gender, class, beliefs, and so on. This comes through strongly in protest discourse, as will be seen in Section 3.3, where the protesters are decisively 'othered' in line with the reporter's view on the subject.

#### *3.2.5. Intersection of race and class discourse*

The tendency to demarcate who the news reporter categorises as 'us' and 'them' naturally results in the intersection of class and race discourse with protest discourse. Class and race differences and struggles remain prevalent in most societies, and the structural inequalities which warrant or result in protests will only affect the relevant groups in society. As a result, the protesters are often also racially polarised as well as being polarised for being protesters, for example.

### 3.3. Similar Studies: Exemplifying Trends in Protest Discourse

These trends can be seen in a number of analyses of media protest coverage, some examples of which will be discussed in full below. This will not only exemplify the trends discussed above, but also exemplify how discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and

corpus linguistics can be used to investigate the ideologies underlying protest discourse in the media.

### 3.3.1. *'Riots' and demonstrations in the Chinese press*

Fang's (1994:463) research offers a look into the way different ideologies can manifest in protest texts in markedly different ways. He found that in Chinese publications, reports of protests differed noticeably based on whether the country where the protest took place was considered hostile or friendly towards the People's Republic of China. In countries thought of as friendly to China, protests were framed as social deviance, but in countries deemed hostile towards China, the protests were framed as valid responses to state oppression.

Fang analysed articles from the *People's Daily*, the official publication of the Communist Party in China and a newspaper that is widely accessible to the Chinese public. He first looked at lexical choices. It was found that unrest in countries whose governments were seen as hostile by the Chinese government, such as South Africa or Israel, was reported on much more than countries deemed non-hostile. Lexical items such as "struggle", which in Chinese culture implies that the cause is legitimate and evokes solidarity, were used to describe the protests in these countries. Often these words were coupled with other words pointing to the injustice of the oppressive governments, thereby applauding the actions of the protesters (Fang, 1994:247). Additionally, the protests in these countries were almost never referred to as riots, whereas the label "riot" was common in reports of protests in non-hostile countries. This support of the protesters is in line with the disdain felt towards the governments of these countries.

Secondly, Fang investigated the differences in syntactic structures between the reports of the protests. He found that in the reports of protests in non-hostile countries, the majority (82%) of sentences that described harm to the protesters were intransitive sentences. The intransitive sentences in this study omitted the cause of harm, in this case the police (Fang, 1994:475). When protesters were injured or killed, it was simply stated that they were injured or were killed, but information about who caused this was not given. To illustrate, the intransitive sentence *many protesters died* was preferred over the transitive sentence *police killed many protesters*. In CDA theory, this is believed to reflect a siding with the police, as the reporter is hesitant to portray the police as responsible for the harm, or to

cast the police in a negative light. In reports of protests in hostile countries, on the other hand, the opposite was found. In these countries, transitive sentences were mainly used (77%) to describe harm caused to the protesters, where the police were named as the cause for the harm (Fang, 1994:476). Similar effects were found in an analysis of the voice in transitive sentences, where the role of the police was either highlighted by consistent use of the active voice, or erased through use of passive or agentless passive constructions.

### 3.3.2. *Abortion, Desert Storm, and Representations of Protest in American TV News*

Ginna Husting (1999:159), in her content analysis of TV reports, examined American media representations of the 1991 “Operation Rescue” pro-life protest, which consisted of a two-month long blockade of an abortion clinic. Husting’s article looked at the way the ‘war on abortion’ was represented in light of previous representations of the Gulf War. While these two events are unrelated, the analysis gave insight into how the media constructs American national identity, and how protesters, similar to opponents in a foreign war, are not included in this identity. Husting’s analysis suggested the existence of an ideology at the time which marginalises feminism and delegitimises political activism as a valid form of political expression (Husting, 1999:160). This was seen through the media’s constructions of a unified, homogenous ‘us’, which was necessarily polarised against a ‘them’.

In analyses of media representations of the Gulf War, it was found that American performance and strategy in the war was framed as highly efficient, technologically advanced, controlled, and rational. This was juxtaposed to the irrational, out of control, violent and chaotic Iraq. Furthermore, there was almost no coverage of any anti-war protests, with most of the activism being reported on consisting of pro-war rallies. This created a strict binary representation of the war and people involved; with only one, homogenous group of Americans who support and excel in the War, as opposed to one homogenous group of violent, foreign terrorists (Husting, 1999:163). For example, discussions of America’s role in the War was often intertwined with hyper-masculine hero discourse, where America was conceptualised as the ‘good guy’ in a showdown between two individuals. There were consistent references to tropes of western or adventure films in this discourse, such as the CBS logo “Showdown in the Gulf”. In all networks analysed, the conflict (a complex and multifaceted phenomenon) was reduced to personifications of Bush,



Schwartzkopf, and Hussein, with Hussein being the ‘bad guy’, or moral evil, that was to be defeated.

Similar juxtapositions and polarisations were found in the coverage of the abortion protests. Once again, a debateable, complex issue which can be negotiated in a broad range of ways was reduced to a black-and-white “us versus them” scenario. However, in this case, not only pro-choice activists but the female activists as a whole made up the alienated ‘other’, with the American citizens who did not engage in any protesting as the rational, normal “people like you and me” (Husting, 1999:165). In addition, where the coverage of the Gulf war emphasized the excellence of American performance, coverage of the abortion protests emphasized destruction, failure, and a lack of control, similar to how Iraq was portrayed in coverage of the Gulf war. The ‘war on abortion’ was consistently construed as such, as news reporting of the event was saturated with military metaphors, such as “cease-fire,” “frontline,” “under siege,” and “on the defensive”. This war was criticised for tearing families and the community apart by ‘extremists’ on both sides of the debate. Rather than take a specific stance on the matter, all activists were blamed for the chaos and destruction, and condemned for disturbing the social order (Husting, 1999:167). This was reinforced by statements by public officials, including the then-president George Bush, who stated that protests do not help the cause, and that certain people “just come try to get themselves on the news”. Thus, through distinct ‘othering’ in the coverage of the abortion protests, protesting in general was construed as illegitimate and irrational; the opposite of the rational social order which should be upheld at all times.

### *3.3.3. Non-protesters in a student and teacher protest*

Anastasia Stamou (2001) used a slightly different approach and looked at how *non*-protesters in particular were represented in media coverage of protests in Greece. Non-protesters refer to those present at the protests but not involved in the protesting. The investigation of representations of non-protesters is viewed as important because of the effect they may have on the readers’ views of the protest and how the protests are received (Stamou, 2001:655). The protests occurred in 1998 and 1999 by both teachers and students in reaction to an education reform bill which threatened to limit access to education and teaching posts. The corpus of data consisted of thirty ‘hard news’ newspaper articles that discussed the protests.

The group of non-protesters appearing most frequently in the data was the parents of protesters. Due to the generally held idea that parents act in their children's best interests and that many of the readers would be parents themselves, it was theorised that the category of parents the articles associated with would be influential on the readers' perceptions of the protests (Stamou, 2001:659). The second group of non-protesters was drivers and pedestrians, followed by journalists and employees of the court, and lastly the 'hooligans' who intruded on the scene to cause destruction.

Stamou looked at if the actions of these non-protesters were described as negative or non-negative, violent or non-violent, and active or passive, as well as who or what is the cause of negative acts. Non-protesters were consistently depicted as the passive victims of violence at the hand of the protesters, so it is likely that the readers would be biased towards the protesters based on the news reports. The hooligans and protesters were construed as 'them', whereas non-protesters (the 'victims') were construed as 'us', particularly in explanations or justifications for violent acts (Stamou, 2001:666). Previous research has indicated that violence enacted by 'us' is often mitigated or justified by offering explanations for why this violence occurred or what motivated the violence. Violence enacted by 'them', on the other hand, does not have this justification (Stamou, 2001:672).

Stamou concluded that the study of non-protesters did reflect the status quo regarding sentiments towards protests at the time, and that an 'us versus them' dynamic was indeed created which was likely to influence the readers' perceptions of the event.

#### *3.3.4. Presidential Discourse and Campus Discord*

Powell (2004) used Critical Discourse Analysis to examine texts that topicalised the 1998 protests at Miami University. These protests occurred as a result of issues related to inequality and exclusivity within the university. The protests began after the University failed to satisfactorily address and deal with a hate crime that had occurred targeting black and homosexual students. The texts under investigation were words written or spoken by the president of the University at the time, James Garland, which were published and made broadly accessible to students, staff, faculty, and the Oxford community at large. These texts can be regarded as highly influential and reflective of the official discourse of diversity, standards, and access of the times, as the president would act as spokesperson for the beliefs and views of the institution as a whole (Powell, 2004:443). In the analysis of the

texts, Powell (2004:446) found that both Garland as well as the publications that reported on the event draw on the genre of presidential address, and position Garland as speaking *for* the University as opposed to engaging in a dialogue of any kind. This stood in opposition to the semantic content of the texts, which stressed the importance of conversation, but in reality, he had refused to meet with the protestors. Further, Garland's use of personal, demonstrative and possessive pronouns and choice of the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person narrative emphasised a shared sense of identity with himself and the University, while at the same time excluding the protestors (Powell, 2004:447). In other words, both the protestors, their actions, and the cause for which they were fighting were consistently 'othered' in these texts.

Furthermore, the protests and student unrest were consistently framed in negative terms. This was seen both by his use of metaphor and lexical items. For example, he consistently conflated the increase in student unrest with a decrease in standards, and constantly described student protests as a recent and harmful trend (Powell, 2004:458). In Garland's plan to move forward, he then refers to everyone as the "community" and urges them to learn and exemplify the (unnamed) humane values of the university, which speak to both a unified human spirit and the American dream. Powell (2004:451) notes that this idea of universal values, spirit, and dreams is problematic because it fails to acknowledge crucial differences in status and privilege of community members. What is more, the community he refers to here is a normative white, middle-class community. This is evident in Garland's reasons for why a more diverse environment would be beneficial for the University. It is clear that, when offering these reasons, he speaks exclusively to a white audience - he states that a more diverse environment would improve students' critical thinking skills due to exposure to "others" who have different ideas and backgrounds, and that it would prepare students for the increasingly diverse workforce and society (Powell, 2004:452). Thus, diversity is encouraged so that wealthy white students can gain enough experience with diversity, but the inherent justness of a diverse community is not recognised or mentioned. Ideals of diversity are thus reconfigured as serving the status quo and do not speak to underlying problems. There is no attempt to dismantle (or recognise) systematic inequalities.

This analysis exemplifies the ‘us versus them’ dynamic that is often found in protest discourse, as well as the delegitimization of protests and protesters which is accomplished both by presenting the protesters as ‘other’, as well as associating the protests with negativity. In addition, this analysis demonstrates the intersection of race and class with protest discourse. It is noteworthy that the demographics of the protesters – the group being constructed as ‘them’ – are mainly black and homosexual students; two groups of people who have been historically disadvantaged and regarded as second-class citizens. The discourse patterns surrounding this protest were found to uphold the status quo, however, this necessarily entailed upholding a society that was white and heteronormative, demonstrating the tendency of protest discourse to inevitably intersect with race and class discourse.

### *3.3.5. Indictments, Myths, and Citizen Mobilisation in Argentina*

Armony and Armony (2005:27) studied discourse on Internet forums and in presidential speeches surrounding the 2001 – 2002 political and economic crisis in Argentina. While many attributed this crisis to macro-level issues such as the financial climate, shaky policy-making and other institutional weaknesses, Armony and Armony maintain that these attributions ignored important cultural factors. They further assert that the crisis cannot be fully understood without considering factors such as concepts of national identity and national myths prevalent in Argentina at the time.

The 1999 recession which culminated in the financial depression of 2001 was believed by political analysts to be a result of various “impersonal” forces, such as unstable financial markets and poor decision-making. To look at more personal, cultural factors, Armony and Armony (2005:37) analysed close to 1000 messages on a discussion forum that topicalised the financial crisis, specifically concepts of national identity in the wake of this financial crisis. Using corpus linguistics, they looked at the most common, semantically full words most likely to express a bond with the country, such as “soil,” “children,” and “love”. The significant collocations of these key words were then found, and the semantic network of the discourse was mapped out.

This analysis revealed three main representations: representations of the rich and beautiful land, representations of the working class, and representations of the ruling class (Armony and Armony, 2005:38). It was found that the financial crisis did not affect the public’s

positive view of Argentina – both as a whole and as being a successful nation at some point in the future. It was believed that a potential catalyst for the protests was the frustration that would ensue after this idea of a successful nation was damaged or undercut by the financial crisis. The analysis further highlighted that this frustration was largely directed towards the ‘ruling class’, which comprised all those in political, judicial, and corporate positions of power. Words such as “corrupt,” “thieves,” and “inept” were the most prominent collocates of this ruling class, which was represented in a consistently negative way throughout the data (Armony and Armony, 2005:39).

In a corpus linguistic analysis of 310 of Argentinian President Menem’s speeches in the same study, the potential of a successful future Argentina, or the myth of the ‘Argentine Dream’ also emerged as a common theme. This was seen, for example, through collocations of “Argentina” with “change,” “greatness” and “transformation”.

The analysis revealed that the disintegration of the Argentine Dream was likely a key factor in the mobilisation of the protests, as this dream was shown to be an important part of Argentine national identity (Armony and Armony, 2005:47).

### *3.3.6. Antiwar Protests on a University Listserv*

Mark Hedley and Sara Clark (2007:26) used social framing theory and discourse analysis to look at the way anti-war protests were discussed on a university faculty listserv. An email was posted in support of the anti-Iraq war protests which invited faculty and staff to join in a vigil that was taking place. This inspired around 120 messages of discussion on the listserv. The analysis revealed an interesting depiction of, and unique insight into, the conflict between social movement and counter-movement in protest discourse.

The discourse centred around three distinct topics: discussions of anti-war protests in general, discussions of the war in Iraq, and discussions regarding appropriateness of engaging in debate on a university listserv. While there were some participants who supported the anti-war protests by citing the importance of free speech, human rights, democracy, and the importance of debate in academia, the bulk of the discourse criticised and delegitimised the protests. Some of the concerns raised about the protests included that they were counter-intuitive to the students’ interests, where a structured classroom discussion about the issue was thought to serve a better purpose than participation in a protest, as well as that protests are contrary to the responsibilities and discipline of

academia in general (Hedley and Clark, 2007:34). Further, the protests were criticised for being misplaced aggression, as the University did not start the war and the protests were regarded as an act against the University. Public demonstrations were also described as being unable to achieve any actual objectives, and thus futile. A last criticism of the protests was that protesters often break laws and disrupt the social order, which was described to take attention away from other, necessary issues (Hedley and Clark, 2007:35).

This research offers insight into the various ways protests are delegitimised. In particular, this research looks at student protests on university property are invalidated, which matches the nature of the protests under investigation in the present study.

### 3.3.7. *Chadors, Feminists, Terror*

Chan-Malik (2011) analysed newspaper and television reports in American media, which had closely followed the 1979 Iranian women's revolution and the events that led up to the protests. A first trend she noted was an emphasis on imagery of the chador or 'veil' which was taken for granted to necessarily represent female oppression. In each article, a definition of the chador was given which emphasised how orthodox it is as well as aesthetically unappealing. This was seen through descriptions such as "shapeless" or "head-to-toe veil orthodox Islamic custom dictates". These descriptions stood in clear opposition to the descriptions of the 'modern' female protesters who were dressed in "tight jeans or Western dresses" (Chan-Malik, 2011:120). In general, Khomeini's Islam was conceptualised as innately opposite to modernity, progress, and equality. This was seen in both the semantic content of the articles as well as the use of orientational metaphors which conceptualised traditional Islam and the East as 'back' and modernity and the West as 'forward', for example.

Beyond the emphasis on the chador, the articles also consistently highlighted the defiance of the modern, educated, and unveiled women involved in the protests. Chan-Malik noted that the movement seemed to be framed as similar or identical to the women's liberation movement that had taken place in America a few years prior. Iranian women were reported to want the same things as Western women, such as equal civil rights, but the needs of poor, working-class Iranian women, such as lack of opportunity and poverty, were not discussed (Chan-Malik, 2011:123).

Chan-Malik's analysis revealed that the women's rights protests were framed within the "Poor Muslim Woman" narrative and distinctly American concepts of civil rights, freedom, and second-wave feminism; thereby reinforcing ideals of Western imperialism, notions of Islamic terror, and the still pervasive polarisation of Islam and feminism (Chan-Malik, 2011:116). Chan-Malik (2011:113) found that American news coverage of the was entrenched in American norms and discourses regarding race, gender, sexuality, and class. What is more, this discourse was shown to be characteristic of typical understanding (and misunderstanding) of Iran and the Middle East today.

