

The ‘Megxit’ in British and American Headlines: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the discursive devices employed by British and American newspaper headlines to deliver the news of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s decision to step down as senior members of the British royal family. It also aims to reveal how devices, such as presupposition, lexical choices and grammar reflect the ideologies of media practitioners in Britain and the United States regarding the issue under study. Forty headlines are collected from ten major newspapers in Britain and the United States of America: The Guardian, The Times, The Sun, Daily Mail, Daily Mirror, New York Post, Washington Post, The New York Times, Chicago Tribune and USA Today. The forty headlines are collected from articles published within fifteen days of Prince Harry’s announcement on the 8th of January, 2020. The study applies Fairclough’s (1995) framework of CDA. The results show that British and American news headlines employ presupposition, word choices, emotive language, naming strategies, along with tools such as direct and indirect quotation an active and passive voice differently to express their different ideologies.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis – Media Discourse – Newspaper Headlines – Ideology

Introduction

In today's world of mass communication, media plays a vital role in informing people of different news stories. However, the information provided by different media, such as newspapers is not entirely objective or neutral, but coated with the writers', editors' and even the newspapers' social, political and cultural predispositions (Garton et al., 1991; Herman and Chomsky, 2010). Oktar (2001) argues, "the media do not passively describe or record news events, but actively reconstruct them, mostly on the basis of their own ideological affiliations" (p.320). Media practitioners manipulate language to pass on their opinions and affiliations which makes media a key player in shaping peoples' perception, beliefs, values, and actions (Van Dijk, 1995).

Fairclough (1995) states that media asserts its power through setting an agenda for the listeners. One of the powerful tools media uses to inform, attract and influence the public is newspaper headlines (Bowles and Borden, 2000; Ellis, 2001; Saxena, 2006). They effectively encapsulate the content of a news story in a minimum number of words to capture the readers' attention. They are also important in constructing the ideologies of their readers. As a result, the same event could be represented differently by various newspapers headlines to propagate their ideologies (Wang, 1993; Fang, 2001).

This study examines how media discourse, specifically newspaper headlines, exercise power on readers through coating their news with specific ideologies and beliefs that can shape readers' perception of the presented news. It aims to investigate the similarities and differences in the presentation of the same news through different perspectives. Through the analysis of different headlines, this study presents how language is employed to pass on the hidden ideologies of their users.

The news of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's decision to quit their royal duties and step back as senior members of the British royal family gained immense international media attention, especially in Britain and Meghan's hometown, the United States of America after their announcement in January 2020. However, British and American newspaper headlines tackled the news from different perspectives.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate the discursive devices and linguistic features employed by British and American headlines when tackling the news of Prince Harry and Meghan's decision to step back as senior members of the British royal family. Presupposition, word choice, structures like active and passive and direct quotes, along with discursive devices like reference to emotion and naming strategies are examined to reveal the similar/different ideologies of British and American news practitioners when they present this news to their readers. The headlines are gathered from a number of well-known British and American papers. These ideologically shaped headlines are analyzed within the three dimensional analytical framework of CDA (Fairclough, 1995).

Research questions

The present study aims to answer the following questions.

1. What are the similarities and differences between the discursive devices used by British and American newspaper headlines in reporting the "Megxit" news?
2. How do the discursive devices employed by British and American headlines reflect the similar/ different ideologies of their news practitioners?

Significance of the Study

This study sheds light on the linguistic tools used in writing newspaper headlines to pass on a piece of news in an attractive manner that would catch the readers' attention. In addition, the study highlights the significance of language as a powerful tool in understanding people's affiliations and ideologies. Analyzing how various media practitioners formulate their newspaper headlines using language differently while reporting the same event contributes to understanding the role of language in shaping and influencing readers' opinions and perspectives. It reflects the potential power of media discourse to shape peoples' perception, beliefs, values, and social relations. In the words of Nisar and Bleich (2020), "headlines offer the opportunity to gauge perceptions toward groups and issues that are at the forefront of the public conscience and that reinforce and shape the attitudes of readers toward those groups and issues. (p. 7)

Literature Review

In the world of media, newspaper headlines play a vital role in reporting, summarizing and grabbing the readers' attention to the content of an article (Schneider, 2000). Newspaper headlines are a significant element in delivering news as they are the first element that readers view, delivering a quick means of information for the majority of those who scan headlines rather than read articles (Javed & Mahmood, 2011; Leckner, 2012;). They are the most striking part of newspaper articles and the most read (Van Dijk, 1986). The best headlines sell and tell. According to White et al. (1993), " the headline should tell you in a glance what the story is, or else intrigue you enough so you want to find out what it is by reading on" (p. 12).

