Critical Discourse Analysis of the RIA *Novosti* News

Lü Hui[1] & Zhang Yuanyuan[2]

Hainan University. Haikou, China

Abstract

This study is situated within corpus-based discourse analysis and provides a critical discussion on China in the Russian mainstream media RIA Novosti during the COVID-19 epidemic. The paper analyzes RIA Novosti's reports on China during the pandemic COVID-19. The authors use Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model to explore the discourse representations of RIA Novosti's reports on China during the epidemic and thus uncover the attitudes and stances of the Russian media and social cognition. The authors come to conclusion that RIA Novosti shows great concern about China during the pandemic by focusing on the epidemic itself and its impact. Additionally, Russian reports reflect the stages of China's fight against the pandemic objectively, truthfully, and comprehensively. RIA Novosti holds a positive attitude towards China's efforts to fight the epidemic. The study broadens the perspective of academic study of COVID-19 pandemic coverage in China from foreign media and enriches empirical research in Russian.

Keywords

---

1   Email: 2625265589[at]qq.com
2   Email: 449142671[at]qq.com

Критический дискурс-анализ сайта *РИА Новости*

Хуэй Люй[1], Юаньюань Чжан[2]

Хайнаньский университет. Хайкоу, Китай

Аннотация

В конце 2019 года пандемия COVID-19 парализовала Китай и стала самой обсуждаемой темой в мировых СМИ. В этой работе анализируются репортажи о пандемии COVID-19 в Китае от РИА Новости. Объектом исследования выступают дискурсивные репрезентации и установки в освещении российскими СМИ пандемии COVID-19 в Китае. Авторы анализируют новостные тексты по трём параметрам: текст, дискурсивная практика и социальная практика. Инструментом анализа выступает трёхмерная модель Н. Фэркло. Исследование показало, что российские СМИ объективны и правдивы в отношении китайских событий, они положительно относятся к усилиям Китая по борьбе с пандемией COVID-19 и постулируют, что Китай продемонстрировал позитивный и ответственный подход в борьбе с пандемией COVID-19. Исследование расширяет перспективу академического изучения освещения пандемии COVID-19 в Китае от зарубежных СМИ и обогащает эмпирические исследования на русском языке.

Ключевые слова

1   Email: 2625265589[at]qq.com
2   Email: 449142671[at]qq.com

Introduction

One of the most important international events of 2020 can rightly be considered the outbreak of pandemic COVID-19, and within months it had spread around the world. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia and China have reliably joined forces to combat the spread of the coronavirus infection. With the promotion of Russia-China comprehensive strategic cooperation of partnership, the media in the Russian Federation are devoting great attention to China. RIA Novosti is one of Russia's largest media outlets, promptly disseminating news on events in Russia and the world. Thus it is important to analyse reports on the RIA Novosti website as language material and scientifically appreciate the political positions it professes.

Review of the related research

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytic study that examines and analyses written and spoken texts to identify discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias and has the characteristics of qualitative research. Ruth Wodak defines it as "an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language from a critical perspective" to examine "linguistic behaviour in natural speech situations of social significance" (Wodak &Meyer, 2009) Discourse analysis, according to T. Van Dijk, has its own history and its own approach, which is not only interdisciplinary, but also independent. (Van Dijk, 1997, 125) Corpus Linguistics (CL) is based on a large number of real texts; it draws conclusions using probabilistic and statistical methods and has the characteristics of quantitative research. Michael Stubbs, in "Text and Corpus Analysis: Computer Assisted Studies of Language and Culture", argues that even the simple tools of corpus linguistics can help uncover basic ideologies, advancing the process of dialogue between critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics (Stubbs, 1990, 45).