### 3.3.8. *"Since when did we have 100,000 Tamils?"*

In another study where race discourse intersected protest discourse and where an 'us vs them' dynamic was created, Daphne Jeyapal (2013:558) investigated the way Canadian media represented the 2008 protests by the global Tamil diaspora against the genocide of the Tamil people in northern Sri Lanka. These protests stimulated racialized debate about citizenship as well as the acceptability of public protest. Jeyapal analysed 153 newspaper articles published in Canada about the protests over a three-year period. These included news reports, letters from the public, columns, and other genres of publication. Jeyapal found that the protesters were represented as impatient and overstepping their bounds as Canadian residents, and in this way and others they were consistently othered.

It was found that across the different genres, the main discursive strategies worked to delegitimise the protests by framing the protests as a "strange encounter", and by constructing a highly racialized space (Jeyapal, 2013:564). The protesters were conceptualised as strangers or 'others' by referring to them almost always as "Tamil" and very rarely as "Tamil-Canadian" or "Canadian", and use of demonstrative pronouns such as "they" and "their" as opposed to "us" and "our". This othering was furthered and demonised with metaphorical references to the protesters as animals who need to be "caged", for example. In addition, the media tended to conflate representations of the protesters with representations of terrorists. The Tamil diaspora as a whole was equated with the LTTE or the Tamil Tigers, a militant organisation aimed at creating an independent Tamil state and ending the massacre of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Controversially, this organisation had been listed as a terrorist organisation by the conservative Sri Lankan government. While the treatment of the Tamil people has since been labelled as genocide, and atrocities that

occurred are still being unearthed to this day, the complexities of the Sri Lankan conflict are not well understood in Canada. The Tamil people were consistently and frequently equated with the Tamil Tigers, which in the Canadian context simply means ‘terrorist’ (Jeyapal, 2013:566). This has the effect of not only presenting the protesters as illegal and hostile, but also as non-members of the Canadian nation. As a result, the discourse of political liberation was reframed into discourse of terrorism.

Many articles also emphasized the idea that these protests, and the unrest in Sri Lanka in general, are not of concern or interest to Canadians, and that these protests are misplaced because it is not “their problem”. This further separates and others the Tamil from the rest of the Canadian population.

This othering and reframing indicates that certain bodies (in this case, “foreign” Tamil bodies) are not seen as welcome or entitled to take up public spaces. This idea was also seen in the metaphorical conceptualisations of space found in the data. Frequent use of spatial military imagery appeared in the data, such as “occupying” “taking over” and “besieging”. Simultaneously, the protesters were often racially polarised, and referred to as an “ethnic group”. Considering Canada’s traditional and historical involvement with and endorsement of political protests, it becomes clear that only certain members of the population are constructed as having the right to occupy public spaces. Evidently, the Tamil diaspora are not constructed as having this right, as their sense of belonging in Canada is seen as conditionally passive and more reminiscent of guests who should not overstep the boundaries of ‘real’ Canadians’ hospitality (Jeyapal, 2013:570).

### *3.3.9. Moralising class: mainstream political response to British riots*

From within a Western context, Bennett (2013:41) analysed responses to the Occupy London protests and the London riots which took place in 2011. He looked at the difference in responses to these protests by leader of the Labour Party Ed Miliband and Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron as reported in the news. While Miliband superficially aligned himself with the movement in line with the Labour Party’s efforts to differentiate themselves from the Conservative Party, the analysis showed that both politicians still framed the protests as an issue of morality rather than of structural class inequalities, which can be regarded as a reflection the almost identical neoliberal ideology that underpins both parties (Bennett, 2013:28).



Bennett looked at a speech given by Cameron and an article published under Miliband's name which were both statements in response to the riots. Bennett contends that, despite their differences in political ideology, both engage in recontextualising strategies which reframe the riots as a moral issue rather than a structural class issue. While Miliband recognises that there is a disconnect between the working class and the ruling class, this disconnect is named a difference in values. Both politicians condemn those who partook in the riots as having poor values, while Cameron asserts it indicates a complete moral collapse.

Cameron further distances himself and Britain in general from the protesters by describing the protesters as "them", as opposed to "us" and "our country", as well as using "this country" as opposed to "those thugs" (Bennett, 2013:38). Miliband does not take such an extreme stance, but instead emphasises poor values on the part of the richest 1%, too. However, it is not that this 1% *have* the power that is an issue, but rather that this 1% have bad values and are irresponsible. It is thus not capitalism itself to blame, but a negative 'aspect' of it. In both cases, then, it is a minority group of Britons with poor values to blame for the riots. This moralising strategy seen in both parties is a common trend in neoliberal discourse and is a longstanding feature of right-wing discourse, particularly when it comes to class discourse (Bennett, 2013:42). The recontextualising and othering strategies used in these statements were thus found to reflect the underlying political ideologies and motivations of both politicians.

#### 3.4. Conclusion

This chapter provided an understanding of the way protests tend to be represented in mainstream media. This was done by describing nine previous studies that had been undertaken within the field of applied linguistics, where one or more of the main trends in protest discourse was reflected. This section highlighted the analysts' methodologies, which ranged from a more general discourse analysis, to critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics. The information presented here will not only inform the methodology of the present study, but also provides important insight into what to look out for in the analysis. It will also be of interest to see which of these trends emerge in my own data, and to what extent.

## Chapter 4 Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

As described in Chapter 2, this study utilises the cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis. Chapter 2 also provided an overview of various triangulation methods, one of which is a corpus linguistic approach. Corpus linguistics was used as a starting point for this analysis. This chapter will outline the details of this as well as other methodological concerns pertaining to this study. The chapter begins with an outline of how the media texts were selected. Following this, it will provide an overview of corpus linguistic analysis and indication of how corpus linguistics was utilised in this study. This will be followed by an overview of the approach to CL-CDA analysis that was used in this research. The penultimate section of this chapter provides an overview of the experimental portion of the study, which aims to test the results of the CL-CDA analysis.

### 4.2 Selection of media texts

The articles that were selected for analysis in this study were found on each publication's online platform using key words such as "Fees Must Fall" or "student protests", and restricted to October 2015 and December 2016; the time period in which the protests were active. These publications included the *Daily Voice*, *Daily Sun*, *The Sowetan*, *Sunday Independent*, *Mail & Guardian*, and *News24*. The articles were reviewed in order to determine whether they contained descriptions of at least one violent interaction between police and protesters. 75 Suitable articles were found and converted to Microsoft Word documents (.doc).

### 4.3 Corpus linguistics analysis

Using Word, these documents were converted to plain text files (.txt) in order for the files to be compatible with the free software AntConc which was used for the analysis. A corpus linguistic analysis was conducted in order to gain preliminary insight into the data. The corpus linguistic analysis allowed the identification of words and the identification of the total amount of tokens in the text. This was useful because it allowed the researcher to determine whether the texts were comparable in size. Conversion to .txt format and the use of AntConc also allowed the researcher to process a large amount of data, particularly in the

initial phase of the research. Key terms could be easily located and, once this was done, AntConc allowed for the identification of trends across the data.

The following table indicates the title and publication date of each article, as well as the number of words and tokens in each article.

No.	Article Name	Date Published	Name of Publication	Total word types	Total tokens
1	FEES PROTEST DRAGS ON!	23 Sep 2016	Daily Sun	237	392
2	University takes no chances	8 Sep 2016	Daily Sun	133	195
3	You can't expect cops to be spectators - Phahlane	29 Oct 2016	Daily Sun	321	620
4	CPUT campus carnage	25 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	226	393
5	CPUT chaos	7 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	284	478
6	Faeces has fallen, UCT burns	6 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	363	676
7	#FeesMustFall protest turns violent	26 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	90	114
8	R2m damages, six arrests #FeesMustFall	28 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	204	334
9	UCT had to shut, again	18 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	209	328
10	Violence and rape at UWC	8 Nov 2016	Daily Voice	266	457
11	'We want the violence to stop' - Gordhan	27 Oct 2016	Daily Voice	355	634
12	Cops, students clash as classes halted at Wits	4 Oct 2016	Sunday Independent	282	506
13	Dire warning for students amid protest pandemonium	22 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	542	1205
14	Fee protests shut down UKZN	18 Aug 2016	Sunday Independent	117	175
15	#Fees 2017: 'I'm fighting for my career'	20 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	212	374
16	#FeesMustFall mayhem escalates	29 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	370	688
17	KZN students held after campus torched	6 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	392	816
18	Media shunned by protesting students	21 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	311	569
19	Nzimande condemns campus violence	21 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	349	685
20	PICS: Tear gas, stun grenades and running battles at Wits	21 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	318	690
21	PICS: Wits protest turns violent, again	11 Oct 2016	Sunday Independent	325	651
22	Protesting Wits students disrupt lectures	10 Oct 2016	Sunday Independent	179	294
23	Students pepper-sprayed as UJ erupts into chaos	28 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	344	704
24	Stun grenades, water cannons used on Wits protesters	10 Oct 2016	Sunday Independent	241	409
25	TUT protest shuts down Pretoria CBD	12 Oct 2016	Sunday Independent	292	530
26	Varsities shut after #Fees2017 protest drama	21 Sep 2016	Sunday Independent	524	1210

27	'We want to go back'	1 Oct 2016	Sunday Independent	368	719
28	#Fees2017: Private security guards throw rocks at students at UJ Doornfontein campus	28 Sep 2016	Mail & Guardian	157	326
29	11 Rhodes University students arrested on various charges for allegedly violating court interdict	28 Sep 2016	Mail & Guardian	225	482
30	#FeesMustFall takes fight to Union Buildings	23 Oct 2015	Mail & Guardian	296	595
31	#FeesMustFall2016: Holy Trinity Catholic Church priest shot in face, sparking clashes	10 Oct 2016	Mail & Guardian	323	658
32	NWU closes Mafikeng campus indefinitely after violent protests	25 Feb 2016	Mail & Guardian	213	435
33	Police clash with student protesters outside Parliament	21 Oct 2015	Mail & Guardian	358	676
34	Police fire stun grenades, arrest 23 at UCT over fee protests	20 Oct 2015	Mail & Guardian	299	487
35	State 'advised varsity shutdown'	7 Oct 2016	Mail & Guardian	509	1204
36	#UKZN: A rape allegation, police violence and the women students who feel vulnerable	6 Sep 2016	Mail & Guardian	521	1468
37	Wits stays shut as #FeesMustFall protests continue	26 Oct 2015	Mail & Guardian	227	359
38	Wits students vs private security: Rocks fly during Solomon House shutdown	20 Sep 2016	Mail & Guardian	241	484
39	Wits University erupts as police blast stun grenades and rubber bullets	21 Sep 2016	Mail & Guardian	357	752
40	Student protests hit watershed moment, Parliament targeted	21 Oct 2015	News24	295	583
41	10 students arrested during UWC protests	11 Nov 2015	News24	217	428
42	Chaos as protesting students force their way into Parliamentary precinct	21 Oct 2015	News24	165	290
43	CPUT postpones exams as mediation continues	14 Nov 2016	News24	178	284
44	#FeesMustFall - Shops looted in Braamfontein, clashes at UKZN - As it happened	10 Oct 2016	News24	138	199
45	I can still picture the anger in their eyes when they shot me - Wits student leader	5 Nov 2016	News24	250	439
46	Police fire rubber bullets at Wits students disrupting tests	20 Oct 2016	News24	118	212
47	Police fire stun grenades to disperse rock throwing Wits students	10 Oct 2016	News24	139	212

48	Post-apartheid disenchantment fuels student riots	23 Oct 2015	News24	346	609
49	Protests like a 'Campus Spring'	22 Oct 2015	News24	283	511
50	Rubber bullets fired at Union Buildings	23 Oct 2015	News24	211	383
51	Running battles between Wits students and cops move to city streets	10 Oct 2016	News24	103	152
52	Student protests enter 7th day	21 Oct 2015	News24	227	340
53	Student protests hit Durban	3 Sep 2015	News24	133	191
54	Student protests won't just go away - Max Price's son	22 Oct 2015	News24	262	493
55	Students, police clash off Mahikeng campus - NWU	26 Oct 2015	News24	224	458
56	The 9 days when students shook SA	29 Dec 2015	News24	749	1736
57	Thousands converge on Union Buildings	23 Oct 2015	News24	195	303
58	US concerned by police action in SA student protests	22 Oct 2015	News24	100	143
59	Violent protests flare up at University of Limpopo	26 Oct 2015	News24	189	305
60	WATCH: Bullets, stun grenade fired at Wits students	21 Sep 2016	News24	39	45
61	WATCH: Stun grenades, Nyalas used on protesting students after Zuma's 0% announcement	23 Oct 2016	News24	50	62
62	What if the #Feesmustfall protests turn violent?	25 Oct 2015	News24	341	648
63	Wits students continue fee protest	21 Oct 2015	News24	330	591
64	Zuma's 0% greeted with rubber bullets, stun grenades, stones	23 Oct 2015	News24	327	615
65	831 arrests mar 2016 Fees Must Fall protests	28 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	203	324
66	Certain students 'targeted for arrest' at UCT protest	25 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	150	255
67	CPUT management meets to map way forward after violent clashes	11 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	117	191
68	EFF being investigated over supporters' attack on police, looting	3 Nov 2016	The Sowetan	329	635
69	Four Wits students injured by rubber bullets	21 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	120	195
70	North West University Mahikeng campus closed, 'under siege'	28 Oct 2015	The Sowetan	212	423
71	Student leaders to meet with ANC as protests intensify	22 Oct 2015	The Sowetan	156	236
72	'UCT is burning' - Cars torched overnight after student leaders arrested	25 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	169	297

73	UWC protests, arson attacks fail to disrupt start of exams	8 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	143	251
74	Wits SRC leader Shaeera Kalla remains in hospital - #FMF leader	24 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	120	188
75	Wits students to meet on Friday, as Ipid probes claims police brutality	21 Oct 2016	The Sowetan	217	384

**Table 1:** List and details of articles collected for analysis

#### 4.4. The Cognitive Linguistic approach to CDA (CL-CDA)

This study utilises a cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis (CL-CDA) as advocated by Christopher Hart. There are many features that could be analysed under this model, however, only transactive constructions were selected for this study. This was further limited to only violent constructions between authorities and protesters.

In each of the 75 articles, all violent interactions between authorities and protesters were isolated and compiled in a separate document. The type of interaction chosen for this study excluded acts of vandalism, arrests, or violent interactions between protesters or between protesters and onlookers; only violent interactions between police, private security, and protesters were chosen for analysis. 234 of these transactive constructions were collected in total, and grouped according to news publication.

Each construction was then categorised as either a reciprocal or an asymmetric construction. Each reciprocal construction was further sub-categorised as a reciprocal<sup>1</sup> or a reciprocal<sup>2</sup> construction, and each asymmetric construction was sub-categorised as asymmetric<sup>1</sup> or asymmetric<sup>2</sup>. The asymmetric constructions were also sub-categorised as being in either the active or passive voice. In addition, the viewing frame of each construction was coded as either a close up<sup>1</sup>, close up<sup>2</sup>, medium shot, long shot<sup>1</sup>, or a long shot<sup>2</sup>. The frequency of these various categories of constructions was then recorded in a table, and percentages were calculated to aid analysis. A table containing the results of the full data set was created first, followed by six further tables which separated the data according to news publication. To further aid analysis, the tables were all colour-coded to indicate which categories theoretically favour the authorities, and which theoretically favour the protesters.

The table (see Chapter 5) containing the results from the full data set allowed conclusions to be drawn about the general trends found in the data. The six tables showing the results from each newspaper publication were then compared to these overall trends, and any differences that emerged across publications were highlighted in the analysis.

#### 4.5. Experiment

Five of these categories of constructions were chosen for further, psycholinguistic testing, including reciprocal<sup>1</sup>, reciprocal<sup>2</sup>, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> active, asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive, and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions. The viewing frame categories, and the active and passive asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions were thus excluded from further testing. These particular categories were chosen to see if Hart's results could be replicated in the South African context, as Hart looked at asymmetric<sup>1</sup> passive and asymmetric<sup>1</sup> active constructions, as well as reciprocal<sup>1</sup> and reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions in his own work. However, the results of this study's cognitive linguistic testing, as will be discussed in the following chapter, showed a high number of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, differing from Hart's findings. For this reason, asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions were focused on for testing as opposed to asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions.

