

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF MEDIA DISCOURSE STUDIES ON JAPAN'S NUCLEAR WASTEWATER DISCHARGE

LEI, Y. M.^{1*} – MAMAT, R.¹ – ZIN, M. Z.¹

¹ Faculty of modern languages and communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia.

*Corresponding author
e-mail: hahalemon2026[at]163.com

(Received 17th October 2025; revised 20th January 2026; accepted 28th January 2026)

Abstract. On August 24, 2023, Japan began discharging nuclear wastewater (DNW) into the sea, sparking a strong international opposition. This study adopts a narrative review approach, it critically examines 15 media discourse studies related to DNW published between 2021 and 2025 from a linguistic perspective. The data in this study is sourced from Chinese, Japanese, and English scholarly platform. It evaluates the strengths and limitations of current research and proposes directions for future studies. The findings reveal that seven main themes are identified: Corpus Linguistic (CL), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), transitivity analysis, nominalization and passivization, media discourse strategies and ideology. And key trends are traced in terms of research focus, theories, methods, corpus use, and findings. The study reveals a strong reliance on corpus-driven SFL and CDA. Yet recurring weaknesses remain in theoretical integration, coding transparency, and reliability checks. Despite these limitations, the review highlights interdisciplinarity and technical innovation in recent studies. It further recommends extending research beyond mainstream media to include social media narratives, adopting multimodal comparative designs, and standardizing reliability reporting to advance discourse-based environmental risk communication research.

Keywords: *discourse construction, ideological representation, nuclear wastewater discharge, critical review, media discourse*

Introduction

In 2011, A severe radioactive leakage at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant was caused by an earthquake and tsunami in Japan (Smith et al., 2023). After ten years, the Japanese government declared that it is going to release in 2023 (Li and Chen, 2024). Japan formally implemented DNW on 24 August 2023. The decision sparks a strong opposition, even though Japanese government insists that the discharge meets the safety standards (McCurry, 2023). In this case, the media plays a key role in moderating public opinion and legitimizing the issue. The prevailing narratives in media discourse tend to align with dominant actors, and influence event framing (Fairclough, 2001), thereby shaping national image while also guiding public perceptions (Jha and Kumar, 2023; Talbot, 2007). Thus, examining media discourse on DNW serves to illuminate how the media shapes public understanding using specific narrative, and plays a key role in ideological construction (Jha and Kumar, 2023). Recent studies on DNW mainly examine public reactions and media attitudes, international legal governance, and international dispute resolution mechanism (Fu, 2024; Liu and Hoskin, 2023; Chen and Xu, 2022). In addition, the linguistic community increasingly focuses on DNW media discourse, A corpus-based SFL with CDA has emerged as a key method. Related studies examine media's discursive choices, combining CDA to uncover underlying ideologies (Yuan et al., 2024). Moreover, previous studies have examined discourse construction, legitimization strategies, and underlying ideologies using large-scale

corpora, cross-cultural comparison, metaphor analysis, and discourse-historical approaches (Li and Chen, 2024; Zhang et al., 2024; Zeng, 2023). Overall, existing linguistic studies reveal how the media constructs ideology and risk perception through discourse and provide a perspective for cross-cultural communication on global environmental issues.

Although existing studies examine DNW media discourse from multiple perspectives, such as SFL, CDA or appraisal theory, they generally focus on a single theoretical framework or a specific analytical method, lack integration between different theories, and do not have a systematic path to analyze ideology. Furthermore, Previous studies applying the social practice dimension of CDA often neglect power relations. Therefore, it is challenging to achieve a comprehensive integration of micro-linguistic and macro-ideological analysis and to reveal the commonalities and differences of environmental risk discourse across cultural contexts. Given these research gaps, this study explores the following three questions: (1) What are the main themes in current linguistic research on DNW media discourse? (2) What are the strengths and limitations of current research on DNW media discourse in terms of five dimensions: research focus, theories, methodology, corpus selection, and findings? (3) How can linguistic research on DNW media discourse be expanded across the five dimensions? To answer these questions, this study reviews 15 DNW media discourse studies conducted from a linguistic perspective between 2021 and 2025. It critically reviews five dimensions: Research focus, theoretical framework, methodology, corpus selection, findings, to compare media discourse studies from different perspectives, and reveal their commonalities and differences. 2021 is chosen as the starting year, as the discharge plan is announced in March, which provokes extensive studies on media coverage. The present study identifies seven major themes: Corpus Linguistic (CL), SFL, CDA, transitivity analysis, nominalization and passivisation, discourse strategies, and ideology. These themes are identified based on an analysis of the DNW media discourse studies over the past five years, though their specific realizations vary considerably.