Fairclough (1992) states headlines are crafted in a way to arouse the readers' curiosity. To achieve this goal, journalists manipulate various language devices to make their headlines attention-grabbing and memorable (Hodgson, 1998). Reah (2002) highlights that the language of headlines is unique as it has special features on the lexical, syntactic, and rhetorical levels to make it concise, clear and appealing. Journalists employ discursive devices, like evaluative language, intensification, immediacy, vocabulary and reference to emotion to encourage readers to continue reading their articles.

However research shows that newspaper headlines do not only present a semantic summary of articles and a pragmatic catchy-device for the readers, but they also reflect the writers' opinions and therefore influence readers' perception of the news (Dor, 2003; Ifantidou, 2009). Studies show that newspaper headlines provide incomplete and distorted stories that can influence the reader's interpretation of the news story (Leon, 1997; Smith, 1999; Andrew, 2007). As Ogilvy (2011) states, headlines play a vital role in orienting the readers' interpretation of a particular event. They are used, in Taiwo's (2007) terms, "to initiate, sustain and shape discourse on the views of readers" (p. 244). Although, journalists claim that they write news with no bias, still anything that is expressed, whether spoken or written, is articulated with an ideological agenda as language is not neutral, but imposes specific ways of thinking about the world (Widdowson, 2007). Fowler (1991) states that all news is inevitably biased. He highlights:

Anything that is said or written about the world is articulated from a particular ideological position: Language is not a clear window, but a refracting, structuring medium. If we can acknowledge this as a positive, productive principle, we can show by analysis how it operates in texts. (p.10)

Conboy (2013) states that headlines offer an initial guide of the style and content of the news attitudes and values of the newspaper. As Abastado (1980, p. 149) argues "headlines

encapsulate not only the content but the orientation”. The way each news press publisher constructs headlines is different according to their identity and ideology. Newspaper headlines are crafted in a way that uses a minimum number of words that encapsulate maximum information. Thus, every word in a headline is carefully selected and structured so as to increase the effect of the headline. In this way, headlines often capture the newspaper’s ideological attitudes, and analyzing discursive devices, such as lexical choices and syntactic structures of newspaper headlines would expose the underlying ideological meaning of newspaper headlines. According to Teo (2000):

[T]he macro-structure that is manifest in headlines and leads encapsulates an ideology that biases the reader to one particular reading, thereby subjugating all other possible interpretations of the news story. Typically, then, news reporting not only provides information for readers to interpret but often comes packaged with the interpretation as well. (p. 14)

Previous Studies

Early studies of headlines started in the 20th century when the focus was mainly on discovering some linguistic features in the headlines of different languages, particularly English, or different types of newspapers to see whether similar linguistic and discursive features could be observed. Straumann (1935), a pioneer in studying the language of headlines, considers them to possess a unique language. He categorizes headlines into four types based on their formal and positional characteristics of words: neutrals, nominals, verbals, and particles. However, Straumann’s study is criticized for not using the terms generally used in standard English grammar and neither did it count the frequency of occurrences of individual syntactic structures.

Wachtler (1953) examines informal word choices used in American and British newspaper and magazine headlines. He concludes that the need for headlines to be brief, simple and informal caused differences between American and British newspapers and magazines. American newspapers were found to omit prepositions more often, while British newspapers omitted them at the beginning of noun clause objects. He also highlights that word omission sometimes cause ambiguity and concludes that the more the number of nouns in the nominal construction, the more the difficulty to interpret the headline.

Mardh (1980), in a study of linguistic features in the headlines of English newspapers, identifies the following features as typical of headlines: the omission of articles; the omission of verbs and of auxiliaries; nominalizations; the frequent use of complex noun phrases in subject position; adverbial headlines; the use of short words; the widespread use of puns, word play, and alliteration; the use of word order for emphasis, with the most emphasized words or phrases at the beginning of the headline statement.

Scollon et al. (2000) examines headlines in three editions of the same newspaper in its Chinese and English editions. The study shows that English headlines focus more on the central topic of the story, while Chinese headlines focus more on settings without providing information about the content of the story.

Other studies focus on analyzing how newspapers with different ideologies, used linguistic, discursive and rhetorical devices differently to devise headlines that report the same event based on their various political and ideological affiliations, which as a result can be used to influence and manipulate readers.

van Dijk (1986) analyze over four hundred headlines in the Dutch press which report the 1985 Tamil crisis, an occasion of racial tensions between the Dutch and immigrant groups with ethnic ancestry. He concludes that the Dutch authorities dominate subject positions in the headlines with active verbs. When the disadvantaged Tamils were mentioned first, the verb tended to be passive.