In China, research into the combination of corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis began relatively late, and the early focus was on theoretical introduction and review. Qian Yufang presented how corpus technology can be effectively used in critical discourse analysis research (Qian, 2010, 198-202). Xin Bin and Gao Xiaoli outlined the trend and dynamics of critical discourse analysis at home and abroad and found that domestic scholars have noticed the research trend of combining corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis (Xin & Gao, 2013, 1–16). Zhang Ruihua and Li Shunran analysing Chinese sources and development trends, proved that there are relatively few theoretical results of domestic research in this field, while empirical research accounts for most of it. (Zhang & Li, 2020). Domestic empirical research is mainly based on this theory for discourse analysis of relevant corpuses, such as government reports, media discourses and political speeches, for image construction of countries, business, cities and organizations, as well as discursive construction of individuals and specific group research.

Looking back at existing studies, it is easy to find that one of the main objects of critical discourse analysis research is the discourse of news reporting. Thompson J. B. believes that the analysis of ideology in modern society should pay full attention to the nature and Influence of "mass media" Central role in the production and dissemination of ideology (Thompson, 1990). At present, however, there are not many studies devoted to the discursive analysis of relevant news messages during the New Crown epidemic, and the construction of China's image within relevant studies in this field is even rarer.

Kang Zhe takes RIA Novosti's reports on the "One Belt, One Road" initiative as the object of study and analyses the current situation in Russia. It is established that the Russian media spoke positively about the initiative "One Belt, One Road" and considered it a dream of many nations to revive the Great Silk Road, a manifestation of great power consciousness and responsibility of China, a catalyst of Eurasian integration, and a new order in international relations (Kang, 2018, 74). Gao Jinping and Liu Shutong selected reports on the COVID-19 pandemic in China from the media of six Western countries and found that as the epidemic situation in China changed, the attitude of Western mainstream public opinion towards China changed from positive to negative several times (Gao & Liu, 2020, 98).

In short, corpus-based methods of discourse analysis proceed from objective data, which helps to eliminate subjective interference. At present, although corpus-based research on domestic critical discourse analysis began late, it has developed rapidly in recent years, and research horizons and ideas have been diversified. Nevertheless, there are still few studies on critical discourse analysis in this field that focus on news reports during the COVID-19 epidemic, and the relevant studies are mostly based on media reports in both Chinese and English, which can enrich empirical research on Russian corpus in this field.

Goals and methods of research

The aim of the paper is to examine the discourse features of news texts and their political positions on the example of reporting on the website of RIA Novosti about China during the COVID-19 pandemic and to analyse the national image of China created by RIA Novosti in the news discourse. The main research method is Critical Discourse-Analysis. At different stages of the empirical study, we apply N. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model. The reliability and validity of the results and conclusions are ensured by the complex approach to the study of texts, combining qualitative and quantitative methods of its analysis, a broad theoretical basis of scientific work and high efficiency of the empirical material. The relevance of this research lies in the consideration of the object under new conditions. The study is based on new linguistic data material, all obtained from the Russian official media RIA Novosti. The research methodology is innovative, combining corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis and N. Fairclough's three-dimensional

model to make the research findings more comprehensive and convincing for all readers.

Theoretical foundations of the study

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analysis that begins by examining how texts and discourses contain, reproduce, replicate and reject abuses of social power, social domination and inequality in political and social contexts. CDA is firmly embedded in the contemporary research paradigm of the humanities. At the core of CDA there is a certain concept of critique interpreted as a purposeful, conscious identification, description and explanation of the order of discursive reproduction of social relations, in particular relations of domination and subordination (Kozhemyakin, 2015, 5).

Discourse analysis, according to T. Van Dijk, is a discipline in its own right. Discourse as structure and process attempts to separate discourse analysis from other disciplines. Discourse analysis has its own history and its own approach, which is not only interdisciplinary, but also independent (Van Dijk, 1997, 125). Critical discourse analysis should consider and explain as a parameter the features of social interaction and social structure. T. Van Dijk defines discourse as text or speech in a social context, local and global (Van Dijk, 1985, 206). N. Fairclough argues that any analysis of discourse and discourse is three-dimensional, namely, it has three dimensions: text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice, and that text exists in discourse practice and discourse practice exists in sociocultural practice. N. Fairclough identifies the following main positions: CDA deals with socio-political issues. The relationship between text and society is mediated. Discourse analysis is interpretative and descriptive. CDA conceptualizes language as a form of social practice (Fairclough, 1995, 93).