This work makes the following contributions: First, by providing a multidimensional synthesis, it systematically integrates five dimensions to construct a cross-linguistic, cross-media comparative perspective, thereby revealing the commonalities and differences among various studies. Second, by identifying overlooked theoretical and methodological patterns, including limited social media research and insufficient coverage of cross-media and cross-language comparisons, the study offers insights into potential improvements and methodological directions for future research. Third, this study proposes a new evaluation framework that integrates “event, stage, discourse characteristics” framework with a multidimensional review, allowing longitudinal tracking across stages and horizontal comparison across platforms, thus offering practical standards for traceable topic research.

Literature review

The first stage: the reason for DNW

In 2011, an earthquake caused a leakage of radioactive wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear power plant (Smith et al., 2023). After that, Scholarly attention shifts to how media frame and construct disaster narratives. Several studies show that media across countries frame nuclear accidents differently. Although certain perspectives are emphasized, these framings may hide the structural causes. A religious

metaphor used by German and US media to enhance emotion and amplify the impact; however, the Japanese media tend to adopt rational and technical frames. US media focuses on the responsibility of the government and downplays technical details and environmental impacts. Notably, a study mentions that Western media tends to resort to culturalist narratives, presenting the accident as a reflection of Japanese culture (Matthews, 2021; Sato and Waragai, 2017; Lazic and Kaigo, 2013). On the contrary, Japanese media are more inclined to construct a scientific, rational, and responsibility-based framing by focusing on the technical reasons why the disaster has happened, the reaction of the government, and institutional improvements and disaster prevention, while paying less attention to environmental risks (Ranghieri and Ishiwatari, 2014; Mimura et al., 2011; Norio et al., 2011). Moreover, other studies focus on the importance of social media. As an illustration, researchers observe that social media can fulfil several roles following the nuclear accident, which is a useful tool of disaster response and a contributor to information exchange and dissemination in different disasters (Hashimoto and Ohama, 2014; Jung and Moro, 2014). Overall, in the initial stage, both international and Japanese media exhibit different reporting frames, reflecting different political contexts and social concerns, while the role of social media is gradually emphasized.

The second stage: the decision for DNW

The Japanese government announced its plans for DNW in April 2021, sparking international concern and heated discussions (Li and Chen, 2024). This plan prompts the second wave of DNW media discourse research. Research during this phase focuses on the effects of public opinion, emphasizing that DNW is an environmental as well as a governance issue. Studies from the government, media, public, and international perspectives indicate that Japanese government's plan has aroused public distrust, and public participation, transparent communication, and international dialogue are required to restore trust, whereas linguistic means are frequently used by the Japanese media to downplay government responsibility (Zhang, 2023a; Ng et al., 2022). At the public level, Chinese social media is interested in environmental risks and food safety (Pu et al., 2022), and comparisons made across national media indicate that they contain discursive differences (Zeng, 2023). All these studies collectively reveal the interactions and negotiation of various actors on the issue. It is worth noting that media discourse studies have gradually shifted from multi-level exploration to ideological analysis. Three-dimensional Model of CDA and Discourse-Historical Approach become the key paths. Relevant research shows that media construct ideology and maintain power through linguistic means, compare narrative strategies of different media, and examine the application of discourse history approaches in media contexts (Zhang, 2023a; Zhao, 2023; Zhou, 2022). In general, studies in this stage have shifted from analyzing event reports to critically uncovering ideology. CDA has already turned into an important path for deepening understanding of this issue.