Fang (2001) examines how two ideologically opposed Chinese newspapers differ in reporting the same events, focusing on the use of lexical choices and syntactic structures.

Javed and Mahmood (2011) investigate Pakistani newspaper headlines of the 2011 – 2012 Pakistani budget. They conclude that the headlines simple statements do not provide neutral information, but rather reflect the editors' ideologies and political predispositions.

Alfangca (2015) employs transitivity analysis to reveal the representation of the MH370 flight incident in newspaper headlines. The study shows that loaded lexical items reveal the writers' disposition.

Ulum (2016) carries out a cross-cultural CDA study on newspaper headlines representing Syrian refugees. The study examines different ideologies presented through newspaper headlines. It concludes that western editors present the issue in terms of how Europe can withstand such a high flow of Syrians into the European Union, in contrast to the Turkish headlines which focus on the hard conditions in which these refugees face to reach Europe.

Nisar and Bleich (2020) compare headlines about Muslims and Jews in the British Guardian and the American New York Times between 1985 and 2014 to investigate how language exposes the ideologies of media practitioners regarding these marginalized communities. The study concludes that headlines about Jews have a more positive tone than those about Muslims.

Theoretical Framework

CDA investigates the deeper meanings embedded in different layers of language. It explores the way language exercises power on society (Fairclough, 1992). It reveals how “discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society” (van Dijk, 2001, p. 353). One of the ways media discourse can have an impact on society is through newspaper headlines. Therefore, it is employed in this study to reveal biases and ideologies of media practitioners to maintain power and construct reality in a desired way. Fairclough (1995) argues that media industry is under the control of certain institutions that hold political, cultural, and economic power. They manage to control readers' minds through framing news stories and manipulating language to unravel certain ideologies and beliefs. Consequently, this study draws upon Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of CDA. It studies sociocultural practice, discourse practice, and text. The relationship of these three dimensions can be illustrated by the figure below (Fairclough, 1995, p. 59).

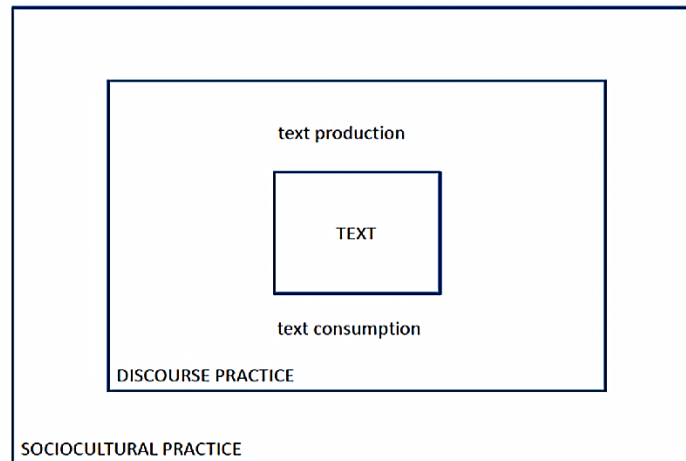


Figure (1): Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA (imbedded ideologies)

Fairclough (1995) defines discourse as a form of social practice. Thus, any discourse analysis involves analyzing the text, discourse practices of text production and finally the analysis of social and cultural practices which frame the text. First level includes the close textual and linguistic analysis. It includes providing descriptions of chosen lexical items that construct social reality. Second level includes the analysis of discursive and inter-textual practices as in the use of direct and indirect quotes or active and passive structures. Interpreting journalists' use of such discursive devices sheds light on their opinions and ideologies. The last level deeply studies discourse in a more socio-cultural context. The description, interpretation and explanation of all three levels of discourse help to unravel the reasons why different newspapers headlines report the same news event from totally different perspectives.

Methodology

Data Collection

Forty headlines from ten prominent British and American newspapers are assembled to highlight how media practitioners with different ideologies pass on the news of Prince Harry and Meghan Markel's decision to step back as senior members of the British royal family. The British newspapers are: The Guardian, The Times, The Sun, Daily Mail and Daily Mirror, while the American newspapers are: New York Post, New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today and Chicago Tribune. All headlines are taken within a two-week period of the royals' announcement.

Linguistic and Discursive Devices

Presupposition

Reah (2002) defines presuppositions as "assumptions that are 'built in' to an utterance, rather than directly stated" (p. 106). They are those statements that language users assume on the part of the listeners or readers. Presupposition is a powerful tool that can be employed to persuade and influence readers and listeners. Analyzing presuppositions in media texts is significant as expressing information in an implicit way usually reflects the speaker's or writer's ideologies. Analyzing this inherent knowledge or presuppositions become significant, especially when they are not true. The thing which indicates the speaker's or writer's attempt to manipulate their listeners' and reader's understanding. Media practitioners employ presuppositions as a strategy to convey hidden messages without asserting them. Bekalu (2006) highlights the "existence of possible ideological reasons behind journalists' use of fair and unfair

presupposition” (p.147) in media texts in an effort to achieve a required cognitive effect on the part of their readers.