Research results

The study used the LexisNexis database to gather information on RIA Novosti's coverage of China during the COVID-19 pandemic from January 2020 to October 2021. The search terms «коронавирус» ("coronavirus") and «Китай» ("China") were used, and news sources were restricted to RIA Novosti, extracted and uploaded. The corpus consisted of 12,260 news articles containing 2,013,340 tokens and 570,607 types. The standard class/token ratio (STTR) was 21.32. In this study, we analyse critical discourse using AntConc 3.5.7 W corpus analysis software, while the critical discourse was analysed using thematic analysis.

Let us now examine the corpus of RIA Novosti publications at the text level, paying special attention to such indicators as thematic words, word combinations and index strings, which together constitute the textual features of the corpus.

Keywords

In corpus analysis, words that occur with high frequency in one or more texts are called keywords. Keywords can be used to identify features of a given category of text or theme. The AntConc corpus analysis software analyses and clears the text and simultaneously accesses the Russian national corpus to produce a list of thematic terms. After entering the vocabulary of disambiguation features, sorted by topic in descending order, the first 100 thematic words are selected and combined. The analysis shows that the key words of the new RIA Novosti report on the COVID-19 pandemic related to China can be divided into four categories, as shown in Table 3–1.

The first category is virus descriptions, accounting for 21.90%. The term 'coronavirus' is specified precisely to refer to a virus; from example 1 we can see that the vocabulary of descriptions of virus characteristics and routes of infection has gradually evolved from unknown to clear and transparent. Words such as new, unknown, contagious, infectious, epidemic, person-to-person, asymptomatic, etc.

Number	Semantic component	Thematic words	Frequency (%)
1	Coronavirus and its characteristics	In Russian: коронавирус, пневмония, вирус, возбудитель, болезнь, пандемия, вирусология, заражения, новый, эпидемия, дезинформация, симптом, неизвестно, от человека к человеку, бессимптомный, инфекция, заразность Translation: coronavirus, pneumonia, virus, pathogen, disease, pandemic, virology, infection, new, epidemic, misinformation, symptom, unknown, person to person, asymptomatic, infection, contagion	21.90
2	Progress and consequences	In Russian: вспышка, возник, заболевший, рейс, борьба, происхождение, установить, положительный, скончаться, распространение, международный Translation: outbreak, emerged, disease, flight, fight, origins, establish, positive, decease, spread, international	12.00

| 3 | Prevention and control measures | In Russian:
здравоохранение, приостановить, привить, сознательно, карантинные меры, необходимо, превентивный, карантин, вакцинация

Translation:
health, suspend, inoculate, conscious, quarantine measures, necessary, preventive, quarantine, vaccination | 3.90 |
| 4 | Highlights | In Russian:
Китай, США, КНР, Ухань, китайский, Гонконг, РФ, Япония, Пекин, ВОЗ, Макао, Тайвань, американская, Хубэй, граждан, турист, эксперт, народ, МИД, специалист, президент, Трамп, Помпео, организация, компания, министерство, правительство

Translation:
China, US, PRC, Wuhan, Chinese, Hong Kong, Russia, Japan, Beijing, WHO, Macau, Taiwan, US, Hubei, citizens, tourist, expert, people, Foreign Ministry, specialist, President, Trump, Pompeo, organisation, company, ministry, government | 28.70 |

Table 1. List of keywords in RIA Novosti stories related to China during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sample 1

In Russian:

По сообщению Центрального телевидения Китая, вспышки вирусной пневмонии неизвестного происхождения, новый вид коронавируса. По данным Централь-ного телевидения Китая, причиной этой необъяснимой вспышки пневмонии является новый тип коронавируса. В результате 4 человека умерли (The first case of death, 2020).

Translation:

China Central Television is reporting a viral pneumonia outbreak of unknown origin, a new type of coronavirus. According to China Central Television, the cause of this unexplained pneumonia outbreak is a new type of coronavirus. As a result, four people have died.