This choice of constructions will allow conclusions to be made regarding the apportioning of blame across asymmetric vs reciprocal constructions, reciprocal<sup>1</sup> vs reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> active constructions vs asymmetric<sup>1</sup> passive constructions, and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions vs asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive constructions. This will give insight into whether these various constructions really do show a favouring of the police or of the protesters to the extent that it shapes and forms the readers' interpretations and value judgments of the parties being described. Testing these five constructions will also potentially reveal which of the constructions has the most influence on readers' perceptions, and which has the least. Hart (2016) found in his research, for example, that the use of the passive or active voice did not have the effect on readers it was theorised to have (Hart, 2016).

To test these features, an experiment in the form of an online survey will be performed. This survey will be modelled on Hart's (2016) own survey of similar form.

##### 4.5.1. Participants

A total of 309 participants completed the survey. Participants were recruited through various social media sites, including Facebook, Whatsapp, and Reddit's r/SampleSize.

Collecting data online was suitable for this study as not only has recent literature pointed to the reliability of psychological testing conducted via the Internet (e.g. Woods et al., 2015:28), but also because an online survey mimics the environment in which many consumers read the news, particularly online news (Hart, 2016: 11). This creates a near-authentic replication of how the participants would normally consume news. Another benefit of using online data collection platforms is that a broader variety of participants can be accessed, as opposed to restricted demographics found on university campuses. While participants were not restricted by factors such as location, age, or first language, they were asked to provide demographic information before completing the survey.

#### *4.5.2. Materials and Design*

The survey was designed and distributed through SurveyMonkey. Participants were presented with a short excerpt from a news report describing violent interactions between protesters and police. There were five variations of this text, each with one of the types of construction chosen for testing. The headlines contained one example of the construction, and the text itself contained a further three examples. Each participant was presented with one of the five versions, which were designed to automatically randomise for each respondent. These news excerpts were invented but inspired by the articles collected for analysis and designed to reflect the authentic texts. Only the construction under consideration differed across the texts. Text A represented reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, version B represented reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions, followed by asymmetric<sup>1</sup> active (C), asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active (D), and lastly asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive (E). The five reports were as follows:

##### **A) POLICE CLASH WITH STUDENT PROTESTERS OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT**

A protest against rising university fees became violent yesterday on the streets of Pretoria. Police fired stun grenades while students threw rocks in running battles throughout the day. The protest later moved towards the city centre where police and protesters continued to clash. Police eventually used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd around 3pm. 17 people were treated for injuries.

##### **B) STUDENT PROTESTERS CLASH WITH POLICE OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT**

A protest against rising university fees became violent yesterday on the streets of Pretoria. Students threw rocks while police fired stun grenades in running protests throughout the day. The protest later moved towards the city centre where protesters and police continued to clash. Police eventually used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd around 3pm. 17 people were treated for injuries.

##### **C) STUDENT PROTESTERS ATTACK POLICE OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT**



A protest against rising university fees became violent yesterday on the streets of Pretoria. Protesters attacked police with stones in running battles throughout the day. The protest later moved towards the city centre where protesters continued to assault police officers. Police eventually used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd around 3pm. 17 people were treated for injuries.

#### **D) POLICE FIRE STUN GRENADES AT STUDENT PROTESTERS OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT**

A protest against rising university fees became violent yesterday on the streets of Pretoria. Police fired stun grenades at protesting students in running battles throughout the day. The protest later moved towards the city centre where police continued to fire at protesters. Police eventually used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd around 3pm. 17 people were treated for injuries.

#### **E) STUDENT PROTESTERS COME UNDER ATTACK FROM POLICE OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT**

A protest against rising university fees became violent yesterday on the streets of Pretoria. Students were fired at with stun grenades by police in running battles throughout the day. The protest later moved towards the city centre where students continued to be shot at. Police eventually used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd around 3pm. 17 people were treated for injuries.

Participants were asked to read the text and move onto the questions that follow. Once the participant moved onto the questions by clicking “next”, there was no option to go back to the text so that participants could not re-read it. Report A was received by 61 participants, B by 68 participants, C by 62 participants, D by 67 participants, and finally E by 51 participants.

The respondents were then asked three questions about the text they had just read. These questions followed up all versions of the text, but the order in which they appeared was randomised to avoid order bias. Hart (2016:13) designed these questions to determine specific cognitive effects that were predicted by the CL-CDA theory. The questions read as follows:

1. Where would you place the blame for the violence that occurred?
2. How aggressive did you think the police were?
3. How aggressive did you think the protesters were?

Each question was answered on a five-point Likert scale. For question 1, respondents could choose from <Protesters Fully to Blame – Protesters Mostly to Blame – Both Parties Equally to Blame – Police Mostly to Blame – Police Fully to Blame>. The answers to both question 2 and question 3 were chosen from the scale <Not Aggressive At All – Somewhat Aggressive – Quite Aggressive – Very Aggressive – Extremely Aggressive>.

#### *4.5.3 Statistical Analysis*

The data collected from the survey were then subject to statistical analyses of variance (ANOVA) in order to determine whether the five constructions under investigation yield

statistically significant results. The demographic variables were also analysed to see their impact on cognition.

#### 4.6. Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the methodological approach used in this study. This began with a preliminary corpus linguistic analysis of the data, followed by an outline of the cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis. This section also motivated for why this study only focuses on violent transactive constructions in the media text. This chapter also provided an overview of an experiment that was designed by the researcher to test the influence of these constructions on readers. This experiment was modelled on Hart's (2016) experiment, but adapted to suit the South African context. This includes a focus on asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, the integration of the South African context in the texts, and the inclusion of the race and multilingualism as categories in the survey. The following chapter will present the findings of the CL-CDA analysis.

## Chapter 5

### Analysis

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter will begin by revisiting the conceptual processes used for a cognitive linguistic critical discourse analysis that were discussed briefly in Chapter 2. These processes, including structural configuration and positioning strategies, will be applied to the data and explained in terms of the data collected for this study. Examples of these conceptual processes found in the data set will be used to illustrate the concepts along with diagrams which conceptualise these constructions.

Once the constructions have been applied and explained, the results of the data collected for the analysis of 75 articles from six different news publications will be presented. 234 Constructions in total were gathered from the articles, then categorised according to the type of construction and the conceptual process they invoke. Subsequent to this, the data is discussed in accordance with the publications to which the text belongs. The results of the entire data set will first be discussed and evaluated. Then, the results of the analyses will be interpreted according to Hart's theory, and overall conclusions will be drawn.

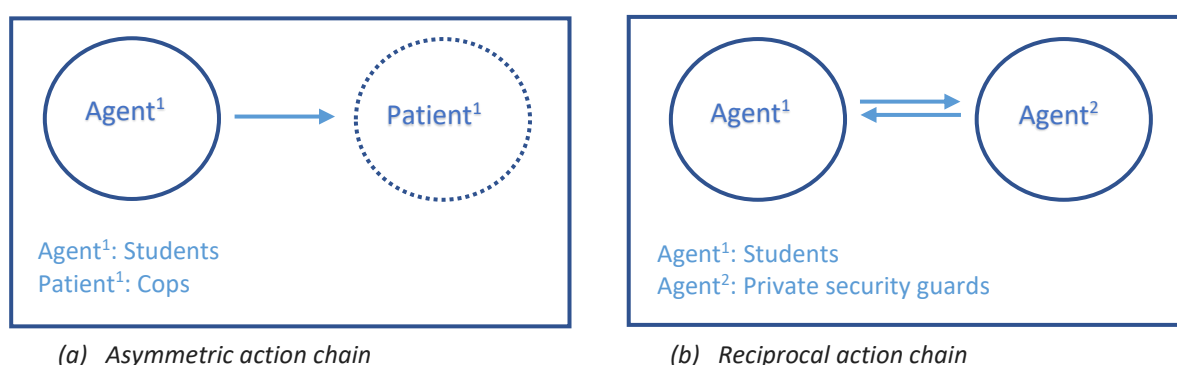
#### 5.2. Structural configuration: Action schemas

A transactive construction is a grammatical construction, such as a clause, sentence, or collection of sentences that describes an interaction between two parties. The use of the word "transactive" in this term brings to the fore the concept of trade, exchange, transfer, or transaction. Within this theory, this exchange or transfer refers to a transfer of *energy* between parties. Interactions between parties are conceptualised as energy flows or force vectors, which can be bidirectional or unidirectional (Hart, 2015:246). These constructions each invoke action schemas represented in Figure 1 below.

In unidirectional energy transfers the source of the energy, or the 'agent', is differentiated from the party on the receiving end of the interaction, the 'patient'. The agent directs its energy from the head of a singular force vector towards the patient, who is conceptualised to receive the energy 'downstream' or at the tail of the vector. A unidirectional energy flow invokes an asymmetric action chain, as exemplified in (a) and conceptualised in Figure 1(a) below.

Bidirectional transfers, on the other hand, do not evoke the agent-patient dichotomy. In these constructions, energy transfer is reciprocal, or appearing on twin vectors. Both parties, then, are agents (Hart, 2015:246). This bidirectional energy flow invokes a reciprocal action chain, as seen in (b) and Figure 1(b) below.

- (a) Plein Street resembles a mini warzone as **[students<sub>AGENT<sup>1</sup>]</sub>** burn rubbish, smash windows and pelt **[cops<sub>PATIENT<sup>1</sup>]</sub>** with rocks.  
(Author Unknown, 2016c: online)
- (b) **[University of Johannesburg students<sub>AGENT<sup>1</sup>]</sub>** are clashing with **[private security guards<sub>AGENT<sup>2</sup>]</sub>** after they were barred from entering the Doornfontein campus.  
(Pather, 2016a: online)



**Figure 1. Transactive Constructions**

The type of action schema invoked plays an important role in responsibility placement and blame attribution. In an asymmetric action chain, the cause, responsibility and blame for the action is placed on the agent. Alternatively, in reciprocal action chains, this is shared across both parties.

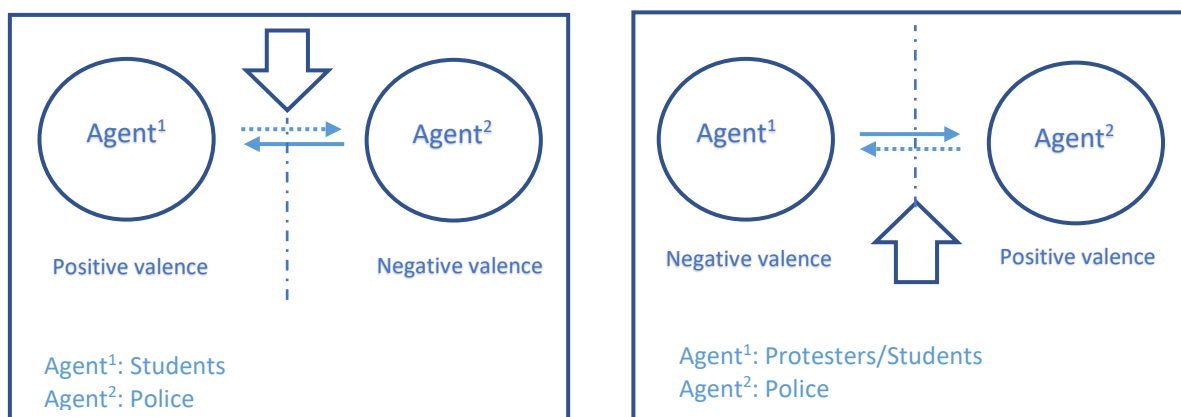
### 5.3. Positioning: Panning and Zoom

Action chains can be said to provide the conceptual structure, but the point of view taken in each interaction also holds significant ideological implications. Positioning strategies frame the event from a specific *perspective*, foregrounding certain actors or events, and backgrounding others. In each action chain, the point of view could be anchored at either of the two parties involved.

While a reciprocal action chain may be more neutral than an asymmetric action chain, it is important to note the information sequence in reciprocal constructions as they can introduce some bias. It is argued that in media discourse, the information presented first (on the left-hand side of the construction) is associated with negative valence. Information

presented second, on the other hand, is associated with positive valence. It is thus theorised that the agent introduced second is being favoured. As conceptualised in Figure 2 and examples (c) and (d), one can note that while both parties are described as responsible for the interaction or violence that occurred (due to the reciprocity of the construction), the reader will be introduced to one party first, and the other last. According to theory, the reader is likely to positively associate with the agent that appears last in the construction.

- (c) Shops have been looted in Braamfontein near Wits University and [**police**<sub>AGENT<sup>2</sup></sub>] and [**students**<sub>AGENT<sup>1</sup></sub>] clashed at UKZN in Pietermaritzburg as the #FeesMustFall protests continued.  
(Herman and Hess, 2016: online)
- (d) Johannesburg – [**Protesting students**<sub>AGENT<sup>1</sup></sub>] at the University of Witwatersrand clashed with [**police**<sub>AGENT<sup>2</sup></sub>] after they disrupted classes and tests on Thursday.  
(Tandwa and Chabalala, 2016: online)



(c) Reciprocal action chain where Agent<sup>2</sup> is to the left of the conceptualiser

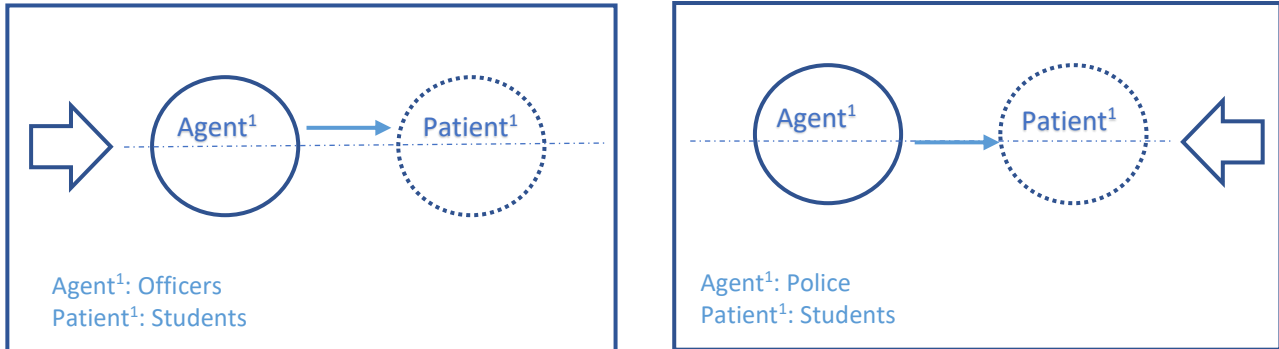
(d) Reciprocal action chain where Agent<sup>1</sup> is to the left of the conceptualiser

**Figure 2. Points of view in reciprocal action chains**

Where information sequence informs an evaluation of reciprocal constructions, the use of passive or active voice informs an evaluation of asymmetric constructions. When the active voice is used in an asymmetric action chain, such as in (e), a view of the event from the perspective of the *agent* is encoded. The agent is foregrounded and the energy flow is experienced as moving outward and away from the conceptualiser. In this way, the conceptualiser adopts the perspective of the agent. Alternatively, a passive action chain will encode the perspective of the *patient*. In a passive construction such as (f), the patient is foregrounded and the agent is backgrounded.

- (e) [**Officers**<sub>AGENT<sup>1</sup></sub>] fired stun grenades, forcing the [**students**<sub>PATIENT<sup>1</sup></sub>] back to campus.  
(Chernik, Monama, Makhubu, Ndlazi and Gwangwa, 2016: online)

- (f) The university of the Witwatersrand has confirmed that [**four students** PATIENT<sup>1</sup>] were injured by rubber bullets when [**police** AGENT<sup>1</sup>] had dispersed a group of protesting students on campus on Thursday.  
(Author Unknown, 2016d: online)



(e) Active asymmetric action chain where the conceptualiser takes the Agent's point of

(f) Passive asymmetric action chain where the conceptualiser takes the Patient's point of

**Figure 3. Points of view in asymmetric action chains**

The role of voice in action chains is to position the conceptualiser so that the interaction is viewed from the perspective of either the agent or the patient. In an active action chain, the agent is seen to be in a position of conflict with the patient. The passive voice, on the other hand, shows the agent to be in a position of antagonism with the (passive) patient. The alternative voices used in these constructions is said to place the conceptualiser literally and metaphorically on either the side of the agent or the patient. The energy flow is directed, then, either away from or towards the conceptualiser. As such, it is expected in an analysis that positive actions of the in-group should be presented frequently in the active voice, as the conceptualiser will be placed in the position of the (positively acting) agent. Similarly, negative events happening to the in-group are expected to be written passively, so that the conceptualiser will be metaphorically on the receiving end of this event; solidifying the out-group member in an antagonistic role. This would be consistent with the ideological strategy of positive self-representation and negative other-representation often found in media discourse and discourse in general.