Word Choice

The linguistic tools used to construct headlines make them unique (Conboy, 2013). One of the outstanding characteristics of the language of headlines is vocabulary. Even though it has to be short to fit the space, yet it must be effective and catchy. Analyzing the headline’s lexical choices is important as a particular word carries connoted as well as denoted meanings (Richardson, 2007). Choosing specific lexis, such as specific action verbs or modifiers like special adjectives can also play an important role in exposing the news practitioner’s predisposition.

Naming & Reference

People possess a range of roles and identities that can be used to refer to them in media; however, by selecting a particular status or identity, media practitioners convey certain messages. As Richardson (2007) states the manner in which people are named in the news can signal the relationship between media practitioners and their news subjects. It contributes to how news subjects are perceived by readers. Thus, the naming strategies employed by British and American headlines tackling the topic under study are explored as “the way that people are named in news discourse can have significant impact on the way in which they are viewed” (Richardson, 2007, p. 49). According to Shostak and Gillespie (2014), naming strategies in headlines are also very effective communicative tactics in “promoting a particular interest and response from the readers and serve to make them read the headlined information” (p. 278).

Active and Passive Voice

The choice journalists make regarding the use of active and passive structures in their headlines sheds light on their ideologies because “such choices, which the language system both enables and forces us to make in every utterance, are precisely the points at which the operation of ideology can and does occur” (Xie,2013: 42). The passive voice is often used in headlines in order to reflect the objectivity of a newspaper article. Declerck (1991) states several reasons to select a passive construction like having self-evident agents or the need to focus on the theme more than the agent.

Direct and Indirect quotes

Quotation patterns are influential ideological tools employed by journalists in devising headlines. Tuchman (1978) claims that a quote from the newsmaker’s own words renders it as a fact. Both direct and indirect speech patterns are frequently used in the formulation of headlines to give them a sense of reliability and authenticity.

Reference to emotions

Reah (2002) states that headlines comprise the use of lexical properties such as emotive language to enhance the impressive value of the story behind the headline and point to the importance of the news. Bucaria (2004) points out that one of the most important features of headlines is the use of loaded words and expressions which carry strong connotation and hence attract attention. Headlines use loaded sensational words and emotive language to influence readers by appealing to emotions (McCarthy and O'Dell, 2001; Swan, 2005).

Results and Discussion

The discursive devices used in British and American headlines to report the news of Prince Harry and Meghan’s decision to quit their royal duties and work to gain financial independence highlight the differences in British and American media-political alignments and ideologies. Analyzing journalists’ and editors’ discursive devices like presuppositions, lexical choices, active and passive structures, direct and indirect quotes, naming strategies and reference to emotions unravels these ideologies.

In UK press, most headlines employ presupposition and are written in the active voice, with only few ones in the passive voice to shed light on the agents in action. As it is shown in Table (1), Harry and Meghan are mostly the agents, with repetition of phrases like “quit roles”, “quit royals”, “step back as senior royals” and “step down as senior royals” showing that they are in charge of the situation. However, their act is depicted negatively and the active structure is used to hold the agents responsible for their action and mostly blame them for it.

Table 1

British Headlines reporting the Megxit news using the active voice and presupposition

British Headlines	Source
Harry and Meghan to ‘step back as senior royals Harry and Meghan quit roles amid Palace split.	The Guardian, Jan. 9, 2020 The Times, Jan. 9, 2020
Harry and Meg quit the Royals	The Sun, Jan. 9, 2020
Sussexes Dramatically Step Down as Senior Royals – WITHOUT – Telling Her Majesty, Charles or William.	Daily Mail, Jan. 9, 2020
Royal Sensation: They didn’t even tell the Queen. Palace only discover Harry and Meg quitting when pair release statement.	Daily Mirror, Jan. 9, 2020
Crisis talks after couple defied Queen. Calls to strip them of their HRH and cash.	The Sun, Jan. 10, 2020
Meghan flees to Canada [...] leaving Harry to face crisis talks with Queen.	Daily Mail, Jan. 10, 2020
Queen fights to save monarchy [...] Harry & Meghan move could destabilize the Firm.	Daily Mirror, Jan. 10, 2020
Charles threatens to halt Harry and Meghan’s cash	The Times, Jan. 10, 2020
Her Majesty reluctantly gives in to young royals.	Daily Mirror, Jan. 14, 2020
Queen gives Meghan and Harry Transition Period.	The Times, Jan. 14, 2020
Harry and Meghan get Queen’s backing	The Guardian, Jan. 14, 2020