The second category describes progress and impact of the epidemic, accounting for 12%. As shown in Table 1, words such as outbreak, origin, spread, decease, international, and chronology of Chinese reports reflecting the epidemic situation have been reported continuously; as shown in Case Study 2, the use of

precise and concise numerical expressions can show the validity and completeness of the report in Russian.

Sample 2

In Russian:

Вспышка нового типа коронавируса началась в конце декабря. Общее число заражённых на территории материкового Китая достигло 2835, из них 81 скончались (Pompeo accused China, 2020).

Translation:

An outbreak of a new type of coronavirus began in late December. The total number of those infected in mainland China has reached 2,835, 81 of whom have died.

The third category is the description of COVID-19 pandemic prevention and control, which accounts for 3.9%. According to example 3 and example 4, we can find that RIA Novosti accurately reported China's anti-epidemic measures such as suspension, deliberate, quarantine, quarantine measures, prevention, vaccination, etc.

Sample 3

In Russian:

Китай из-за коронавируса существовал в условиях повсеместного карантина и строгих ограничений длительностью в месяц, болезнь внесла изменения в привычный образ жизни и распорядок работы (China hid coronavirus data, 2020).

Translation:

China, because of the coronavirus, has been under widespread quarantine and strict one-month restrictions; the disease has changed the way people live and work.

Sample 4

In Russian:

Китай намеревался привить от коронавируса 50 миллионов человек до китайского Нового года, который в 2021 году отмечался 12 февраля (Chaplygina, 2020).

Translation:

China intended to instil 50 million people against the coronavirus before the Chinese New Year, which in 2021 was celebrated on 12 February.

The fourth category is highlights, accounting for 28.7%. In terms of location, the Russian media showed a high degree of attention to areas with relatively serious epidemics. Among these, news about Wuhan made up the majority, as shown in Case Study 5, followed by Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. In terms of characters, most reports cited the Chinese government and experts, as shown in example 6, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and former US President Trump and Secretary of State Pompeo's statement, among them experts and governments are more

frequently cited, making the reports more political and professional and having a greater impact on the audience.

Sample 5

In Russian:

В конце декабря 2019 года китайские власти сообщили о вспышке неизвестного происхождения в городе Ухане (Beijing told about assistance to other countries, 2020).

Translation:

In late December 2019, Chinese authorities reported an outbreak of unknown origin in the city of Wuhan.

Sample 6

In Russian:

Китай, который восстанавливается после эпидемии коронавируса, может достичь положительного роста ВВП по итогам 2020 года, заявил в интервью РИА Новости профессор Александр Латкин (Dakhnovsky, 2020).

Translation:

China, recovering from a coronavirus epidemic, could achieve positive GDP growth by the end of 2020, Professor Alexander Latkin told RIA Novosti.

Collocation

The concept of collocation was first introduced by J. R. Firth. Collocation is an isolated concept, meaning certain words in a language that tend to be used together. By extracting and analysing the words that have an exceptional frequency in a discourse and the words or groups of words that are matched to them, it is possible to identify the theme of the discourse and the set of words that express this theme. In order to analyse collocations more effectively, 'collocativity' has been proposed. In order to trace the attitude of RIA Novosti towards the prevention and containment of a new epidemic of coronavirus pneumonia by the Chinese government, this study selected the frequent subject term 'government' to further analyse the relationship between government and its collocations. The value of MI, a classic method for calculating the strength of word combinations provided by WordSmith Tools, developed by M. Scott, was used to identify related word combinations.

As shown in Table 2, through the analysis of the choice of words with higher strength of combination, it was found that the words with higher correlation with government are 'prompt, correspond, win, effective' and other words. The positive semantics of this evaluative vocabulary are more prominent and make up the positive rhyme of the discourse.