The third stage: the implementation of DNW

Japan launched DNW on August 24, 2023, which continues to cause widespread controversy globally (McCurry, 2023). This event quickly became a focus of media discourse research. However, International and Japan media present different characteristics. International media employ metaphors, emotions, and judgmental

resources to construct moral and legitimacy controversies about DNW, focusing on risk narratives, protest, and ecological crisis, thereby shaping national stances and ideological differences. On the whole, Chinese media emphasize moral responsibility, risk, and legitimacy questioning, whereas Western media tend to frame it as a scientifically rational choice. The comparisons of cross-national media also indicate that the similarities and differences in news value construction among media outlets in different countries reflect the differences in ideologies (Liu et al., 2025; Chen and Liu, 2024; Huang, 2024; Li and Chen, 2024; Zhang, 2023b). Japanese media focus on technological discourse, employing a destigmatization strategy to construct harmless, thus diminishing public perception of risk. Furthermore, by citing authoritative discourse and reinforcing positive evaluations, they consolidate the legitimacy and credibility of policies. Therefore, under internal and external pressure, the narrative of legitimization becomes an important means of maintaining social stability. Furthermore, the report reflects potential ideologies and political objectives by presenting the differences between Japan's national image and that of others (Chen and Pan, 2025; Xu, 2025; Pezzali, 2024; Sun et al., 2024). Overall, international media show polarization, however, Japanese media emphasizes scientific and legitimization strategies, highlighting ideological differences in transnational communication.

Materials and Methods

This study uses CNKI, CiNii, and Google Scholar as search platforms, which are representative and influential in Chinese, Japanese, and English academic literature. During the search, keywords in Chinese, Japanese, and English (e.g., “nuclear wastewater discharge,” “Fukushima nuclear wastewater,” “nuclear-contaminated water,” “media discourse”) are used. The preliminary search results are manually screened using three criteria: a linguistic perspective, relevance to DNW media discourse, and studies from 2021 to 2025. Excluding studies that are primarily based on communication or sociological methods and provide little or no systematic analysis of language use. Finally, 15 articles are selected, forming a relatively small corpus. Regarding data platform distribution, 8 papers come from Google Scholar, 6 from CNKI, and 1 from CiNii. The latter is fewer due to the fact that media discourse research on DNW in Japan has more orientation to environmental science, engineering, and other fields. The literature reviewed in this study is made up of quality journal articles available in Elsevier databases, master theses available in CNKI, core journal articles in Chinese, and other representative articles. The existence of diverse types of literature aims to minimize language and publication bias, to provide a more comprehensive cross-linguistic understanding of existing research.

Firstly, to identify the main themes, 15 articles are thoroughly read. Since corpus is limited, Excel is then used to classify and organize the data across five dimensions: research focus, theoretical framework, corpus source, methodology and findings. Excel is recognized as an effective instrument for data classification in qualitative research, as it enhances the clarity of literature analysis (Tempone, 2006). Such an approach is also reliable as the five dimensions are predetermined in every article. The information is then checked by re-reading to eliminate omissions. Secondly, based on the research objectives, 10 themes are initially identified through repeated reading and summarizing, then the rare themes are excluded, resulting in seven main themes: CL, SFL, CDA, Transitivity Analysis, Nominalization and Passivization, Media Discourse Strategies

(with two sub-themes: “Legitimization” and “Media Stance”), and Ideology. These themes are used as theoretical and methodological basis of the following critical reviews. Lastly, the main themes and critical review in this study adopt a narrative review approach. According to Sukhera (2022), this method is suitable for multi-perspective analysis of complex problems, emphasizing explanatory and critical analysis, which helps to put forward research gaps and new insights. Therefore, it is very suitable for this study. Through a critical review of DNW related media discourse from five dimensions, it helps to reveal the shortcomings and provide suggestions for further research. However, this method also has limitations, and its flexibility and subjectivity cannot be ignored (Sukhera, 2022). For this reason, this study improves the consistency of analysis through repeated reading and comparative analysis.