As it is shown in Table (1), British newspaper headlines employ presupposition to influence their readers. They use factive presuppositions as in “Harry and Meghan **quit roles** amid Palace split” that presuppose that Harry and Meghan have roles and duties that they choose to neglect and disregard. The active voice is also used to highlight the agents mostly in a negative image. Harry and Meghan are portrayed as irresponsible as they choose to “quit” their roles, duties and responsibilities. Lexical presuppositions, such as “Sussexes dramatically step down ... WITHOUT telling Her Majesty, Charles or William” and “They didn’t even tell the Queen” presuppose that Harry and Meghan had to tell the royal family and get their approval before their “dramatic” announcement. They are viewed in the headlines as careless and disrespectful of the monarchy as they did not involve other family members, especially the queen in taking the decision. The headlines stress in the active voice the fact that the palace “only discovers Harry and Meg quitting when pair release statement”. The Times headline however uses a passive structure to pass on the same news; “Queen was not told before announcement made” to focus more on the act which is regarded as a blow to the monarchy. They are also viewed as ungrateful as The Sun’s headline states that they “defied the queen” herself, the head of the royal family who according to the monarchy’s rules should be treated with obedience and utmost respect. The agents Harry and Meghan are also depicted as selfish family members as they do not consider the consequences of their act on their family and the monarchy as a whole as in the Daily Mirror’s terms “Harry and Meghan’s move could destabilize the firm”. Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne and Harry’s father, is also an agent and his action “threatens to halt Harry and Meghan’s cash” presupposes his disapproval of the couple’s decision. This is an indirect way of attacking the young royals as it shows that their move was not for the royal family’s best interest.

Meghan, as an actor, is depicted by British media through negatively portraying her as the agent in active structures like, “Meghan flees to Canada”. She is portrayed as someone committing a crime and then trying to escape the situation. Headlines also highlight that she flees “leaving Harry to face crisis talks with Queen”, which depicts her not only as a coward, but also unsupportive of her spouse.

In British headlines, the Queen of England is almost the only agent who is portrayed positively as the family protector. According to the Daily Mirror, she is the one who “fights to save monarchy”. As an agent, the queen is also portrayed as being forgiving, understanding and generous as she “gives Meghan and Harry Transition Period”. The Daily Mirror’s headline, “Her Majesty reluctantly gives in to young royals”, however, portrays the queen as being helpless in the face of the young royals who give her no other solution but to accept their decision. The word “reluctantly” again highlights that she gives them this transition period with a pinch of salt.

Passive structures are used seldom in British headlines to stress the severity of the crisis on the royal institution, especially the queen rather than the agents. As shown in table (2), headlines like, “Queen was not told before announcement made”, “Queen was forced to phone Harry” and “Her pleas that were ignored” all portray the queen as devastated and helpless, and arouse emotions of sympathy for the queen, in contrast to emotions of dismay towards the couple who, according to British newspaper headlines, choose to leave their royal duties and quit their family without consulting them and finally discard the queen’s pleas. Headlines in the passive voice, like “The Sussexes are celebrated, praised and criticized in memes and hot takes as shock announcement sinks in” are used to shed light on the reactions to the couple’s decision which is controversial.

Table 2*British Headlines reporting the Megxit news in the passive voice*

British Headlines	Source
The Sussexes are celebrated, praised and criticized in memes and hot takes as shock announcement sinks in.	The Guardian, Jan. 9, 2020
Queen was not told before announcement made.	The Times, Jan. 9, 2020
How Queen was forced to phone Harry. Her pleas that were ignored	Daily Mail, Jan. 10, 2020

American headlines also rely mostly on active voice, with Harry & Meghan as the agents in the majority of the headlines. However, the active voice is not used to put the agents at the center stage of blame or attack, but rather employed to depict them as strong and independent human beings whose decision is not just justified, but rather celebrated and praised. As shown in Table (3), the agents, Harry and Meghan, “leave royals for commoner life”, “aim to step back as senior royals” because they “want to be financially independent”, a thing which is valued in the American culture. The New York Times headline in the active voice “Going Rogue: Prince Harry and Meghan Caught the Palace Off Guard” connotes that the agents do not follow the expected script, but display independence. Unlike British headlines, which refer to the young royals’ decision as “a move”, The New York Times headline refer to it as “a wish” by the agents “to carve out more progressive roles”. The agents’ decision is described by the Washington Post headline as “bold and remarkable”.