Number	General frequency	Frequency of the left-hand pairing	Frequency of the right-hand pairing	MI	Corresponding words
1	1	0	1	10.55915	Скрывать (to hide)
2	1	0	1	9.55915	Оперативно (promptly)
3	1	1	0	8.55915	Соответствия (correspondencies)
4	2	1	1	7.45423	Победа (victory)
5	3	1	2	7.03919	преднамеренно (Intentionally)
6	3	0	3	6.45423	Эффективно (efficiently)

Table 2. Collocations of the word combination with the word 'government' in reports from RIA Novosti about China during the COVID-19 pandemic

However, there are also negative words such as 'hide' and 'intentionally'. By reconstructing the key words in the text, it can be seen that all the above-mentioned negative words are taken from RIA Novosti referring to American reports. Unlike the Russian media, the US media shows a serious tendency to deliberately discredit China and reinforce a negative image of China.

Sample 7
In Russian:

Должностные лица США считают, что Китай скрыл масштабы вспышки нового типа коронавируса и степень его заразности, чтобы запастись товарами медицинского назначения, предоставляет агентство Ассошиэйтед Пресс (Associated Press: China Hid Coronavirus Data, 2020).

Translation:

US officials believe China concealed the extent of an outbreak of a new type of coronavirus and its degree of contagiousness in order to stockpile medical supplies, the Associated Press reports.

Sample 8

In Russian:

Директор Центра анализа стратегий и технологий Руслан Пухов заявил РИА Новости, что доклад 'Альянса пяти глаз' говорит о сокрытии Китаем информации, а не фактов (Chaplygina, 2020).

Translation:

Ruslan Pukhov, director of the Centre for Strategy and Technology Analysis, told RIA Novosti that The Five Eyes (FVEY) report suggests China is withholding information, not facts.

It is clear from Sample 7 and Sample 8 that the US is ignoring the Chinese government's efforts to combat the epidemic and deliberately discrediting China, but the RIA Novosti report insists on starting from the truth and maintaining a rational and objective approach in the face of hot-button issues. A stance questioning the deliberate slander and malicious propaganda of the United States was a rare true voice in the general chorus of public opinion when the West collectively discredited China at the time.

Concordance

A concordance is a string of text of a given length, showing the use of a word in context. The most common form of word concordance is called KWIC (keyword in context). The function of corpus concordance has a number of ways to help interpret the speaker-writer relationship. In this study, the frequent subject term China was chosen as the search term and ten left and right word concordances (L10/R10) were extracted with the search term in the centre. A total of 499 lines of concordances allows us to intuitively explore the attitude and position of RIA Novosti on China's fight against the pandemic reflected in these discourses. Through preliminary analysis, it was found that China usually expresses location and it is often used with the prepositions "in, on, from, for, etc." And it is also used for specific names of organisations; 'China' is also frequently used as a subject of action, often with 'to reveal, to direct, to launch, to inform, etc.' For more intuitive and effective observation, this study uses only "China" as the main index string, as shown in Table 3. The table also confirms the conclusion reached by the collocation analysis, and it indicates that the Russian media is objective and rational about reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic in China.

Number	Keyword	Mention index
1	China	выявил 9 случаев коронавируса и 4 бессимптомных (identified 9 cases of coronavirus and 4 asymptomatic)
2	China	существует в условиях повсеместного карантина и строгих ограничений (exists in an environment of widespread quarantine and strict restrictions)
3	China	скрывал ситуацию с коронавирусом (covered up the coronavirus situation)
4	China	активно борется с коронавирусом (is actively fighting the coronavirus)
5	China	направил своих медицинских экспертов в Иран, Ирак (sent its medical experts to Iran, Iraq)
6	China	поставил помощь в виде медизделий (put aid in the form of medical supplies)
7	China	крупнейший торговый партнёр России (Russia's largest trading partner)

Table 3. Matching lines for 'China' in reports from RIA Novosti about China during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sample 9

In Russian:

Китай за сутки выявил девять случаев коронавируса и четырёх бессимптомных носителей, из больниц выписали 27 пациентов, следует из сообщений госкомитета по здравоохранению КНР (Ratkoglo, 2021).