Main themes

The main themes based on key theories and concepts drawn from DNW related media discourse studies, where certain overlaps can be observed. This study presents a narrative literature review of these themes. It highlights key milestones, focuses on historical and theoretical perspectives, and captures the multi-layered nature of the themes (Juntunen and Lehenkari, 2021). A similar narrative approach is used by Abid and Polo (2025) in the study of talent management, which demonstrates its interdisciplinary applicability. The objective is to clarify the development of the theory and propose future research directions. Then representative studies are presented to prove the applicability of each theme in DNW media discourse studies. Similarly, Spicer and Alvesson (2025) applied the paradigm to systematically examine themes within critical management studies.

Corpus linguistics (CL)

According to Biber et al. (1998), CL is based on a real corpus and explores the language characteristics and patterns in it. It can be seen that CL is an important theoretical method for studying media discourse. As Canning and Walker (2024) point out, researchers generally build corpora based on the research problems and objectives. For this reason, selecting a corpus that directly addresses the research question is crucial. For large corpora, heuristic filtering is required to ensure reliability and consistency of analytical results (McEnery and Hardie, 2011), that is, CL emphasizes data-driven, problem-oriented, and rigorous methodologies. Many studies have shown that in processing large corpus and identifying language patterns, corpus linguistics technology improves efficiency, and the analysis results are objective. However, Xu (2025) points out that there are certain limitations in analyzing social roles in the corpus and dealing with subtle emotions, so he adopts the framework of social actors in his research to better identify the ideology in media discourse. In addition, there are also scholars who combine CL with news value analysis to compare and reveal the different positions of Chinese and American media on DNW (Chen and Liu, 2024). Considering this limitation, researchers need to combine other communication theories to reveal deeper thoughts and emotions in media discourse.

Systemic functional linguistic (SFL)

In the original stage, the theoretical foundation for SFL is laid by the idea put forward by Firth (1950), that is, language is a social process, and language analysis

must be combined with context. Halliday (1956) further develops this view, when discussing the functional relationship between the context and the speaker, he is the first to propose the term “system”, laying the foundation for the proposal of the three metafunctions. According to Halliday (1978), as a social symbol, language also constructs meaning in the process of conveying information. This theory emphasizes the social function of SFL and marks its transformation into systematic grammar. Then he proposes three context variables: Field, Tenor, and Mode, which symbolize the formation and development of the SFL theory. Then, in the theoretical refinement stage of SFL, Halliday (1994) emphasized the realization of meaning at the functional level of language, revealing the intrinsic connection between grammar and function, while paying attention to metaphorical phenomena and nominalization. Based on this, Martin (1992) proposes a hierarchical model ranging from discourse semantics, to register and genre, and then to ideology, which deepens the connection between language and society, and pushes SFL from linguistic form to the exploration of the social function of language. Later, Martin and White (2005) further propose the Appraisal Theory, an analytical framework for examining interpersonal meaning. Since then, SFL has been popularized worldwide. Recently, SFL has been gradually combined with multimodal discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, and cross-cultural and interdisciplinary fields, expanding the theoretical horizon and scope of application.

Regarding the use of SFL in media discourse, Halliday (1978) argues that language is a symbolic resource for constructing social meaning, emphasizing that SFL achieves meaning through function in social contexts (Halliday, 1994), providing a powerful tool for revealing ideology and power relations in media discourse. In one study, Yuan et al. (2024) integrate SFL's transitivity analysis with CDA to reveal the implicit discourse structures in DNW media reports, as well as the underlying domestic, foreign, and international relations discourses.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