The last construal operation surrounding action chains is what Hart (2014:182) refers to as *Zoom*. *Zoom* relates to the amount of background information given in conjunction with each transactive construction, or the extent to which the full scene is captured in each

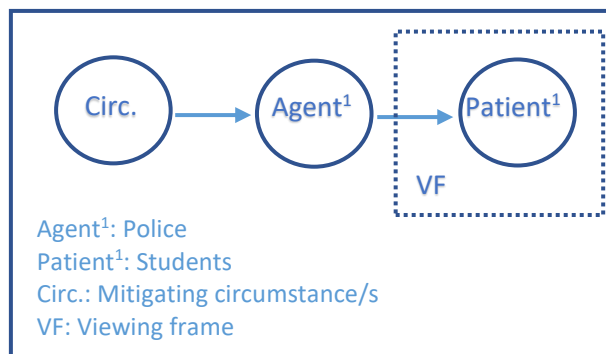
construction. As mentioned previously, Hart distinguishes between a *close-up shot*, a *medium shot*, and a *long-shot*.

A *close-up shot*, as the name implies, is a description of a scene or interaction where either the agent or the patient are not mentioned; or only the result of the interaction is mentioned. In the case of injuries, for example, only the injury itself would be mentioned without an indication of how the injury was sustained. Consider the example of a *close-up shot* in (h), for example, where the construction ‘zooms in’ on the police’s use of weapons, without including information regarding who they were shooting at or why. This could be interpreted as acting to emphasize the police violence by excluding the other party as well as any explanation. Similarly, this could be argued to eliminate any responsibility the students may have had in the situation entirely.

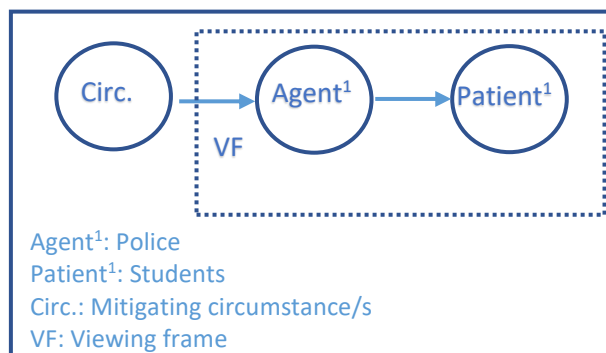
- (g) Wits University erupts as **[police<sub>AGENT</sub><sup>1</sup>] blast stun grenades and rubber bullets.**  
(Pather, 2016d)

A *medium shot*, on the other hand, encodes a viewing frame that captures the full action chain of the interaction. The agent, patient, and result of the interaction are captured, but additional information that may affect the conceptualiser’s judgment of the interaction is not included. Compare (h) and (i), a *medium* and a *long-shot* respectively, where both constructions include the full action chain in the viewing frame. In (i), however, the action chain is precluded by information that could be interpreted as delegitimising the police action. The underlined phrase “the students were peaceful but” describes a scenario in which the police violence in the interaction was unwarranted and unprovoked. This is likely to influence the conceptualiser’s opinion of police negatively. In this way, the additional information given in a *long-shot* can serve to attach value judgments to the interactions captured in the action chain, whether this be to legitimise or delegitimise the actions of either party involved.

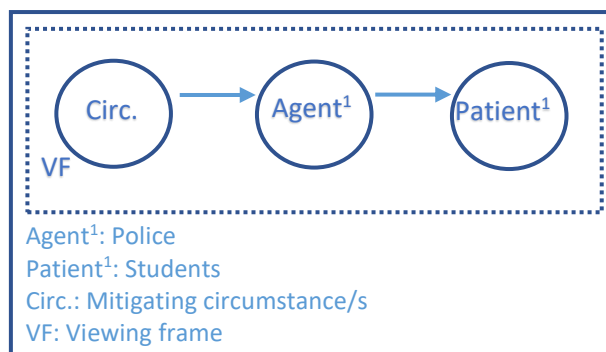
- (h) **[Students<sub>AGENT</sub><sup>1</sup>] throw stones at [private security<sub>PATIENT</sub><sup>1</sup>].**  
(Lepule, 2016b)
- (i) The students were peaceful but once they arrived to enter the Doornfontein campus, **private security threw rocks at the students and pepper sprayed them.**  
(Pather, 2016a)



(a) Close-up shot



(b) Medium shot



(c) Long-shot

**Figure 4. Viewing Frames**

#### 5.4. Data

A total of 75 articles were collected from six online news publications topicalising the fees protests in South Africa and sorted according to the features described above. Each interaction between the police and protesters (n=234) was isolated and categorised according to the two types of transactive construction: asymmetric or reciprocal. These two categories were further split into two more categories: Asymmetric<sup>1</sup>, Asymmetric<sup>2</sup>, Reciprocal<sup>1</sup>, or Reciprocal<sup>2</sup>.

An asymmetric<sup>1</sup> construction encodes an asymmetric action chain where the police are agent<sup>1</sup>. An asymmetric<sup>2</sup> construction, on the other hand, encodes an asymmetric action chain in which the students are agent<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, a reciprocal<sup>1</sup> construction encodes a



reciprocal action chain in which the students are mentioned first, and a reciprocal<sup>2</sup> construction encodes a reciprocal action chain in which the police are mentioned first.

Each of these four categories were then sub-categorised according to the point of view taken in each construction. These sub-categories include: close-up<sup>1</sup> (a close-up shot favouring police), a close-up<sup>2</sup> (a close-up shot favouring students), medium, long shot<sup>1</sup> (a long shot justifying police behaviour), and finally a long shot<sup>2</sup> (a long shot justifying student behaviour). Lastly, the asymmetric constructions were both categorised as active or passive, as can be seen on the far-right of Table 1.

#### *5.4.1. Critically interpreting the data*

Within the context of political protest discourse and from a critical perspective, these varying constructions function to attribute blame or apportion responsibility for the violence they describe in varying ways:

#### *5.4.2. Reciprocal vs. asymmetric constructions*

As described in Section 5.2, an asymmetric action chain attributes blame to the agent while casting the patient as the victim. As such, it follows that asymmetric constructions with the protesters as agent (asymmetric<sup>1</sup>) favour the police, and asymmetric constructions with the police as agent (asymmetric<sup>2</sup>) favour the protesters. In line with this, Hart (2016:7) found that right-wing press in the UK preferred asymmetric constructions where the protesters were agent (asymmetric<sup>1</sup>) over reciprocal constructions. This is argued to be reflective of a willingness to present the protesters as the cause of the violence, and an unwillingness to share the blame for the violence between both protesters and police. Left-wing press in the same study, on the other hand, preferred to use reciprocal constructions when describing violence in which protesters were the agent. This holds with the theory, which argues that reciprocal constructions conceptually share blame across the two parties, as sharing the blame would represent the agentive in-group (the protesters) more favourably. It is thus expected that in publications favouring protesters there would be a higher number of reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions than asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions.

#### *5.4.3. Reciprocal constructions*

In an analysis of reciprocal constructions overall, it is argued that the information sequence introduces bias. Historically, the orientation left has been symbolically negative and the right symbolically positive. In more recent times, theories such as the body-specificity

hypothesis have demonstrated that in general the left tends to be associated with negative valence, and the right with positive valence (Hart, 2016:11). In terms of reciprocal constructions, then, the agent introduced first (on the left-hand side of the sentence) tends to be evaluated negatively, and the agent introduced second tends to be evaluated positively. Hart (2016:7) found this to be true in his own study, where left-wing publications preferred reciprocal constructions mentioning the police first (reciprocal<sup>2</sup>), and right-wing publications preferred mentioning the protesters first (reciprocal<sup>1</sup>).

#### 5.4.4. *Asymmetric constructions*

Analyses of voice in asymmetric constructions also hold ideological implications. Hart (2016:11) argues that in the active voice, the conceptualiser is more likely to view the actions of the agent as legitimate or justified, due to the conceptualiser viewing the event metaphorically from the perspective of the agent. He further argues that in the passive voice, the conceptualiser is most likely to view the agent's actions as antagonistic, due to the energy flowing metaphorically towards the conceptualiser in such constructions.

Considering this, it is expected that publications favouring the police will use the passive voice more frequently in constructions where the police are the patient (passive asymmetric<sup>1</sup>). When the police are on the receiving end of violence as the patient, use of the passive voice will influence the conceptualiser to view the agentive protesters as antagonistic. Similarly, constructions where the police are agentive (asymmetric<sup>2</sup>) should be constructed more frequently in the active voice, as theoretically this will influence the conceptualiser to regard the police action as more legitimate. Hart's (2016:7) study found this to be the case in right-wing publications.

Similarly, publications favouring the protesters should theoretically make use of the passive voice in constructions where the protesters are the patient (asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive). In constructions where the students are agentive (asymmetric<sup>1</sup>), then, the active voice should thus be preferred.

#### 5.5. *Data results*

As seen in the previous section, the various categories of constructions can be sorted according to if they supposedly favour the police or the protesters. This can also be interpreted as tending towards a more conservative or liberal disposition. Due to this, the table containing the data results is colour-coded both horizontally and vertically according

to whether or not the category or sub-category (theoretically) favours the students or the police.

Transactive construction type	Total (234)		Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	54 (23%)		0	0	35 (65%)	15 (28%)	4 (7%)		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	31 (13%)		0	0	20 (65%)	10 (32%)	1 (3%)		
								Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	40 (17%)		3 (7.5%)	1 (2.5%)	24 (60%)	9 (22.5%)	3 (7.5%)	30/40 (75%)	10/40 (25%)
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	109 (47%)		2 (2%)	10 (9%)	50 (46%)	31 (28%)	16 (15%)	70/109 (64%)	39/109 (36%)

	Constructions favouring students
	Constructions favouring the police

**Table 1. Results of the full data sample (75 articles)**

As can be seen from Table 1 above, 47% of the constructions (n=109) were asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, which shows a definite and overarching focus on the violent actions of the police, particularly when compared with the much lower number of asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions (n=40). Reciprocal constructions made up 36% of the total constructions, though interestingly most of these were reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions which favour the police rather than the students. There were also more reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions than asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions, however, which was also theorised to be in the students' favour.

The preferred viewing frame encoded for each construction was the most neutral option of a medium shot. The second-most preferred option, however, was the long shot favouring the police (long shot<sup>1</sup>). This undermines the overall favouring of the students at least partly, due to the explicitness of the bias in a long shot. There were some long shots favouring the students (long shot<sup>2</sup>), as well as some close-ups found in the data, but neither category was prevalent.

In a voice analysis of this data, it seemed that the active voice was preferred overall and was used with similar frequency in both types of asymmetric construction. According to theory, the high use of the active voice in asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions shows a favouring of the

police, and the high use of the active voice in asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions shows a favouring of the students.

Overall, the data shows mixed results in terms of favouring the students or the police. Overall, however, the theory shows the publications to be in support of the students, as indicated by the extremely high number of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. The following section will describe the data results according to each publication, highlighting deviations from the trends found above throughout.

#### 5.5.1. *Daily Sun*

The three articles collected in the *Daily Sun* contained only four transactive constructions. As can be seen in Table 2, none of these constructions were reciprocal, and six out of the seven were asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. As mentioned, these constructions encode a unidirectional energy flow from the police as the agent. Repeated or exclusive use of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions may indicate an emphasis on the actions and violence of the police. In addition, all six of these interactions were constructed in the passive voice. According to theory, this positions the conceptualiser at the tail of the energy vector, giving the conceptualiser the patient's point of view. From this perspective, the police are constructed as the antagonist. There is one long shot<sup>1</sup> which acts to justify police behaviour somewhat, but other than this instance the data points to a favouring of the students.

Transactive construction type	Total (4)	Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0		
							Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	1 (25%)	0	0	1 (100%)	0	0	1/1 (100%)	0
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	3 (75%)	0	0	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	0	0	3/3 (100%)



	Constructions favouring students
	Constructions favouring the police

Table 2. Results of the *Daily Sun* data (3 articles)

### 5.5.2. Daily Voice

The *Daily Voice* data set is the only one where the majority of the constructions were reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions (41%). As mentioned, this construction theoretically favours the police, which deviates from the norms the overall data shows. In addition, there were no viewing frames encoded in any of the constructions in this sample that favour the students (i.e. there were no close-up<sup>2</sup>s or long shot<sup>2</sup>s) at all. In line with this, there were slightly more (approximately 10% more) long shots favouring the police in this data sample than the norm.

In addition, the *Daily Voice* data is also unique in that it is the only publication that has more asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions than asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. Once again, these constructions theoretically favour the police. Of the asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions that were found, though, all of them encoded a viewing frame with a longshot<sup>1</sup> favouring the police. These constructions were also all constructed in the passive voice; again favouring the police.

However, most of the asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions were constructed in the active voice which is argued to be a construction favouring the students. Further, there are more reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions than asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions which also theoretically favours the students.

Overall, though, this data sample points overwhelmingly towards a favouring of the police, starkly contrasting the trends in the overall data.

Transactive construction type	Total (33)	Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	14 (43%)	0	0	10 (71%)	4 (29%)	0		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	1 (3%)	0	0	0	1 (100%)	0		
							Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	11 (33%)	1 (9%)	0	9 (82%)	1 (9%)	0	8/11 (72%)	3/11 (28%)
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	7 (21%)	0	0	0	7 (100%)	0	7/7 (100%)	0/8 (0%)





	Constructions favouring students
	Constructions favouring the police

Table 3. Results of the *Daily Voice* data (8 articles)

### 5.5.3. *Mail & Guardian*

The *Mail & Guardian* data showed some similar trends to the overall data, with a few differences that seem to increase the support of the protesters. While asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions still make up the majority, there are also more reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions than reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions, which shows a further leaning in favour of the students. Another difference in this sample is the increased number of asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions written in the active voice. All of the asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions were written in the active tense, which is higher than the average of 75% in the overall data. In addition, this data set showed a much higher number of viewing frames favouring the students. Overall there were more *close-up shots* and *long shots* favouring the students than ones favouring the police, where in the overall trends there were significantly more favouring the police. The only categorisation in the table below which favours the police is the passivity of the majority of the asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. Overall it could thus be concluded that the *Mail & Guardian* data favours the students to a greater degree than the rest of the publications which were included in this study.

Transactive construction type	Total (44)	Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	5 (11%)	0	0	3 (60%)	0	2 (40%)		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	7 (16%)	0	0	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	0		
							Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	7 (16%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)	7/7 (100%)	0
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	25 (57%)	0	3 (12%)	10 (40%)	4 (16%)	8 (32%)	20/25 (80%)	5/25 (20%)

	Constructions favouring students
	Constructions favouring the police

**Table 4. Results of the *Mail & Guardian* data (12 articles)**

### 5.5.4. *News24*

The *News24* data is arguably most reflective of the overall trends found in the full data set. As discussed previously, the overall trends indicate a favouring of the students with regards to the majority of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, the dispersion of active and passive voice across all the asymmetric constructions, and a favouring of long shots favouring the police. This data set could be interpreted as favouring the students slightly less than what is reflected overall in the data, however, as there are an equal number of reciprocal<sup>1</sup> and

reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, which preferred reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions. Furthermore, there are very few viewing frames which favour the students. Overall it could be concluded that the *News24* data follows the overall trend, but the publications seem to indicate that *News24* does favour the students to a lesser degree than the other publications, but it could still be said that it favours the students overall.

Transactive construction type	Total (64)	Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	10 (15.5%)	0	0	6 (60%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	10 (15.5%)	0	0	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	0		
							Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	9 (14%)	0	0	6 (67%)	3 (33%)	0	7/9 (78%)	2/9 (22%)
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	35 (55%)	1 (3%)	4 (11%)	20 (57%)	8 (23%)	2 (6%)	26/35 (74%)	9/35 (26%)



<span style="color: #00AEEF;">■</span>	Constructions favouring students
<span style="color: #002060;">■</span>	Constructions favouring the police

**Table 5. Results of the *News24* data (25 articles)**

#### 5.5.5. *The Sowetan*

Data from this sample showed some similarities with the *Daily Voice* data, in that it seemed to lean more towards favouring the police despite overall trends favouring the students. While asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions remained in the majority, the analysis of passivity in the asymmetric constructions showed unusual results. As can be seen in Table 6 below, the majority of the asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions were passive (83%), where usually only around 25% are passive. Furthermore, the percentage of active asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions (77%) was slightly higher than normal (64%). Both these results (colour-coded in navy blue) favour the police. There were also more long shots favouring the police (long shot<sup>1</sup>) than normal.