Translation:

China identified nine cases of coronavirus and four asymptomatic carriers in 24 hours, and 27 patients were discharged from hospitals, according to National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China.

Sample 10

In Russian:

Китай направил своих медицинских экспертов в Иран, Ирак, Италию, где специалисты делились своим опытом также посредством видеоконференций с рядом стран и ВОЗ.

Translation:

China sent its medical experts to Iran, Iraq and Italy, where experts also shared their experience through videoconferences with a number of countries and the WHO.

Sample 11

In Russian:

Китай – крупнейший торговый партнёр России – в 2020 году не допустил значительного падения двустороннего товарооборота. После спада, вызванного эпидемией, он снова вышел на траекторию роста в 2021 году (Ratkoglo, 2021).

Translation:

China, Russia's largest trading partner, has avoided a significant drop in bilateral trade in 2020. After a downturn caused by the epidemic, it is back on a growth trajectory in 2021.

Analysing Table 3 and Samples 9 and 10, we found that RIA Novosti pays attention to the real-time dynamics of the epidemic situation in China and the number of confirmed cases and asymptomatic infections of the new coronavirus, during which isolation control and other timely reporting took place; RIA Novosti objectively assessed the US media's belief that China was covering up reports of the new coronavirus; RIA Novosti believes the US views are false; RIA Novosti treats China as if the efforts made to combat the epidemic have generated a positive attitude, and positive reports on China's fight against the epidemic made up the majority of all reports, such as "China sends medical experts to other countries, donates medicines, etc." As it is shown in sample 11, RIA Novosti also highlights issues such as the direction of cooperation between Russia and China in trade, energy and other economic areas after the epidemic. Russia is positive about Sino-Russian cooperation in the post-epidemic era and has stated that opportunities and challenges coexist.

Discursive practice analysis

This kind of analysis is conducted in terms of sources and paraphrasing, focusing on the relationship between texts and discursive practices, namely the "production", "dissemination" and "reception" of texts. Sources are divided into concrete and definitive sources, implicit and unspoken sources, and sources that appear to be true but are not. In order to ensure the credibility of the story, the media rarely select sources that are untrue. Giving readers the opportunity to hear the voices of different people, directly or indirectly, is the most important goal of news reporters using paraphrased speech (Gale, 2010).

Xin Bin has classified sources into six categories: party and government agencies, journalists and media, experts and academics, social groups, companies and ordinary people. In our study, the target texts are found in concrete and definite sources (80.74%) and implicit and indefinite sources (14.29%), with a smaller number of sources (4.97%) being true or untrue. Choosing reliable sources helps to increase trust in the news.

As can be seen from the examples, the specific and accurate sources of information in the target corps are mainly government leaders, the Foreign Ministry

Spokespersons, due to the fact that the government usually occupies the main channel for releasing and disseminating information, and can often exert varying degrees of influence on other channels as well. In addition, the Russian media also prefer to select journalists, experts and academics as sources, and the information is generally objective and realistic, with more positive commentary, which makes the coverage political and professional and has a greater impact on the audience and society, whereas the corresponding negative comments and messages come from the quoted US media.

Discourse analysis and social practice

Critical discourse analysis advocates combining linguistic analysis with social analysis, so that the social analysis of news discourse is combined with a specific political and economic context.

Politically, China's international discourse has intensified significantly in recent years. As Russia is a friendly partner of China, the position of the Russian media is inevitably influenced by the ideology of that country, and objective news coverage related to the epidemic in China is also a way to show recognition and respect for the Chinese government and to present a positive and proactive image of China's fight against the epidemic in its reporting on China. Economically, in order to contain the spread of the coronavirus, the Russian government has been forced to close the borders, restrict the movement of people and detain trade. As a result, economic growth in Russia has slowed. Now most Russian economic experts say economic growth is slowing down because of the new coronavirus pandemic. Russia's economic performance is declining rapidly, they say, but the negative impact is not just on Russia's economy but on the world economy as a whole.