In recent years, CDA has gradually become an important methodology in the study of DNW media discourse, with the most widely used being the three-dimensional model, and followed by Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), which proposed and refined by Wodak (2001; 1996). These studies seek to uncover how ideology and power operate within media texts, highlighting the theoretical value and practical significance of CDA in analyzing media discourse. The roots of CDA can be traced back to Frankfurt School's critical theory, which provides the methodological basis. Based on this, Foucault (1969) emphasizes the constructive and power-sustaining functions of discourse as an institutionalized practice. Later, Fowler et al. (1979) first combined SFL with critical theory, proposing critical linguistics, which marks the prototype of CDA. Moreover, Van Dijk (2000) introduces social cognition theory to examine the correlation between discourse, cognitive psychology and social structure. Similarly, Fairclough (2010; 2001) elaborates on the three-dimensional model of CDA, which reveals the inherent relationship between discourse and ideology. In the process of systematization, Van Dijk (1992) emphasizes that discourse plays an important role in manipulation of social cognition by the power elites. Moreover, Wodak (2001) develops DHA, where special emphasis is made on historical context, intertextuality and multimodal analysis. During the process of interdisciplinary integration, Fairclough (2003) develops the concept of recontextualization, which tends to be concerned with restructuring of the policy discourse across the various social settings. In addition,

Chilton (2004) also combines cognitive linguistics and CDA, and develops the system of spaces-time-modality (STM) to examine the metaphors and their cognitive processes in political speech.

Regarding using CDA in media discourse, as Fairclough (2003) notes, discourse plays a key role in constructing social reality through particular ideologies. It is also one of the most significant tools for achieving political control. Therefore, CDA aims to reveal how power actors use the media to manipulate public perceptions and disseminate ideologies (Yazgan and Utku, 2017). In addition, Van Dijk (2000) argues that media discourse is essentially ideological, not only reproducing reality but also contributing to the consolidation of the dominant ideology and power structure, which in turn influences social cognition. Based on this, Wodak (2001) emphasizes that CDA provides a unique perspective for interpreting power operations in media discourse. As an example, prior studies have not only combined transitivity analysis with three-dimensional model of CDA, to reveal the discourse structure and socio-political context of Korean media reports on DNW, but also combined DHA with legitimacy theory to analyze how Japanese media construct the legitimacy of power through discourse (Yuan et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2024).

Transitivity analysis

Transitivity analysis, which is one of the core concepts of SFL, is extensively employed in the investigation of linguistic characteristics in DNW media discourse research. According to Halliday (1994), transitivity has three components which are participants, process, and circumstances. The transitivity system goes beyond the traditional grammar, and treating grammar as a system of choice, where language users usually choose language depending on the social contexts (Simpson and Mayr, 2009). Transitivity analysis should have a clear identification of the type of process, participants and their roles. Material processes focus on specific actions, mental processes reflect internal emotional experiences, relational processes define attributes or identities, and verbal processes concern speech and the exchange of information (Thompson, 2013). Clark (1992) points out that media achieve focus shifting and attribution of responsibility through transitive choices, even manipulating emotions and concealing responsibility through superficial condemnation to shift public attention. As Simpson and Mayr (2009) emphasize, transitivity not only encodes the media's stance on responsibility attribution, by emphasizing or omitting participants, but also reveals the underlying ideology. That is, transitivity analyses reveal not only the explicit content of a text but also its implicit content (Simpson and Mayr, 2009). Zhao (2023) and Yuan et al. (2024) both employ transitivity analysis in combination with CDA. The former reveals differences in the distribution of transitivity processes through a comparison of Chinese and Japanese media, while the latter shows the mechanisms of stance and discourse strategy operation in the Korean media. This indicates that this method can reveal the implicit stances and power operation of media reports in different contexts and provide theoretical and methodological references for interdisciplinary research.