Transactive construction type	Total (27)	Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	6 (22.5%)	0	0	4 (67%)	1 (16.5%)	1 (16.5%)		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	2 (7%)	0	0	0	2 (100%)	0		
							Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	6 (22.5%)	1 (16.5%)	0	1 (16.5%)	4 (67%)	0	1/6 (17%)	5/6 (83%)
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	13 (48%)	0	1 (7%)	4 (31%)	4 (31%)	4 (31%)	10/13 (77%)	3/13 (23%)



	Constructions favouring students
	Constructions favouring the police

**Table 6. Results of the *The Sowetan* data (11 articles)**

### 5.5.6. *Sunday Independent*

The *Sunday Independent* data followed the norms of the overall data relatively closely. The only category that differed notably from the norm was the number of active asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, which was calculated at a low 27% as opposed to the standard 65%. This would indicate a further siding with the students, which could be further supported by the high percentage of active asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions (100%).

Transactive construction type	Total (62)	Close-up <sup>1</sup>	Close-up <sup>2</sup>	Medium	Long shot <sup>1</sup>	Long shot <sup>2</sup>		
Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>	19 (30.5%)	0	0	12 (63%)	7 (37%)	0		
Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	11 (18%)	0	0	8 (73%)	2 (18%)	1 (9%)		
							Active	Passive
Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	6 (9.5%)	0	0	2 (33%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)	6/6 (100%)	0/6 (0%)
Asymmetric <sup>2</sup>	26 (42%)	1 (3.5%)	2 (7.5%)	14 (54%)	7 (27%)	2 (8%)	7/26 (27%)	19/26 (73%)

	Constructions favouring students
	Constructions favouring the police

**Table 7. Results of the *Sunday Independent* data (16 articles)**

### 5.6. Conclusion

This CL-CDA indicates that South African news publications ideologically favoured the protesters in their coverage of the Fees Must Fall protests in 2015 and 2016. While some results showed a favouring of the police, such as the higher number of reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions than reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, the above conclusion could be drawn overall



due to the extremely high number of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. Overall, there was not huge differentiation between the different publications, where only the *Daily Voice* data showed strong deviations from the trends found in the entire data set. Due to the prevalence of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, the experimental portion of this study focussed on asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions by including both its active and passive form. The following chapter reports on the findings of this experiment.

## Chapter 6

### Results of the Experiment

The following chapter presents an overview of the quantitative aspect of this study. A total of 309 participants completed the online survey, which required participants to read a short paragraph and answer three follow-up questions. There were five variations of the paragraph, each containing three instances of the constructions under investigation. These five constructions were reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions, reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions, asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions, and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive constructions. The way in which these constructions were distributed to the participants is outlined in Section 6.1. below as well as the demographic information of the participants. Section 6.2 reports on the results of the experiment itself, which was analysed in order to assess the effects of the construction types on readers' perceptions of blame and aggression, as well as what role demographic variables played in the interpretation of the data. Due to spatial constraints, visualisations of the data results in the form of tables and graphs will only be included in Section 6.2.1.

#### 6.1. Materials and Participant Demographics

The survey was designed to randomly disseminate one of the five versions of the survey to each participant. Figure 1 below shows the distribution of the five versions of the survey across the respondent pool (n=309). The five versions of the survey were fairly equally distributed amongst all participants.

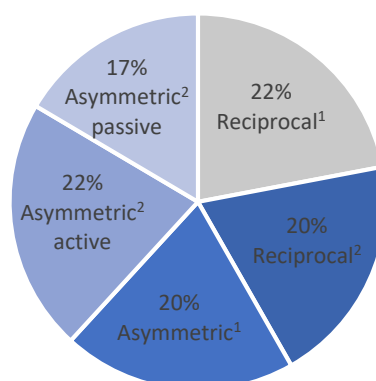


Figure 1: Percentage of participants per construction type

After answering three follow-up questions to the text, participants were asked to provide their demographic information. This included their age, first language, number of languages

spoken, political affiliation, country of residence, race, and level of education. Figures 2 to 8 below represent the demographic information of the participants.

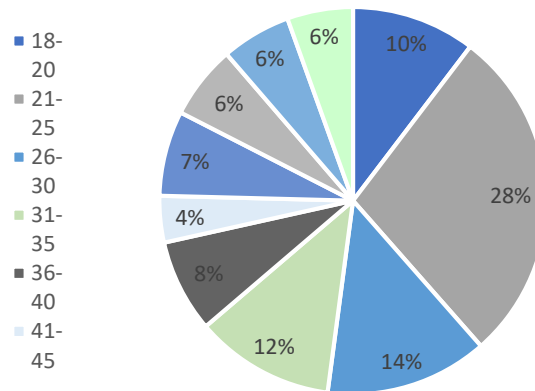


Figure 2: Age [Median = 28; Mean = 34]

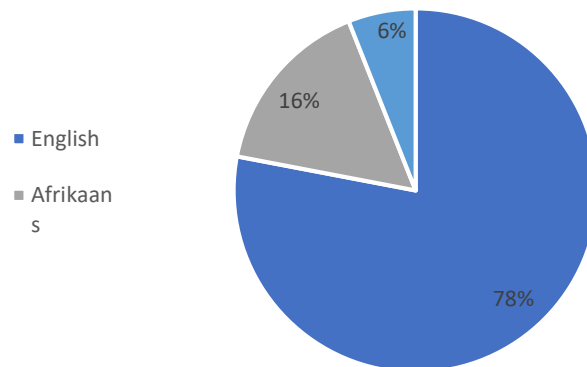


Figure 3. Native language

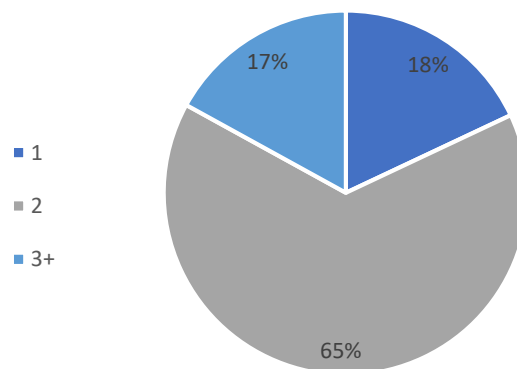


Figure 4. Number of languages spoken

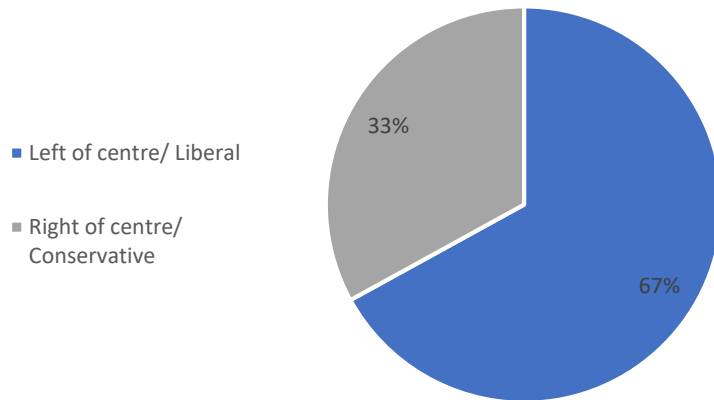


Figure 5. Political affiliation

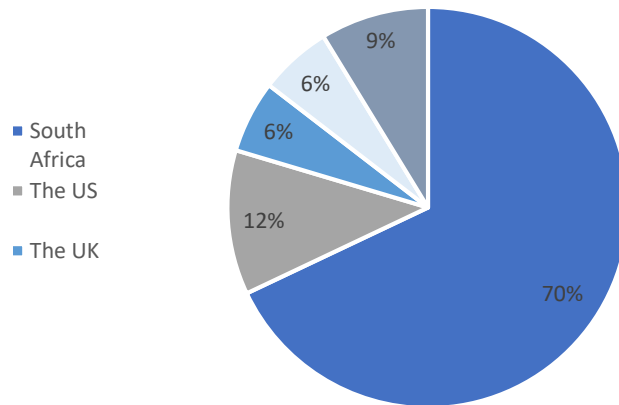


Figure 6. Country of residence

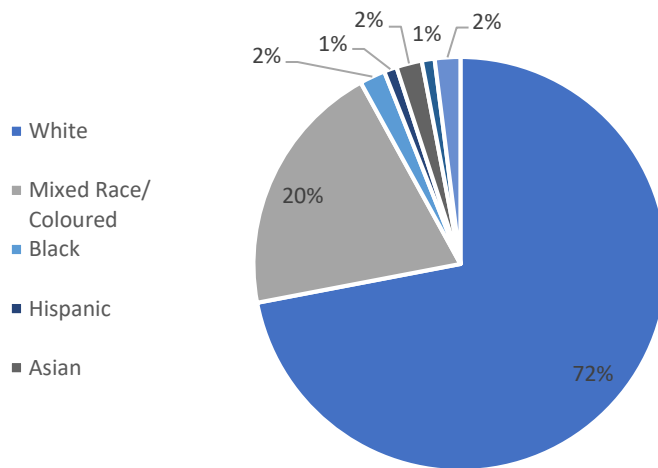


Figure 7. Race

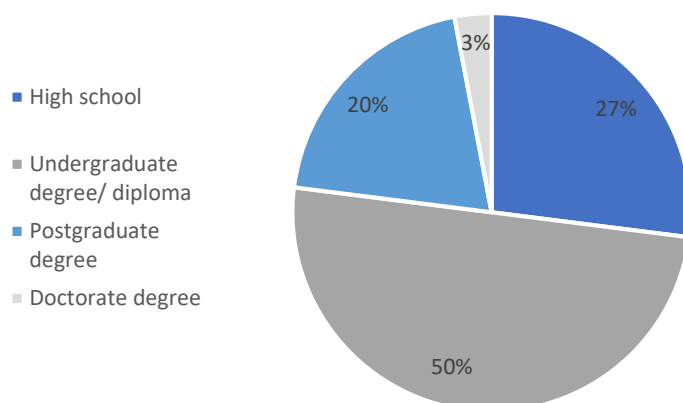


Figure 8. Level of education

## 6.2. Results of Statistical Analysis

After reading the short paragraph in the survey which described a violent interaction between police and protesters, participants answered three questions based on their perception of the described event. These questions required participants to apportion blame for the violence and to rate the degree of aggression of both the police and the protesters. All three questions were answered using a five-point Likert scale. The data from each of these three questions were analysed using a two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) in order to determine if the different construction types used affected the readers' perceptions significantly, and to determine if the participant's demographics had any influence on their responses. The following section will report the findings of the analyses of variance for each of the three questions according to the five construction types, as well as according to the various demographic variables.

### 6.2.1. (1) Where would you place the blame for the violence that occurred?

The first question required participants to indicate where they would place the blame for the violence. The following Likert scale was provided: *<Police fully to blame – Police mostly to blame – Both parties equally to blame – Protesters mostly to blame – Protesters fully to blame>*. The first step of the statistical analysis aimed to determine whether the five different versions of the text resulted in statistically significant differences in the apportioning of blame across all the participants. The null hypothesis was thus that the average blame score is equal between all five groups of participants. The analysis rendered a p-value of .0071 ( $p < .05$ ), indicating that there are significant differences in blame

apportioning between the five groups, on a 5% significance level. In this case, then, the null hypothesis was rejected. Figure 9 below shows the distribution of the blame. Overall, participants tended to blame the protesters. This was seen most prominently in reciprocal<sup>1</sup>, reciprocal<sup>2</sup> and asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions. Both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions approached a fairly equal placement of blame on the police and protesters, with asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive constructions being slightly closer to an equal placement than asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions.

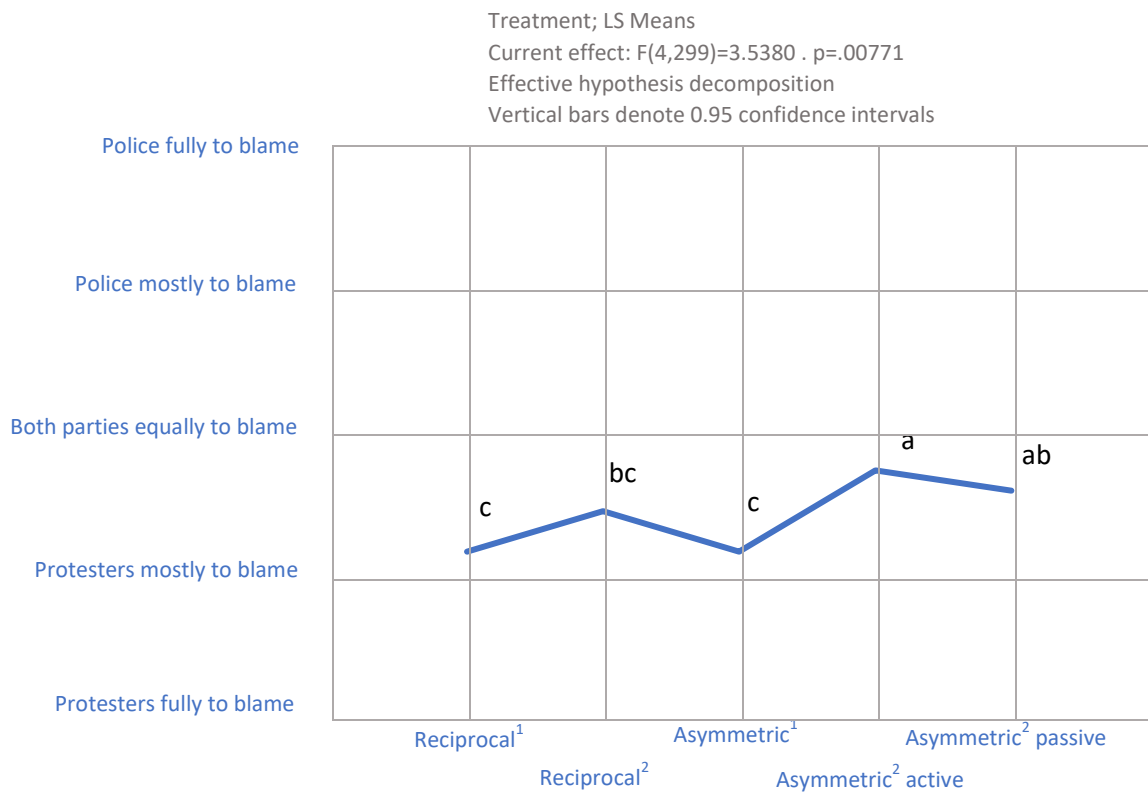


Figure 9. Blame placement

Figure 9 above also demonstrates the results of post hoc testing (using the Least Significant Difference test). These tests break down the initial analysis into sub-hypotheses, and compare the groups in pairs to see which pairs are significant. The LSD test thus examines the results in order to assess significant differences between each version of the survey. It was found that reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions differed significantly from both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions differed significantly from asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions, and asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions different significantly from both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. These results are captured in Table 1 below. The asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions did not differ significantly from each other, indicating that the choice between active or

passive voice in asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions does not have an effect. Similarly, reciprocal<sup>1</sup> and reciprocal<sup>2</sup> were not found to differ significantly in blame placement.

LSD test; variable "blame"						
Probabilities for Post Hoc tests						
	Construction type	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
		2.1912	2.4590	2.2742	2.8209	2.7647
1	Reciprocal <sup>1</sup>		0.11	0.62	0.00	0.00
2	Reciprocal <sup>2</sup>	0.11		0.29	0.03	0.09
3	Asymmetric <sup>1</sup>	0.62	0.29		0.00	0.01
4	Asymmetric <sup>2</sup> active	0.00	0.03	0.00		0.75
5	Asymmetric <sup>2</sup> passive	0.00	0.09	0.01	0.75	

Table 1. Blame placement post hoc test results (red indicates statistical significance)

#### 6.2.1.1. Effects of political affiliation on blame placement

Next, the various demographic variables were introduced in the analysis of blame placement. The first variable that was analysed was political affiliation. This analysis aimed to determine whether the two groups of participants (those who identify as left of centre and those who identify as right of centre) showed significant differences in blame placement. The null hypothesis was thus that the two groups would equal. The result, as seen in Table 2 below, rendered a p-value of 0.01 ( $p < .05$ ). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and it can be said that political affiliation significantly affects how participants apportioned blame in this study. The interaction effect is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), demonstrating that the combined effect of political group with constructive type does not significantly affect the placement of blame.