According to the three-dimensional concept of discourse, all types of discourse are essentially social practices subservient to particular ideologies. Critical analysis of discourse cannot be separated from analysis of its social practices at the macro level. The section explains the specific findings of Russian media based on the attributes of social practices in reporting on China-related epidemics.

Conclusion

Based on the theory of Critical discourse analysis, following descriptive statistics on 12,260 reports of COVID-19 epidemics in China on the RIA Novosti website, it was found that the sample news has the following main characteristics.

In terms of quoting sources, the official RIA Novosti uses a variety of information sources and pays attention to the balance between official and unofficial sources. Chinese governments, companies, experts and media outlets can be sources of information for RIA Novosti. It disseminates discourse on China from different perspectives in order to achieve "full listening and understanding" and helps the Russian audience to form a more complete picture of the epidemic situation in China and even of China's image. In addition, RIA Novosti has picked up

a large amount of news published by the Chinese government and Chinese media, giving China more of a voice.

In terms of describing trends, most RIA Novosti reviews are neutral, reflecting the facts truthfully and objectively, and they do not influence public perceptions and judgements. This is due to the concise expositing of RIA Novosti news essays: they rarely add the reporter's subjective opinion to the news information. Other papers document China's contribution to the global fight against the epidemic. In the context of global counter-epidemic cooperation, what is important is that compared to some Western media outlets using the epidemic to discredit China and confuse audiences, these positive and neutral RIA Novosti statements can to some extent balance international public opinion and make useful attempts to break the current imbalance in the strength of international discourse.

However, due to the only corpus source used in this study, the limited number of corpus, only one choice of medium and the short time period, the results of the study still need to be tested on a wider range of material. Prospects for future research could focus on a dynamic assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic in China by other Russian media (such as Russia Today and TASS) over a longer period of time.

References

Associated Press: China Hid Data on Coronavirus. (n. d.). Dicred.ru. https://www.discred.ru/2020/05/04/associated-press-kitaj-skryval-dannye-o-koronaviruse-dlya-nakopleniya-lekarstv/ (In Russian).

Beijing told about assistance to other countries in the fight against coronavirus. (2020, March 18). RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20200318/1568773800.html (In Russian).

Chaplygina, M. (2020, May 3). *An Expert Evaluated the Western Intelligence Report on China.* RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20200503/1570925582.html (In Russian).

China hid coronavirus data to stockpile drugs. (2020, May 4). RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20200504/1570937934.html (In Russian).

Dakhnovsky, A. (2022, January 10). *Russia and China achieved a record in trade in spite of the pandemic.* RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20220110/dakhnovskiy-1767060390.html (In Russian).

Dijk, T. A. van. (1997). *Discourse as structure and process.* SAGE.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language.* Longman.

Gale, J. (2010). Discursive analysis: A research approach for studying the moment-to-moment construction of meaning in systemic practice. *Human Systems: The Journal of Therapy, Consultation & Training*, 21(2), 7–37.

Gao, J., & Liu, S. (2020). Analysis of public opinion on the new crown pneumonia in Russian mainstream media. *Chinese Journalists*, 4, 98-101. (In Chinese).

Kang, C. (2018). Russian mainstream media commentary on the Belt and Road Initiative—A survey based on Russian news agencies. *Journal of Dalian Maritime University (Social Science Edition)*, 17(2), 74-78. (In Chinese).

Kozhemyakin, E. A. (2015). Discourse analysis as interdisciplinary project: between method and ideology. *Scientific journal of Belgorod State University. Series: Humanities*, 6, 5–12. (In Russian).

Liang, M., Li, W., & Xu, J. (2010). A tutorial on corpus applications. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press*, 4, 197-199. (In Chinese).

Pompeo accused China of interfering with WHO and vaccine inefficiency. (2020, December 18). RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20201218/kitay-1589989038.html (In Russian).

Qian, Y. (2010). Corpus and critical discourse analysis. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 42(3), 198-202. (In Chinese).

Ratkoglo, A. (2021, February 15). *Nine cases of coronavirus detected in China in 24 hours*. RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20210215/koronavirus-1597472133.html (In Russian).