Nominalization and passivization

Nominalization and passivization constitute another key conceptual theme in media discourse studies on DNW. The former implicitly conveys ideology by transforming dynamic behavior into noun forms, blurring actor and causal relationships (Halliday and

Matthiessen, 2004). The latter shifts narrative focus using passive constructions to divert public attention by omitting or weakening the actor (Behnam and Khodadust, 2012). Halliday (1994) points out that nominalization is the process of transforming a verb or adjective into a noun, which affects the information weight of the subject in a sentence. From the SFL perspective, Fowler et al. (1979) argue that critical discourse analysts generally regard nominalization and passivization as important objects of study in terms of textual function. Many studies show that nominalization and passivization play an important role in ideological construction. Since with the help of these linguistic devices, the media makes the content of report ideological and tends to influence public perception by blurring the actor (Fowler, 1991). In a study, Tehseem and Talaat (2022) also point out that nominalization as a discourse strategy, it can not only shift the focus but also guide public opinion. Similarly, as Fairclough (2001) argues, nominalization is often used by media to blur the causal relationship, thus avoiding the attribution of responsibility. Several studies have pointed out that media employ nominalization and passivization in discourse construction to obscure agency and weaken accountability, and thus establish objectivity and authority (Zhang, 2023a; Zhou, 2022). These empirical studies demonstrate that nominalization and passivization are not merely linguistic tools but also ideological manipulation strategies.

Media discourse strategies

During the review, media discourse strategies, as an important conceptual theme, are closely related to SFL, transitivity analysis, nominalization, passivisation, and CDA. For example, transitive and nominalization analyses in SFL can be used to reveal discourse strategies for constructing meaning in the media. Fowler (1991) states that news discourse involves the intentional use of language to construct meaning, frame events, and influence public perceptions. On this basis, Jha and Kumar (2023) also argue that the media typically employ discursive strategies to negotiate power relations and influence public opinion through multilingual means, which are reflected in lexical choices, intertextuality, and persuasive expressions. Thus, media discursive strategies are flexible and context-dependent, often depending on the content, context, and communication intentions, and their diversity reflects the media's ability to strategically manage discourse power in different contexts.

The media can guide and shape public perceptions (Talbot, 2007), and therefore, its discursive strategies play a key role in policy promotion and public opinion formation (Akram et al., 2025). These strategies often rely on the basic ideas of framing theory and narrative construction (Entman, 1993). As Fairclough (1995) notes, media discourse is a form of linguistic practice that is closely related to social power and ideology. Based on this perspective, Dahlberg (2011) states that analyses of media discourse strategies help to reveal the function of the media in ideological shaping. Legitimization is an important concept in media discourse strategy. Reyes (2011) points out that legitimization is the process of arguing for the legitimacy of a certain social behavior to gain recognition from others. Its essence is that the speaker provides reasons to explain and justify their own behavior or speech in order to achieve specific goals, and it is particularly common in political discourse. Existing studies have explored discourse strategies from multiple perspectives, including the construction of the legitimacy of war, the legitimization of international issues, and legitimization strategies in social scandals (Zeng, 2023; Wang, 2020; Lin and Miao, 2016). These studies indicate that the analysis of media discourse strategies is applicable to a wide range of issues.

The common media discourse strategies include evaluative language, framing, agenda setting, and intertextuality, which are often not used in isolation, but rather operate cohesively to build the media discourse system (Jha and Kumar, 2023; Zhou, 2022; Wang, 2020). Studies have shown that the media employs a variety of strategies in its reporting on DNW, including designation, predication, argumentation, reinforcement and weakening, as well as positive evaluations, borrowing authoritative voices, and ignoring public opinion, to selectively shape discourse and thereby downplay the severity of DNW (Zhang et al., 2024; Zhou, 2022). Another core concept closely related to media discourse strategies is media stance. According to Biber et al. (1999), stance refers to the attitude, judgment, emotions, and responsibility that an author conveys toward a topic within the text of an article. Different media employ their own discourse strategies to express stance, and even when addressing the same event, they may present different stances (Haq et al., 2022). In previous studies, scholars have examined the stances and attitudes of different media towards the DNW (Liu et al., 2025; Fu, 2024; Zeng, 2023). Therefore, media stance not only shapes the presentation of discourse but also influences the public perception.