American newspaper headlines also focus on the couple’s “hard exit” which presupposes that they suffered in order to exit the royal family. They also highlight what the young royals had to give up in their pursuit of financial independence. The New York Times uses causal relations to link two active structures in its headline “Harry, Meghan to Quit Royal Jobs, Give Up 'Highness' Titles”. The headline “The couple’s wish to carve out more ‘progressive’ roles has led to the loss of perks, privileges and titles” presupposes that their decision to quit the royal family is something positive as it stems from a desire to have more progressive and active roles. These presuppositions are employed to persuade the readers of Harry and Meghan’s successful decision. The New York Post headline also focuses on what Harry and Meghan have lost; “Harry and Meghan lose ‘royal highness’ titles, will pay back \$3 million in Megxit deal”. Harry and Meghan’s decision is viewed as a bad deal and a sacrifice that they had to make in order to live a normal life.

Table 3*American Headlines reporting the Megxit news in the active voice*

American Headline	Source
Harry and Meghan aim to ‘step back’ as senior royals and split time between Britain and North America. Such a move [...] bold and remarkable.	Washington Post, Jan. 9, 2020
The Duke and Duchess of Sussex want to be “financially independent.”	The New York Times, Jan. 9, 2020

Megxit: Meghan and Harry leave royals for ‘commoner’ life.	New York Post, Jan. 9, 2020
Going Rogue: Prince Harry and Meghan Caught the Palace Off Guard.	The New York Times, Jan. 10, 2020
Harry, Meghan to Quit Royal Jobs, Give Up 'Highness' Titles	The New York Times, Jan. 18, 2020
Great British break off: Harry and Meghan lose ‘royal highness’ titles, will pay back \$3 million in Megxit deal.	New York Post, Jan. 19, 2020
Harry and Meghan’s Hard Exit: The couple’s wish to carve out more “progressive” roles has led to the loss of perks, privileges and titles.	The New York Times, Jan. 20, 2020
'Megxit' divides U.K.: Is Meghan Markle to blame for royal shocker?	USA TODAY, Jan. 10, 2020
The queen rules on ‘Megxit’. Queen Elizabeth is ‘supportive of Prince Harry and Meghan’s plan.	USA TODAY, Jan. 13, 2020
Meghan Markle, the American princess, wants out. Maybe we should all move on.	USA TODAY, Jan. 15, 2020
Family business: Prince Harry, Meghan Markle bolt for the exit. Can you really blame them?	USA TODAY, Jan. 25, 2020
Britain outraged over Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s ‘Megxit’ from the royal family: ‘We have got a crisis here’	Chicago Tribune, Jan. 9, 2020

Unlike American newspaper headlines, British headlines employ direct quotes, as it is shown in Table (4), to make the news more personal and factual. There is focus on the queen as the British people would be interested in the queen’s reaction and what she has to say. Therefore, The Sun’s headline “Queen’s Summit Verdict: ORF YOU GO ... BUT ONE IS NOT AMUSED” and the Daily Mail’s “Queen’s historic personal statement [...]: GO ... IF YOU MUST” and the Daily Mirror’s “Queen to Harry: I WANT YOU TO STAY ...BUT YOU’RE FREE TO GO” all make the Queen’s decision more personal as if she is talking to Harry in public. This not only adds to the dramatic effect of the situation, but also arouse people’s sympathy for the queen who “reluctantly gives in” to the young royals and attracts more readership as these headlines would attract the British readers to read the complete articles to get the details of their queen’s decision which might affect the monarchy, an important part of the British political structure.

The Sun’s headlines “Fury as Harry Quits Firm: MEG’S MUGGED US ORF” and “First Pic Since Megxit Crisis: I’M MEGHAN ... smiles as she takes seaplane” again portray Meghan as the villain of this news story. The first connotes that the royals, especially the queen blame

Meghan for this decision. It connotes that Meghan has taken advantage of the British royal family and has made idiots out of them, while the second shows that the British media views Meghan as someone gloating and smiling while escaping the whole situation after defying the royals. Both direct speech headlines create negative images of Meghan.