Univariate Tests of Significance for "blame"					
Sigma-restricted parameterization					
Effect	SS	Degr. Of Freedom	MS	F	p
Intercept	1549.84	1	1549.84	1681.57	0.00
Treatment	13.04	4	3.26	3.54	0.01
Political affiliation	12.69	1	12.69	13.76	0.00
Treatment*Political	1.76	4	0.44	0.48	0.75
Error	275.58	299	0.92		

Table 2. Effect of political affiliation on blame placement (red indicates statistical significance)

Figure 10 below conceptualises the difference between the two political groups by each construction type. There is a significant difference in blame between the two political groups. Political affiliation and construction type both have an influence on blame. As can be seen, both groups were affected by the five constructions in similar ways, but liberals were consistently closer to equal blame than conservatives.

For both groups, asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions resulted in relative leniency towards the protesters. Reciprocal<sup>1</sup> and asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions, on the other hand, seemed to result in the least leniency towards protesters. In post hoc testing, asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions were not found to be significantly different from each other in both groups, however it could be said that in the conservative group, there was a trend that asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive constructions resulted in less leniency than asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions. Furthermore, in the liberal group, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions were significantly different from asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, but this effect was not found in the conservative group, indicating that liberals were influenced more by asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions than the conservative group.

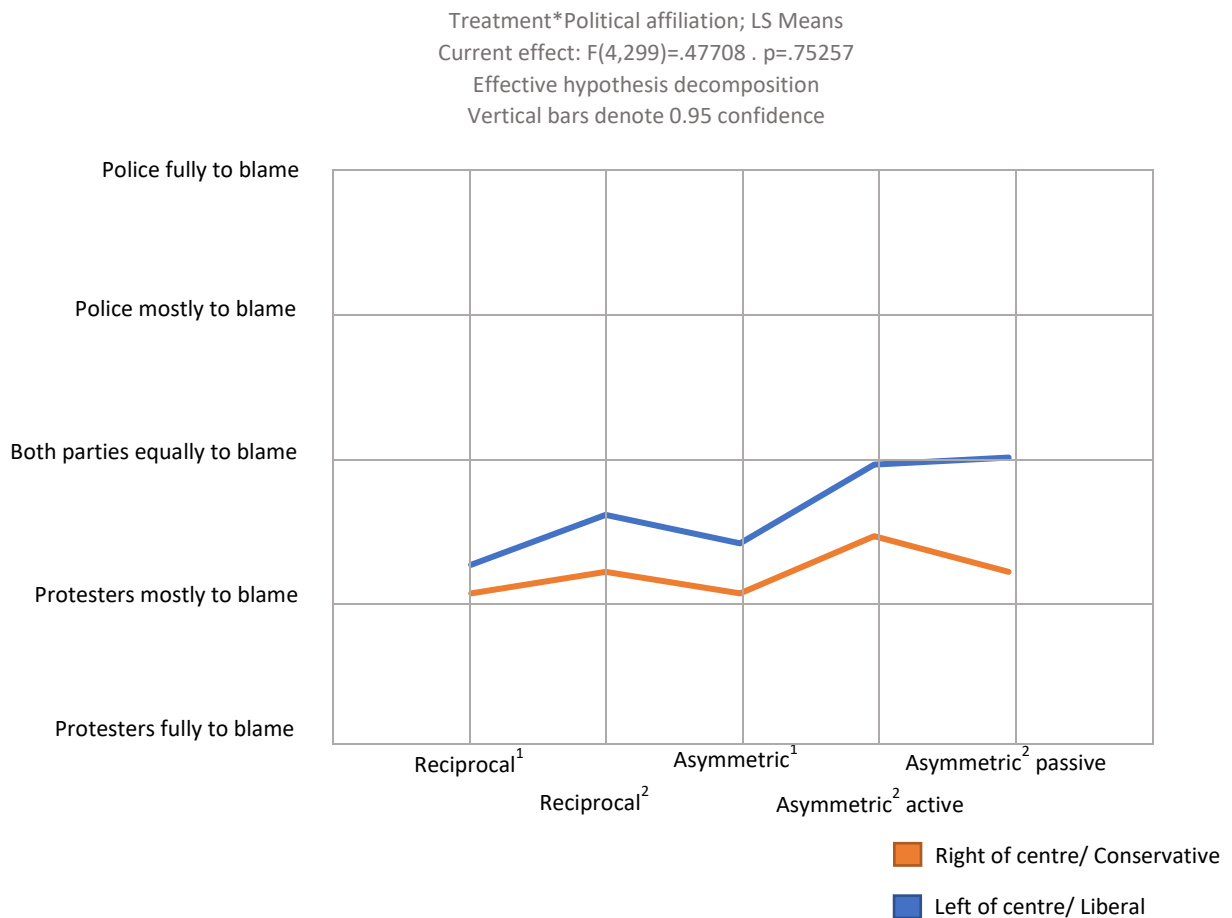


Figure 10. Differences in blame placement by political affiliation



6.2.1.2. *Effects of race on blame placement*

Race was also found to significantly impact blame placement ( $p = 0.03$ ). White participants were found to show similar results to those identifying as conservative, and participants of colour reflected the results of the liberal grouping. No significant interaction effect was found in this test; the construction types and race both have a significant effect on the way in which blame is apportioned.

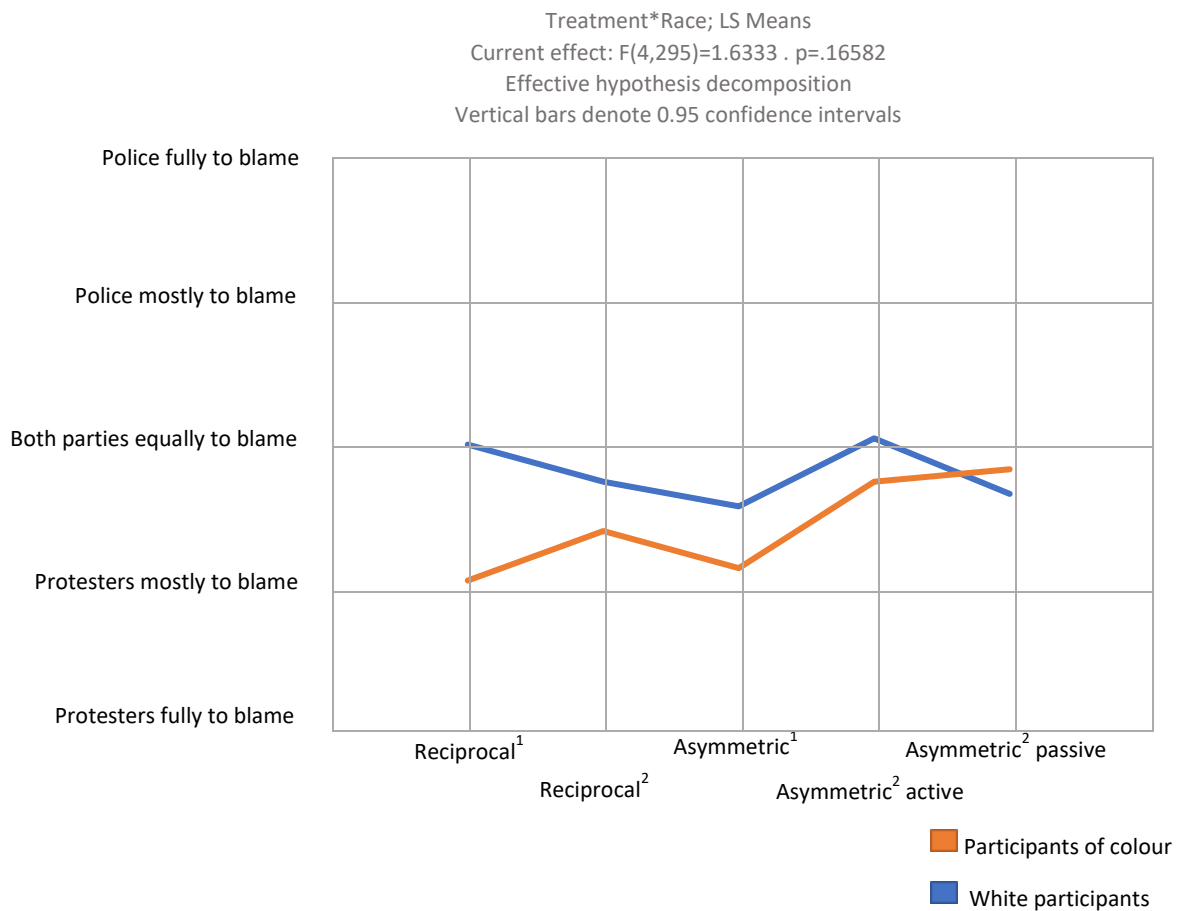


Figure 11. *Difference in blame placement by race*

6.2.1.3. *Effects of country of residence on blame placement*

In the analysis of the country of residence, a significant interaction effect between the two variables was found ( $p = 0.01$ ). Therefore, construction type and country of residence jointly determined the response of blame, as blame placement and country of residence was not constant across the different constructions. As a result, it cannot be interpreted whether the construction types or country of residence had an individual effect on blame. As seen in Figure 12, however, there does seem to be a trend in which non-residents of South Africa

are more lenient towards the protesters and critical of the police; whereas residents of South Africa blame the protesters more.

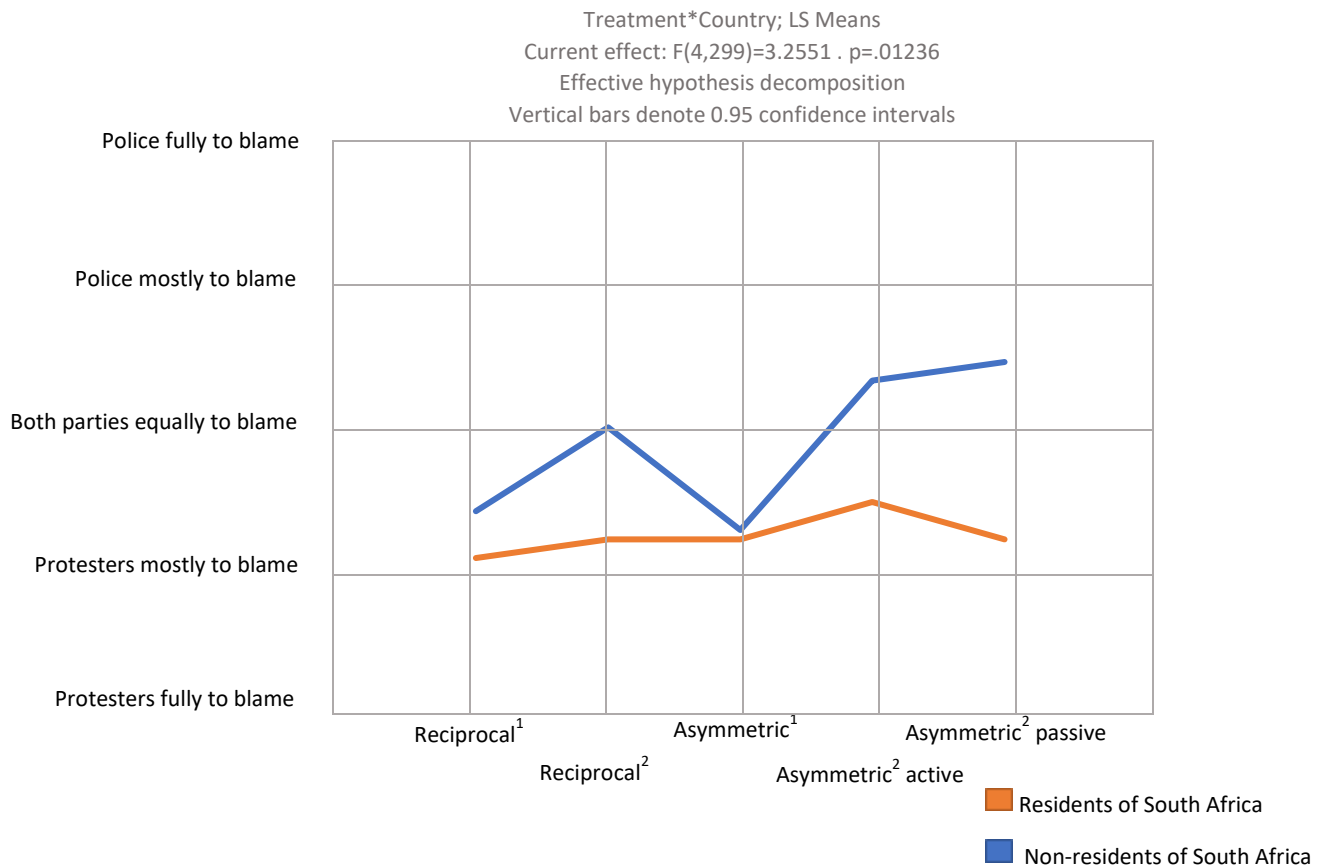


Figure 12. Difference in blame placement by country of residence

### 6.2.2. (2) How aggressive did you think the police were?

The second question posed to the participants asked them to rate the aggression of the police. This question was answered according to the following Likert scale *<Not aggressive at all – Somewhat aggressive – Quite aggressive – Very aggressive – Extremely aggressive>*. The analysis of variance tested the null hypothesis that there were no significant differences in aggression ratings across the five groups. The analysis revealed a p-value of 0.17 ( $p > .05$ ) which means this null hypothesis can be accepted. The five construction types did not significantly affect how aggressive the participants rated the police to be. However, it could be said that police aggression rating follows a similar trend to blame placement. As can be seen in Figure 13 below, the dispersion follows a similar pattern to that of Figure 9 above, but with less differentiation.

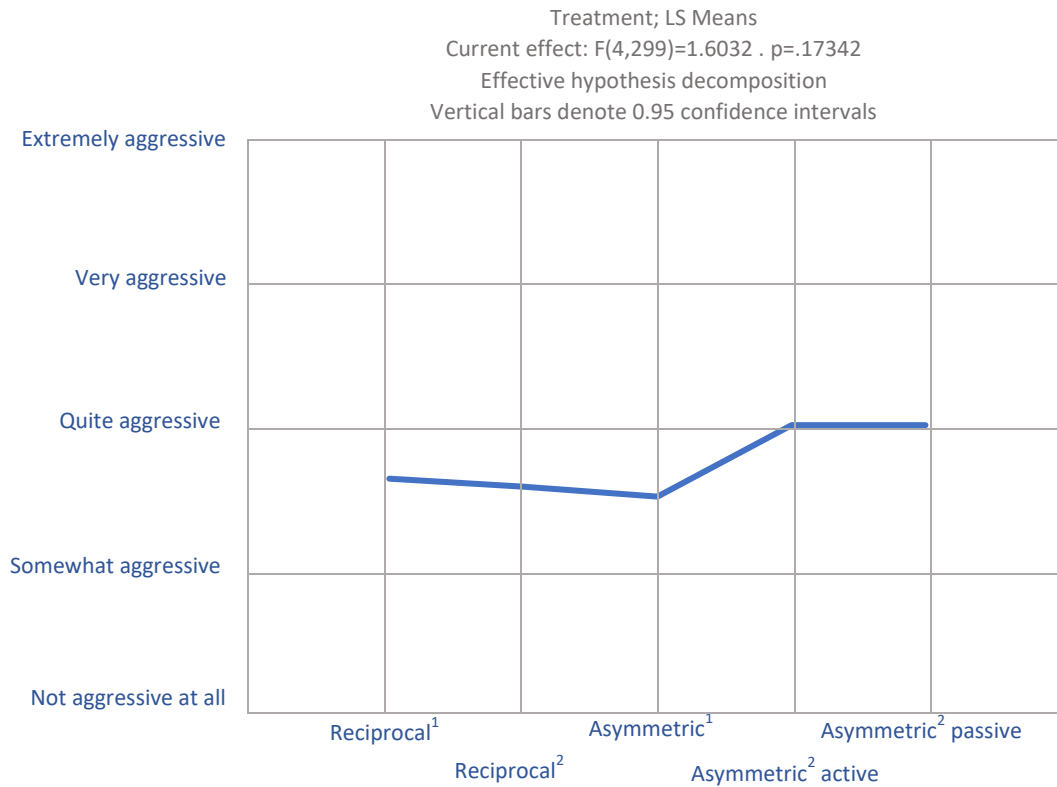


Figure 13. Police aggression rating

Overall, the participants rated the police relatively neutrally, favouring the mid-point on the scale at “Quite aggressive”. In post hoc testing, the only significant pair of constructions was asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions with both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, where asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions resulted in lower aggression ratings and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions resulted in higher aggression ratings. Here again there was no significant difference between the two reciprocal constructions or the two asymmetric constructions. There was also no significant difference between asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions and both the reciprocal constructions.