Stubbs, M. (1990). *Text and corpus analysis: Computer-assisted studies of language and culture*. Blackwell Oxford.

The first case of death from a new coronavirus was reported in Beijing. (2020, January 27). RIA Novosti. https://ria.ru/20200127/1563940435.html (In Russian).

Thompson, J. B. (1990). *Ideology and modern culture*. Polity Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503621886

Van Dijk, T. A. (1985). *Handbook of discourse analysis*. Academic Press.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed). SAGE.

Xin, B., & Gao, X. (2013). Critical discourse analysis: Goals, methods, and dynamics. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 4, 1-16. (In Chinese).

Zhang, R., & Li, S. (2020). A review of domestic corpus-based critical discourse analysis studies. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, 6, 101-110. (In Chinese).

Список литературы

Dijk, T. A. van. (1997). *Discourse as structure and process*. SAGE.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Longman.

Gale, J. (2010). Discursive analysis: A research approach for studying the moment-to-moment construction of meaning in systemic practice. *Human Systems: The Journal of Therapy, Consultation & Training*, 21(2), 7–37.

Gao, J., & Liu, S. (2020). Analysis of public opinion on the new crown pneumonia in Russian mainstream media. *Chinese Journalists*, 4, 98-101. (In Chinese).

Kang, C. (2018). Russian mainstream media commentary on the Belt and Road Initiative—A survey based on Russian news agencies. *Journal of Dalian Maritime University (Social Science Edition)*, 17(2), 74-78. (In Chinese).

Liang, M., Li, W., & Xu, J. (2010). A tutorial on corpus applications. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press*, 4, 197-199. (In Chinese).

Qian, Y. (2010). Corpus and critical discourse analysis. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 42(3), 198-202. (In Chinese).

Stubbs, M. (1990). *Text and corpus analysis: Computer-assisted studies of language and culture*. Blackwell Oxford.

Thompson, J. B. (1990). *Ideology and modern culture*. Polity Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503621886

Van Dijk, T. A. (1985). *Handbook of discourse analysis*. Academic Press.

Wodak, R., & Meyer, M. (2009). *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (2nd ed). SAGE.

Xin, B., & Gao, X. (2013). Critical discourse analysis: Goals, methods, and dynamics. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 4, 1-16. (In Chinese).

Zhang, R., & Li, S. (2020). A review of domestic corpus-based critical discourse analysis studies. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, 6, 101-110. (In Chinese).

Associated Press: Китай скрывал данные о коронавирусе для накопления лекарств. (б. д.). Dicred.ru. https://www.discred.ru/2020/05/04/associated-press-kitaj-skryval-dannye-o-koronaviruse-dlya-nakopleniya-lekarstv/

В Пекине зарегистрировали первый случай смерти от нового коронавируса. (2020, январь 27). РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20200127/1563940435.html

В Пекине рассказали о помощи другим странам в борьбе с коронавирусом. (2020, март 18). РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20200318/1568773800.html

Дахновский, А. (2022, январь 10). *РФ и КНР добились рекорда в торговле вопреки пандемии*. РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20220110/dakhnovskiy-1767060390.html

Китай скрывал данные о коронавирусе для накопления лекарств. (2020, май 4). РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20200504/1570937934.html

Кожемякин, Е. А. (2015). Дискурс-анализ как междисциплинарный проект: Между методом и идеологией. *Научные ведомости Белгородского государственного университета. Серия: Гуманитарные науки*, 6, 5–12.

Помпео обвинил Китай в помехах ВОЗ и неэффективности вакцины. (2020, декабрь 18). РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20201218/kitay-1589989038.html

Раткогло, А. (2021, февраль 15). *В Китае за сутки выявили девять случаев коронавируса*. РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20210215/koronavirus-1597472133.html

Чаплыгина, М. (2020, май 3). *Эксперт оценил доклад западных разведок по Китаю*. РИА Новости. https://ria.ru/20200503/1570925582.html