Table 4
British headlines using Direct Speech

Headline	Source
Queen’s Fury as Harry and Meghan Say: WE QUIT.	Daily Mail, Jan. 9, 2020
Queen’s Summit Verdict: ORF YOU GO ... BUT ONE IS NOT AMUSED	The Sun, Jan. 14, 2020
MEGXIT: THE SANDRINGHAM SHOWDOWN. Queen’s historic personal statement [...]: GO ... IF YOU MUST.	Daily Mail, Jan. 14, 2020
MONARCHY IN CRISIS Queen to Harry: I WANT YOU TO STAY ...BUT YOU’RE FREE TO GO.	Daily Mirror, Jan. 14, 2020
First Pic Since Megxit Crisis: I’M MEGHAN ... smiles as she takes seaplane	The Sun, Jan. 15, 2020
Fury as Harry Quits Firm: MEG’S MUGGED US ORF	The Sun, Jan. 10, 2020

UK newspaper headlines employ loaded lexis to focus on the impact of the young royals’ decision on the media, the public and the royal family with special focus on the queen. Headlines state that “Megxit dominates”, “world pores over Harry and Meghan” and “papers revel”. They describe Harry and Meghan’s decision as “Megxit bombshell”, “Royal bombshell”, “Palace bombshell”, “Royal countdown to chaos”, “Megxit crisis”, “Hard Megxit”, “Shock announcement”, “Royal dismissal” and “The Sandringham showdown”.

UK press headlines employ word choices to show that Harry and Meghan’s decision is a blow to the monarchy. Headlines shed light on how the royal family has “crisis talks”, “civil war” and even a “bitter Palace battle that raged through the night”. The Daily Mirror uses headlines like “royals in crisis talks” and “Monarchy in crisis”. The family meetings to discuss the issue are described by UK newspaper headlines as “emergency summit”, “payback time” and “summit verdict”.

The UK Sun newspaper was the first to coin the new term “Megxit” to describe Harry and Meghan’s decision to seek financial independence and split their time between the U.K. and North America. It is a play on “Brexit” which is Britain’s withdrawal from the EU. After being coined, the term “Megxit” went viral and was adopted by almost the majority of British press. Even though the decision was made and announced by both royals on their shared account, coining and using the term “Megxit” insinuates that British press views Meghan as the key role

player in taking this decision. By constructing this new identity of Meghan, British newspaper headlines have created negative ideological images of her.

Even though US press adopts the same new coined term “Megxit” from British press, they still use it differently. Megxit is described as the “new Brexit” and a “fairy tale”; a move that is “bold” and “remarkable”. The rhetorical question employed by USA Today headline, “‘Megxit’ divides U.K.: Is Meghan Markle to blame for royal shocker?” questions Meghan’s liability for the act. A USA Today headline even describes Meghan as “the American Princess” who “wants out” after being trapped in a surge of racism by British media.

Unlike British newspaper headlines, US press headlines use positively connoted terms to celebrate Harry and Meghan’s “Megxit”. The New York Post releases the headline “Three cheers for Prince Harry and Meghan Markle’s ‘Megxit’”, just a day after the announcement was made. The New York Times headline word choices, “Good for Meghan and Harry. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex are right to blaze their own trail”, also supports the young royals. USA Today headline “Prince Harry, Meghan Markle bolt for the exit. Can you really blame them?” refutes the attack waged by British newspapers against Harry and Meghan. The Washington Post manipulates the term “step back” which is used by British newspaper headlines negatively to make it positive as in “‘Step back’ is the language of control. We can thank Harry and Meghan for that”.

American newspaper headlines also focus on “Harry and Meghan’s Hard exit”. They make word choices to show that Harry and Meghan pay a high price to become “financially independent” and stop being publically funded. The newspaper headlines word choices justify their action and show their losses. “Prince Harry and Meghan stepping back, explained”. They sacrifice and “give up Highness’ Titles”, “lose highness’ titles”, “pay back \$3 million in Megxit deal”. This “loss of perks, privileges and titles” is due to the fact that “The Duke and Duchess of Sussex want to be “financially independent.”” and “Wish to carve out more progressive roles”.

British newspaper headlines make extensive reference to emotions that focus on the feelings of dismay, sadness and even fury that members of the royal family experience after Harry and Meghan’s “shock announcement”; a description used by The Guardian. Many headlines focus on the queen’s feelings. Headlines like “Queen’s fury”, “Queen sad, Charles & Wills furious”, “Fury as Harry quits firm”, “Her Maj sad at pair’s Canada move”, “Queen is fury as Harry and Meghan say: We quit” and “Queen: ORF you go, but one is not amused” by The Guardian, The Sun and The Daily Mail not just attract the readers’ attention, but also arouse feelings of sympathy towards the queen and other members of the royal family.

Daily Mirror highlights the royal family’s “fear” in its headline “Emergency summit over fears Harry & Meghan move could destabilize the Firm”. Both Daily Mirror and Daily Mail respectively refer to the queen’s feelings of despair and helplessness; “Her Majesty reluctantly gives in to young royals” and “...regretfully agrees to a ‘transition’ period of living in UK and Canada”.