6.2.2.1. Effects of political affiliation on police aggression rating

After introducing the political affiliation variable into the analysis, it was found that there were significant differences in police aggression rating across the two groups with a p-value of 0.004 ( $p < .05$ ). Following the trends found so far, liberals rated the police higher in aggression than the conservatives; the dispersion of both political groups followed similar patterns to the blame placement question. The main difference in this analysis, however, was that the asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions resulted in a near-identical response from both political groups, where usually they run consistently parallel. The asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions influenced liberals to rate police aggression lower, but this effect was not found for

conservatives. This is supported by the post hoc testing, which shows a significant difference between the asymmetric<sup>1</sup> and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions in the liberal group, but not the conservative group.

#### *6.2.2.2. Effects of race on police aggression rating*

Race did not have a significant effect on the rating of the police aggression ( $p = .055$ ). However, it could be said that these results are aligned with the trends seen so far, as participants of colour mostly rated the police as more aggressive than the white participants, although there was less differentiation between the two groups in this case. These results are in line with the similarities drawn in section 6.2.1.2. where participants of colour and liberals rendered similar results, as did white participants and conservatives.

#### *6.2.2.3. Effects of country of residence on police aggression rating*

Whether or not the participants live in South Africa was found to significantly influence the perception of police aggression ( $p = 0.01$ ). Overall, residents of South Africa showed less differentiation in the aggression rating, and tended to perceive the police aggression lower than those who do not live in South Africa. Post hoc testing showed no significant pairings between any of the results across the five constructions amongst South Africa residents. The non-residents showed a stark deviation from the trend with asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions, where their ratings of police aggression dropped lower than that of the residents, where otherwise police were rated consistently higher. Amongst the non-residents, significant differences were found between the asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions and the other constructions, though there was not a significant difference between asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive constructions.

#### *6.2.3. (3) How aggressive did you think the protesters were?*

The last question asked the participants to rate the aggression of the protesters. The analysis produced a p-value of 0.0005 ( $p < .05$ ), showing a strong difference in protester aggression rating across the five construction types. The null hypothesis that all five groups would produce equal ratings was thus rejected. As visualised below in Figure 14, overall the participants rated the aggression of the protesters higher and less neutral than that of the police. Asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions are shown here to result in the highest aggression rating, with post hoc testing confirming it to be significantly different from all other construction. Both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions result in the lowest aggression rating and were also

statistically significant from all other instructions apart from the pairing of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive and reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions. No significant difference was found between both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, as well as between both reciprocal constructions.

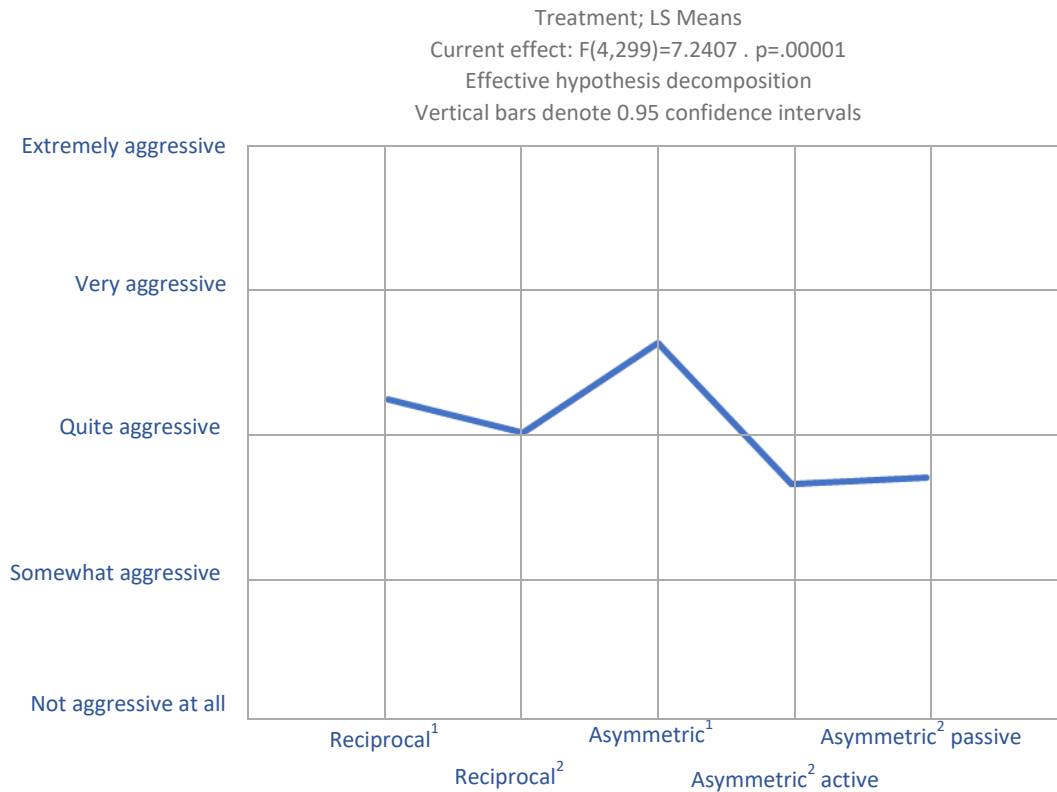


Figure 14. Protester aggression rating

Post hoc testing indicated significant differences between asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions and both reciprocal constructions, as well as between asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions and both asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. There were also significant differences between both reciprocal constructions and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active constructions. There were no significant differences between reciprocal<sup>1</sup> and reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, as well as between asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> passive constructions.

6.2.3.1. Effects of political affiliation on protester aggression rating

When political affiliation was introduced into the analysis, results showed that it did not significantly affect the rating of the protesters' aggression ( $p = .09$ ). It can be said, however, that there was a trend for the conservative group to rate the protesters more aggressively than the liberal group, as the conservative group dispersion lies consistently above the liberal group dispersion. For both groups, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions resulted in the highest

aggression ratings, and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions resulted in the lowest aggression ratings. There were no significant differences between the two asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions for either groups, but as a pair they were significantly different from asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions. There were also no significant differences between the two reciprocal constructions across both groups.

#### *6.2.3.2. Effects of race on protester aggression rating*

In an analysis of the effects of race, it was found that race did play a role in how the participants perceived the aggression of the protesters ( $p = 0.02$ ). In line with the findings so far, white participants tended to rate the protesters as more aggressive than the participants of colour. As seen with the effects of political affiliation, the two groups did not differ significantly in asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions, which in both cases resulted in the highest aggression ratings. However, race differences accounted for a difference in responses to reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions, whereas political affiliation saw almost identical responses. No differences between asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active and passive constructions were found for both groups, and no differences were found between the reciprocal constructions here either.

#### *6.2.3.3. Effects of country of residence on protester aggression rating*

The country of residence of the participants also influenced the protester aggression rating ( $p = 0.0004$ ). Participants living in South Africa consistently rated the protesters as more aggressive than those who do not live in South Africa. Non-residents again showed more drastic differentiation in the results across the five constructions, as seen in the police aggression ratings. Both groups showed near identical results with reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions, and similar results for asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions. Amongst non-residents, a significant difference was found between reciprocal<sup>1</sup> and reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, which is unusual relative to the trends seen so far in this data. Another deviation from trends in this data is that amongst non-residents, a significant difference was found between asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active and passive constructions.

#### *6.2.4. Other factors*

Other factors investigated in this analysis included the first language of the participant, how many languages spoken by the participants, and the participants' ages.

#### *6.2.4.1. Native language*

In an analysis of English and Afrikaans speakers, significant differences were found in blame placement ( $p=0.0005$ ) and protester aggression ( $p=0.0005$ ), where Afrikaans speakers followed the same trends as the conservative group, and English speakers followed the trends of the liberal group.

#### *6.2.4.2. Number of languages spoken*

The number of languages the participants speak was found to affect the blame placement ( $p=0.002$ ) and protester aggression ( $p=0.01$ ) in a similar way to country of residence. Bilingual and multilingual participants rated protesters more aggressive than monolingual participants, and placed more blame on protesters than monolingual participants.

#### *6.2.4.3. Age*

Age was found to influence the participants' responses protester aggression ( $p = 0$ ) but not in police aggression ( $p = 0.13$ ). In an analysis of age and blame placement, a significant interaction was found ( $p = .01$ ), indicating that construction type and age jointly determined the response of blame. As a result, it cannot be interpreted whether the treatments or age had an individual effect on blame. The analysis showed that younger age groups reflected liberal trends, and older age groups reflected conservative trends. While the analysis of police aggression ratings was not statistically significant, it could be said that the results of police aggression followed the same trends found so far, in that police were rated less aggressive as the age of participants increased.

#### *6.2.4.4. Level of education*

Participants were also asked to indicate their highest level of education attained, ranging from high school graduation to doctorate degree. The analysis showed that the level of education of participants did not affect the attribution of blame or the perception of aggression in neither the police nor the protesters. The p-values were calculated at 0.57, 0.16, and 0.52, respectively.

### *6.3. Conclusion*

This experiment yielded a fair number of statistically significant outcomes, some of which support the theory, and some of which weaken the theory. The following chapter will discuss these results within the context of the theory as well as from within the South African context.

## Chapter 7

### Discussion and Conclusions

The previous chapters presented the results of a critical discourse analysis of the data, as well as a cognitive linguistic analysis of the data. In Chapter 6, only the structural configuration and positioning strategies of all the transactive constructions in the data were chosen for investigation. Overall, the results of this analysis showed an interesting deviation from global protest discourse norms (as explored in chapter 3) as it appears that South African news publications hold a bias in favour of the *protesters* rather than the police. This chapter will discuss this analysis and its results, providing possible explanations for these findings. This chapter will also discuss the experimental second half of the study, where the validity of the CL-CDA theory as a whole was tested. Lastly, this chapter will discuss any limitations of the present study, as well as recommendations for further investigation of this topic.

Most importantly, this chapter aims to answer the initial research questions posited in the introductory chapter, which were:

- (i) What are the dominant linguistic features used to represent events and actors in the student fees protests?*
- (ii) Do these linguistic features differ between publications, and in what way?*
- (iii) According to CDA theory, what influence might these differences in linguistic features and representations have on the target readers?*
- (iv) When these features are isolated and presented in the form of a closed-question survey, will they actually create different perceptions of the same social event in the minds of the target readers as CDA theory assumes?*

These research questions culminate into one overarching research question:

***Do linguistic differences in news reporting significantly affect reader cognition?***

#### 7.1. CL-CDA of coverage of the #FeesMustFall protests

Research questions (i) – (iii) are answered by the cognitive linguistic critical discourse analysis in Chapter 5. The analysis was restricted to only violent transactions between the police and protesters, which amounted to 234 transactive constructions. The results of the full data set showed a strong favouring of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions over asymmetric<sup>1</sup>



constructions, as well as a favouring of reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions over asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions. Both these outcomes indicate a theoretical favouring of the students, however there were also some outcomes that would favour the police. While the analysis rendered some mixed results, it was concluded that overall the students were favoured due to the disproportionate number of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. As explored in Chapter 3, protest discourse has been largely found to support the police, and protesters are usually othered and cast negatively.

### *7.1.1 South Africa's political landscape*

One possible explanation for these results can be found in the history and political climate of South Africa. South Africa is a young democracy, created twenty-three years ago after a liberation struggle against the deeply oppressive Apartheid government. At this time, the African National Congress (ANC) came to power, and remains the ruling party in contemporary South Africa with a strong majority vote. The ANC has historically identified as a liberation movement and has had a long-term allyship with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), called the *Tripartite Alliance*. Both COSATU and the SACP align themselves with socialist ideals such as unionisation, anti-exploitation, and empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, these groups support and demand the right to strike and protest. Southall (2004:2) states that while it is now agreed that the ANC has embraced capitalism, the ANC still maintains ideological commitment to its original ideals of liberation and democratic revolution.

While the ruling political party has clear ties to ideologies of liberation and democracy, there is evidence that these ideologies are shared by the South African population at large, too. To begin, the Apartheid regime was dismantled recently in 1994 and the after-effects and memories of that time are far from gone. Many who suffered under the Apartheid regime are still alive, and many structural remnants of the regime continue to hold in all facets of life including housing, education, economy, and society. While there are still large disparities in income and property ownership across races, South African residential areas are also still largely segregated by race, where a strong correlation between 'poor areas' and 'black areas' pervades. In the education sphere, Afrikaans remains a compulsory subject in many primary and secondary schools in South Africa, despite Afrikaans only being the third-most

spoken language in South Africa (with English as the fourth). This policy finds its origins in the Bantu Education Act, a cornerstone of Apartheid philosophy, which deliberately excluded black South Africans from education in attempts to exclude them from the modern sector and ensure a continued supply of cheap labour. This is compounded by the lack of funding for schooling in poor (black) areas, along with a lack of quality teachers and teaching resources available (Fiske and Ladd, 2006:104). Spaul (2013:8) investigated the staggeringly poor quality of South African education and writes that after nineteen years of democracy “black children continue to receive an education which condemns them to the underclass of South African society, where poverty and unemployment are the norm, not the exception”. This is supported by university enrolment rates, for example, where a disproportionate number of white students are enrolled, despite comprising a minority (9%) of the national population. What is more, black and coloured South Africans were found to have the lowest, below-average success rates in higher education (Letseka and Maile, 2008:4). The legacy of Apartheid is clear in many facets of contemporary South African society, and the inequalities faced daily serve as a reminder of the effects of state oppression and the necessity of democracy.

Another way the ideologies of the ruling party can be seen in the public is in the recent municipal elections. In South Africa’s 2016 municipal elections, popular support for the ANC dropped from 61.95% to 53.9%, its heaviest electoral loss since it came to power. This stark drop in support came largely from urban areas, while the majority rural areas retained immense support. This came after South Africa’s controversial president, Jacob Zuma, both used state funds to build himself a R246 million (\$18,6 million) homestead, and evaded any consequences of doing so. This scandal was not uncharacteristic of the Zuma administration, which has been fraught with corruption scandals and infighting, gross economic mismanagement, the facilitation of a 5% rise in unemployment, and the weakening of national currency since Zuma came to power in 2007 (Malala, 2016: Online). South Africa’s rural population, on the one hand, remains unwaveringly dedicated to the liberation party and memories of freedom fighter Mandela, a dedication which is consistently exploited by ANC campaigns where opposing parties are painted as Apartheid sympathisers. On the other hand, urban South Africans, who were largely responsible for the electoral loss, voted against a corrupt government. Malala (2016: online) explains that this was a watershed

moment, because South Africa is no longer dominated by one party and is shifting towards a multi-party system. The dynamics behind this election offer insight into South African ideologies surrounding freedom and democracy. While rural South Africans remain loyal to the ANC's legacy of liberation, urban South Africans showed an intolerance for Zuma's anti-democratic politics. Both groups, then, are grounded in principles of liberation, democracy, and an intolerance of state oppression.

There are thus a number of factors contributing to the idea that South African society could be ultimately characterised by an acceptance of political protests; perhaps to the extent that they are believed to be fundamental and necessary for continued development. The current ruling party was borne out of revolution and carries ideals which support protest. There is also evidence that these ideologies are shared by the population at large, where all voters can be interpreted as being motivated by liberation from state oppression. This political landscape, coloured with the painful memories and pervasive remnants of the oppressive Apartheid government, is likely to have fostered a unique culture of sensitivity towards all semblances of state oppression, and a view of protests as more positive and necessary than might be found in other countries. Political protests have historically been, and continue to be a tool for realising goals of liberation in South Africa as it continues to mature as a democracy. Indeed, the word *toyitoyi*, originating from Ndebele and Shona describing a dance step typically used in protests and marches, has been adopted into the South African vocabulary, and is practised regularly in South Africa.

Considering these factors, it is perhaps not so surprising, then, that the results of this analysis indicated South African mass media publications hold underlying ideologies that support protesters rather than state police.

#### *7.1.2. Tabloid news*

The overall results of the CL-CDA were separated according to news publication, where differences between publications were highlighted. Apart from one publication, the *Daily Voice*, the publications all followed the overall trends of the data set to varying degrees. A possible explanation for the stark contrast in the *Daily Voice* data was that it along with the *Daily Sun* were the only tabloid publications from the data set. Only three *Daily Sun* articles were included in the analysis, which could explain why similar trends were not found in the *Daily Sun*. Tabloid news is considered a separate and distinct genre in news discourse, and is

often criticised as being sensational and irresponsible news reporting (Hadland, 2010:132). The difference in results could be attributed to an emphasis on the violence itself rather than the full event, which would be characteristic of tabloid news. One factor supporting this possibility is the higher percentage of medium shots found in both the *Daily Voice* and the *Daily Sun* data. Increased medium shots indicates a lack of long shots and close-ups, which are viewing frames that offer additional information which can validate or invalidate the violent encounter. This points to an emphasis on the violence. What is more, violence perpetrated by the protesters may also be regarded as more sensational to read about, and would thus take centre stage in tabloid news.