The Times newspaper headline “Charles threatens to halt Harry and Meghan’s cash” and The Sun’s headlines “Calls to strip them of their HRH and cash” “Queen’s hard Megxit: Payback Time” magnify the Royal family’s negative feelings and contempt with Harry and Meghan’s decision and take it to the level of revenge. The Guardian also refers to the stance and feelings of British newspapers “UK papers revel in Harry and Meghan's royal dismissal.

Unlike UK newspapers, US newspaper headlines do not rely on emotions in reporting the news as they try to rationalize Harry and Meghan's action. The Chicago Tribune's headline "Britain 'outraged' over Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's 'Megxit' from the royal family" and the New York Post's headline "Queen 'furious' over Megxit" employ emotions to refer to a British crisis from the American media's perspective.

Both British and American newspaper headlines choose to name "Harry and Meghan" in three ways. First through using only their first names as the news actors here are well-known public figures and members of the British royal family. Second they name them by their first name accompanied by the title, as in "Prince Harry and Meghan" and finally through their role labels as in "the Sussexes" and "Duke and Duchess" and "the young royals". British headlines mainly rely on using first names as the public is already familiar with Harry and Meghan. American headlines, on the other hand rely more on the second naming strategy which is using the title along with the name as American readers do not have the same background information on British royalty and also to attract their attention.

Findings and Conclusion

This study examines how the ideology of media practitioners functions in the formation of newspaper headlines. Forty headlines from British and American newspapers reporting the news of Prince Harry and Meghan's decision to step back from their royal duties are collected and analyzed using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA. The headlines are taken from prominent British and American newspapers, namely The Guardian, The Times, The Sun, Daily Mail, Daily Mirror, New York Post, Washington Post, The New York Times, Chicago Tribune and USA Today. Newspaper headlines presuppositions, word choices, emotive language, naming strategies, along with discursive techniques like the use of active and passive structures and the use of direct speech are analyzed in both British and American newspaper headlines to unravel their hidden ideologies or messages which exist in seemingly plain texts. Based on their different cultural, social and political predispositions, British and American newspaper headlines employ the same discursive tools differently to report the same news story from two different stand points.

Although the British Monarchy is a constitutional monarchy where the queen no longer has a political or executive role, she continues to play a vital role for the British people. She is 'Head of Nation' and stands for national identity, unity and pride. The monarchy gives the British public a sense of stability, continuity, success and excellence. In 2012, celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, a poll of 1,006 British adults found that 80% were in favor of the monarchy. This British belief in the importance of the monarchy as part of their national identity, their pride in the royal conventions and traditions, along with their respect and admiration of the queen make them take the news of Harry and Meghan's decision negatively since it is viewed as a blow to the royal institution that could "destabilize the firm" as the Daily Mirror headline names it. Therefore, British newspaper headlines employ the active structure, direct speech, loaded vocabulary and emotive language in a way that reflects these ideologies.

The headlines are found to depend mainly on the active structure with Harry and Meghan as the main agents. However, the agents are negatively presented and attacked by British newspapers, with special focus on Meghan who is directly blamed for the situation. The negative impact of their decision on the monarchy is stressed through the use of loaded vocabulary and emotive language that are heavily used not only to grab the reader's attention, but also to arouse feelings of sympathy for the queen. Headlines employ direct speech to add to the dramatic effect of the situation and make the queen's position more personal with the public who are constantly reminded that it all happened without the queen's knowledge or

approval and how Harry and Meghan leave her no other choice but to “reluctantly give in” to them at the end as the Daily Mirror headline states. The headlines mainly refer to Harry and Meghan using first names as they are well-known public figures and members of the British royal family.

The American society, on the other hand, does not possess the same political structure. It does not have a monarch and so its views of duties and roles differ. The American culture upholds and cheers different values, such as the individual’s freedom to choose his/ her own path, hard work and financial independence. Even the concept of a family and family ties differs. Besides, Meghan Markle is an American and the decision entails splitting time between the UK and North America, which includes the United States and not just Canada. Therefore, there is an attempt by American press to diminish this negative image of her and Prince Harry and replace it with a more positive image as they call her the “American princess”. The strategies used in employing the linguistic and discursive devices in American newspaper headlines reporting this news story consequently differs as it is reported with a positive tone.

The American headlines rely on the active structure with Harry and Meghan as the agents. However, their act is cheered and celebrated. Their losses of HRH titles, privileges and cash in order to be able to work and gain financial independence are highlighted through the use of loaded vocabulary. Unlike British headlines, they neither heavily employ emotive language nor direct speech as they aim at rationalizing Prince Harry and Meghan’s decision and since the American readers would not be keen on knowing the British queen’s feelings or what she has to say. American headlines also choose to name Harry and Meghan by their titles and role labels to grab the reader’s attention and because the American reader might not be familiar with the first names of British royalty.

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