## 7.2. Testing the theory

Research question (iv) is answered by the experimental portion of this study.

- (iv) *When these features are isolated and presented in the form of a closed-question survey, will they actually create different perceptions of the same social event in the minds of the target readers as CDA theory assumes?*

This question speaks to the assumptions of mainstream CDA that linguistic features do indeed influence the readers' perceptions. The results of the experiment in this study supported this hypothesis to a large extent, but to varying degrees.

### 7.2.1. Blame placement

The first question asked participants to place the blame for the violent encounter. The results showed that the five constructions influenced the readers' perceptions of blame to a significant degree ( $p=.0071$ ). It was further hypothesised that blame would be assigned more evenly in reciprocal action chains than in asymmetric action chains. This was not the case in this question, as both asymmetric constructions approached even blame more closely than both reciprocal constructions. The theory also posited that asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions, which are unidirectional energy transfers with the protesters as agent, and reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions, which are bidirectional energy transfers with the protesters at the head of the energy vector, should both result in a favouring of the police. This was supported by the present study, as these two constructions resulted in the strongest blame placement on the protesters. Conversely, reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions, with the police at the

head of a bidirectional energy vector, resulted in a trend of less blame placed on the students, though it must be noted that this was not found to be a statistically significant difference. In line with this, no statistical difference was found between the use of the passive voice and the active voice in asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, either. However, a trend was found that the point of view taken in asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions impacts blame in a way that is inconsistent with the theory. Passive asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, where the conceptualiser theoretically views the agent (the police) as antagonistic, were hypothesised to result in a more negative view of the police than its active counterpart, but the opposite was found in these results. While not statistically significant, passive asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions resulted in a harsher perception of the protesters than the active constructions.

In sum, then, the results of blame placement in this study supported the overarching hypothesis that these construction types do influence reader perception. The sub-hypothesis that reciprocal constructions would result in a more even distribution of blame was not supported, and a trend was found that also does not support the sub-hypothesis that passive asymmetric constructions place the reader in a position of antagonism with the agent. However, a trend was found that information sequence in reciprocal constructions does favour which agent is at the head of the vector. Lastly, a significant difference was found between asymmetric<sup>1</sup> and asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions, where both resulted in the highest amount of blame placed on the agent, which was also hypothesised by the theory.

#### *7.2.2. Police aggression rating*

The second question asked participants to rate the aggression of the police. For this question, the five construction types were found to not influence the aggression rating ( $p=.17$ ). While no conclusions can be drawn from these results, the dispersion of aggression ratings somewhat reflected the pattern seen in the first question. Asymmetric constructions resulted in the highest police aggression rating (which complements more equal blame placement in the previous question), and asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions resulted in the lowest police aggression rating, which also aligns with the theory.

Considering police aggression was the only question not found to be statistically significant, it may suggest entrenched views of the police in the minds of the participants of this study, where opinions and judgments about the police are much less susceptible to influence from

linguistic features. This is likely not a negative view of the police, as overall the protesters were perceived as more to blame and more aggressive. From this, it could be inferred that the participants align with prevailing global discourses of police officers as protectors or enforcers of civil order.

### *7.2.3. Protester aggression rating*

Protester aggression ratings, on the other hand, were found to be significantly affected by the five construction types ( $p=.0005$ ). Overall, protesters were rated as more aggressive than the police. As seen in both previous questions, reciprocal constructions did not result in more leniency than asymmetric constructions. Both the asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions yielded the lowest aggression ratings; this shows an inverse of the police aggression ratings, indicating the results are consistent with each other and the theory. Once again, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions confirmed theory by resulting in the highest aggression ratings. The two reciprocal constructions did not differ significantly from one another, but did show a trend hypothesised by theory in that reciprocal<sup>1</sup> constructions generated higher protester aggression ratings than reciprocal<sup>2</sup> constructions. Once again, passive asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions did not differ from their active counterpart, and rather showed an inclination to increase aggression ratings of the protesters instead of decreasing them.

### *7.2.4. Support for the CL-CDA theory*

In all three questions, asymmetric<sup>1</sup> constructions were found to yield significantly different results from asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions. The hypothesis that grammatical constructions encoding uni-directional flows of energy will significantly affect cognition was thus supported by this study. The same cannot be said for the theorised difference between reciprocal and asymmetric constructions, however, where mostly insignificant differences were found.

With regards to information sequence, the theory posited that the party mentioned first in reciprocal constructions would be found more aggressive or more to blame. No significant differences between reciprocal constructions were found overall for any of the reciprocal constructions, however all three questions followed this trend somewhat. It could be said that information sequence (and the body-specificity hypothesis on which it is anchored) is supported but only to a small degree.

However, this was not extended to include the positioning strategies of asymmetric constructions. A prevailing trend in this data was the lack of significant difference between the use of the active and passive voice. In almost all cases there was no difference between the effects of asymmetric<sup>2</sup> active or passive constructions. Indeed, in some cases, the passive option showed a slight change towards having the opposite effect from what was theorised. This is an important finding, as voice change is considered a significant feature in mainstream CDA analyses (see, for example, Fairclough, 2003:13). While it still may be true that the choice between the passive or active voice indicates an ideological bias on the part of the writer, these findings, however, suggest that these differences are not transferred onto the readership, and are thus not relevant in any CDA.

#### *7.2.5. Demographic variables*

These results should not be interpreted without a complementary investigation of participant demographics that may influence value-judgments (Hart, 2016:17). Hart theorised that factors such as political affiliation would affect judgments surrounding political protests. Hart did not find any significant differences in his study for blame placement and police aggression, though it was noted that it was a small study from which overarching generalisations should not be drawn. It should also be noted that the political landscape in the UK contrasts that of South Africa starkly, where newspaper publications and political parties are aligned in a clearer way, and the distinction between left and right wing is more obvious. South African political parties and news publications are not distinguished from one another in this way. Hart (2016:17) did find, however, that political affiliation was significant in ratings of protester aggression, where those who affiliate with Conservative values were found to judge the protesters aggression higher than those associating with Labour values.

In this study, political affiliation was found to significantly affect the readers' judgments in blame placement ( $p=.01$ ), police aggression ( $p=.004$ ), and protester aggression ( $p=.01$ ) in similar ways. While the protesters received more blame overall, those identifying as liberal approached a more equal blame placement, found the police more aggressive and the protesters less aggressive. While the various construction types did influence these perceptions, the difference in the results between the conservative and liberal group remained fairly constant (see Figure 10, Chapter 6). This suggests an entrenched view of

protests and protesters in the minds of the participants of this study, where their predispositions about protests guided their value-judgments in a consistent way.

In addition, the results of this study indicated that race, country of residence, number of languages spoken, and first language all had a significant effect on blame placement and protester aggression to varying degrees. While it may seem that numerous demographic factors are individually influential in determining cognitive effects in this study, it should be considered that some or many of these features are interdependent. For example, it is likely that the number of languages spoken correlates with whether the participants are residents of South Africa. This is due to the high level of multilingualism in South Africa when compared to, say, the UK. This idea is supported by the study results, as bilingual and multilingual participants were found to rate the protesters more aggressive and more to blame than monolingual participants in the same way South African residents rated them more aggressive and to blame than non-residents.

One interesting result that appeared in the testing of country of residence was that South African residents showed much less differentiation across the five constructions than their non-resident counterparts. This could suggest less susceptibility to the various constructions. One possible explanation for this is that South Africans already had a pre-existing opinion about the student protests due to the violent student protests recently having taken place in South Africa.

Similarly, it is possible that younger participants are more likely to affiliate themselves with liberal values, and older participants are more like to affiliate themselves with conservative values. It could also be the case that participants with Afrikaans as a first language are more likely to be conservative due to the conservative nature of Afrikaans culture in South Africa.

### 7.3. Limitations and Recommendations

Both components of this study yielded interesting results which could inform future research. These recommendations will be explored in the following section, along with the limitations experienced while executing and interpreting the analyses in this study.

#### 7.3.1. CL-CDA

The six publications investigated in the CL-CDA portion of this study did not show much differentiation. While the *Daily Voice* showed a stark difference to the other publications,



the other publications did not differ markedly. This could be attributed to the homogeneity of online mass media news reports (Fenton, 2010:8). However, it could also be attributed to the restricted scope of constructions under investigation in this study. A number of other features and strategies could be investigated under in a CL-CDA, including profiling, metonymy, scalar adjustments, deixis, and epistemic modality (Hart, 2011b:186). Due to the scope of this thesis, however, only Hart's 2016 structural configuration and positioning strategies were looked at in this study. This was further limited to only violent transactions between the police and protesters. Any other interactions were not investigated, and all content of the articles not characterised as a violent transaction between police and protesters was not analysed. Additional linguistic features pointing to underlying ideologies are likely to have been missed in the analyses as a result.

A natural extension of this study would be to include framing strategies in both the analysis and the experimentation. For example, the analysis of the *Daily Sun* articles found the publication to theoretically lean towards favouring the protesters. However, if framing strategies had been included, for example, the metaphors used in the *Daily Sun* may have resulted in a different conclusion. The metaphor in "drags" in one article titled "FEES PROTEST DRAGS ON!" characterises the protests as negative and burdensome (Dlali, Medupe, Moagi, Makora and Mehlwana, 2016: online). The frame of 'burden' is invoked, implying the protests are not regarded as something important, necessary, or particularly significant. The use of punctuation furthers this idea, where the burdensomeness of the protests seems to be combined with feelings of exasperation elicited by the exclamation mark and capital letters. Further in the article, the behaviour of the students is categorised negatively. As can be seen in terms such as "unruly behaviour" and "unlawful activities", the protest action is not being categorised as political action, but rather as social deviance (Dlali et al., 2016: online). As discussed in Chapter 3, this framing of protests as invalid and deviant is common in protest discourse. In terms of trends in protest discourse, the inclusion of framing strategies would also have allowed for a more comprehensive comparison. Other than the trend of favouring the police, the trends discussed in Chapter 3 including othering strategies, invalidation of protests, emphasis on violence, and the intersection of race and class discourse did not come into play into this analysis due to the narrow scope of the constructions investigated.

Another potentially important feature that was omitted from this CL-CDA was what could be phrased as larger scale long shots. While long shots attached to transactive constructions were included in this analysis, additional information in the articles that could serve to legitimise or delegitimise the protests was not included. The articles showed stark differences in terms of how much background information to the protests was provided. For example, the *Daily Sun* and *Daily Voice* articles offered their readers almost no information regarding why the students are protesting. Certain articles in the *News24* data pool, on the other hand, on occasion went into detail about the societal scale catalysts of the protests. For example, the protests were described as “[fuelled by] post-apartheid disenchantment” and a result of “mounting anger of the widespread poverty and inequality that persists since the elections in 1994”. Information was given regarding the state of the economy, class struggles, and “the inability of the government to address inequality” was emphasized (Cohen and Vollgraaf, 2015: online). In this respect, it is clear that some reporters framed the protesters as a necessary consequence of inequality in South Africa, whereas others framed the protests as hooliganism or did not frame them at all. These differences across publications were not recognised in an analysis of violent transactive constructions, however.

While the analysis of violent transactive constructions can offer insight into the overarching stance of the media publishers, the inclusion of framing strategies and possibly the extension of structural configuration and positioning strategies to cover the full content of the article would have provided a more comprehensive look into the content of the articles.

This leads onto another difficulty encountered in the CL-CDA, which was a lack of any hierarchical ordering of the features. The theory does not offer information as to which feature should influence the readers’ perceptions more or less than others. In most of the publications analysed, the articles had dominant features that theoretically favour the students *and* the police. For this study, the conclusions were based on the feature that appeared the greatest number of times (in this case, asymmetric<sup>2</sup> constructions) as well as any deviations from the norms seen in the full data pool. However, considering Hart’s own experimentation has found that the effect of different pairs of constructions vary a lot in significance, the analyses should be interpreted hierarchically. For example, the effect of asymmetric versus reciprocal constructions was found to have a p-value of .00001, and the

effect of information sequence (reciprocal<sup>1</sup> versus reciprocal<sup>2</sup>) was calculated a much less significant .01 (Hart, 2016:14).

Related to this, it may aid future analyses of this kind if a more specific criterion for the categorisation of features is created. While in most cases the transactive constructions in this study could be categorised easily, there were instances of ambiguity. The sentence *police clash with protesters* is grammatically ambiguous, for example, as *clash* could imply one party colliding with another stationary, passive party; or it could imply two active parties colliding with one another. This ambiguity is significant as it would determine whether the construction was categorised as encoding an asymmetric or a reciprocal energy transfer. The problem with ambiguity was particularly prominent when deciding whether to categorise the construction as a close-up, medium, or long shot. The theory advised that a construction can be considered a close-up when either the agent or the patient are not mentioned, or if only the result of the interaction is described. A medium shot captures the full action chain (the agent, patient, and result), and a long shot captures the full action chain as well as additional mitigating information onto which value judgments are attached. There were cases where these categories overlapped, or where it was debatable whether the agent was mentioned. The sentence *9 were arrested* could be interpreted as a close-up, as the agent (the police) is not explicitly mentioned. However, the word “arrested” necessarily implies the police as agent, as no one else can perform an arrest. Similarly, differentiating between what is mitigating information (encoding a long shot) and what is simply describing the event (encoding a medium shot) in ambiguous constructions can become difficult.

A last recommendation for future study on this topic would be to perform an expanded analysis using the same methodology which includes more of the cognitive features. In addition, further analyses on this topic with different theories and methodologies informing the analysis should be performed. This method of triangulation will strengthen the field of CDA as well as CL-CDA if the results from various analyses using various methodologies yield similar results (Hart, 2013:3).

### 7.3.2. Experiment

When interpreting the demographic differences in the results of the experiment, it was found that certain demographic variables overlapped. In line with this, further research

could be done into the effects of factors such as bilingualism and age on blame placement and aggression ratings to better understand the role of demographic factors in a study such as this one.

One definite limitation of this experiment was that the participant pool was not varied enough across certain demographic variables. The vast majority of participants were white (72%) which meant that the results of various race groups could not be compared to one another. This is unfortunate in a study focussing on South Africa, where race is a prominent factor in determining societal factors such as status, wealth, and opportunity, and is likely to affect citizens' views on inequality and the necessity of political protests as a result.

A last recommendation would be to expand the experiment in general to include more participants. This will allow for more conclusions to be drawn from the data. Considering the prominence of political affiliation as a variable, it may also benefit the study to introduce a neutral, unsure, apathetic, or 'centre' option when choosing political affiliation. This will separate those who have consciously chosen a liberal or conservative stance from those who may have chosen either option as a default, or done so without real knowledge of the two options. This may result in more prominent cognitive effects in the liberal and conservative group. It may produce results in which politically neutral individuals are found to be more susceptible to the various constructions, for example. This would be particularly helpful in the South African context, where 'liberal' and 'conservative' are not clearly delineated by political party or by news publication.

### 7.3. Conclusion

This study analysed South African media coverage of the Fees Must Fall protests according to Hart's cognitive linguistic approach to critical discourse analysis. It was found that South African publications, according to theory, hold underlying ideologies that supported the student protesters, or perhaps political protest in general. In an effort to explain this deviation from typical protest discourse, it was posited that South Africa's current political landscape and the legacy Apartheid imprinted in the seams of South Africa's society created a culture that is particularly intolerant of state oppression and tolerant of protests.

Based on this analysis, an experiment was created which investigated the cognitive effects of variable action event frames, encoded by reciprocal or asymmetric verb constructions, information sequence and voice in online media publications describing political protests in

South Africa. The results of the experiment show that readers' conceptualisations of events are influenced by subtle lexico-grammatical differences. As Hart (2016:17) asserts, it is *semantic* aspects of language that have been typically believed to influence the readers' conceptualisation, but these results highlight the influential power of *grammatical* features in informing the way readers understand and respond to information.

This study aimed to further the field of CL-CDA by adapting it to the South African context, as well as the field of CDA by contributing to the growing empirical research being gathered to support or discredit the assumptions of mainstream CDA. In terms of the field of a CDA as a whole, the most prominent finding from this study was the insignificance of voice changes in asymmetric constructions, as passivity has been a cornerstone for many analyses in the past.

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