Ideology

Ideology has been a concept that cannot be overlooked in studies of DNW media discourse. Van Dijk (2006) notes that ideology is a system of beliefs shared by a social group. Although McLellan (1995) argues that ideology is difficult to define, Chen (2007) points out that ideology serves both as a tool for practice (e.g., maintaining dominance) and as a conceptual system (e.g., values). In other words, ideology is sustained through social sharing and communication, and its expression depends on linguistic forms (Van Dijk, 2000). Fairclough (2010) argues that ideology is reflected in linguistic structures and the process of language use. That is, ideology functions in meaning construction through language practices (Martin, 2016). According to Yang (2023), researchers often use three theoretical frameworks when analyzing ideology: Van Dijk's social cognitive model, Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA, and Wodak's DHA. The reason why media discourse has become the focus of CDA is that media discourse is essentially a social practice deeply rooted in power and ideology (Fairclough, 1995).

Through the critical analysis of media discourse, it can reveal how power and ideology are constructed through seemingly objective reports (Fairclough, 2010). Notably, the ideology in this study refers to that viewed from a critical perspective. Unlike general ideologies (such as values or beliefs), according to Fairclough (2003), CDA views ideology as a mechanism that reflects, maintains, or changes social power relations. Furthermore, this ideology is not fixed or predetermined but is dynamically constructed through the analysis of specific discursive practices and social practices (Fairclough, 2001). Yuan et al. (2024) and Zhang (2023a) both adopt three-dimensional model of CDA to explore how media deeply engage in ideological construction through linguistic means. This reflects the reproduction of ideology from the perspective of CDA.

Theoretical integration framework of main themes

The research themes above are interconnected rather than separate. *Figure 1* illustrates an integrated framework of theoretical and conceptual themes in DNW-

related media discourse studies. It highlights the intrinsic connections and bridges micro-level linguistic forms with macro-level ideology. Goatly (2004) demonstrates that CL offers data and methods to support SFL analysis and CDA's ideological critique. The integration of SFL and CDA is widely recognized as a powerful tool for media discourse analysis. Some studies highlight the strong complementarity of the two theories in both theory and method (e.g., Young and Harrison, 2004). At the operational level, micro-level discourse features or strategies are revealed through means such as transitivity analysis in ideational function, modality analysis in interpersonal function, and nominalization and passivization in textual function (Fowler et al., 1979). On the other hand, CDA adopts a macro-level perspective, drawing on Fairclough's (2010) three-dimensional model and Wodak's (2001) DHA to explore how discourse constructs ideology, achieving a deep integration of linguistic form and social context.

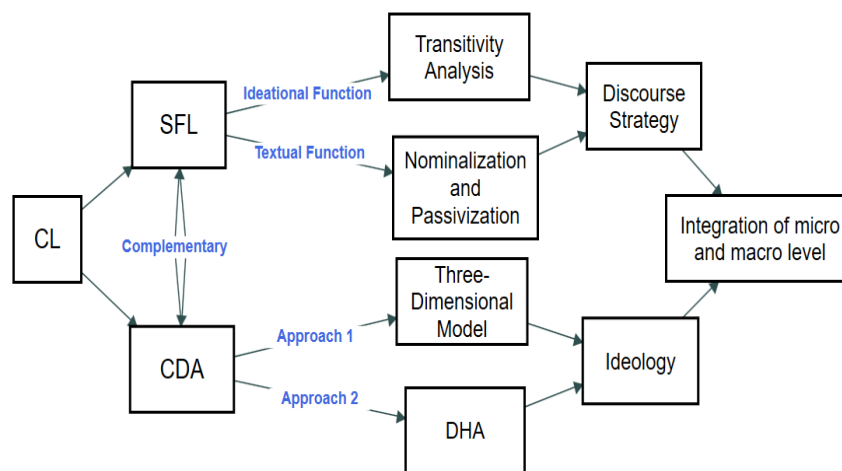


Figure 1. An integrated theoretical framework of main themes.

Critical review from five dimensions

Research focus

Within recent years, the DNW media discourse studies have diversified, such as cross-cultural media comparisons, media attitudes or stances, micro-level discourse strategies, and macro-level ideological analyses (Liu et al., 2025; Xu, 2025; Zhang, 2023a; Zhang, 2023b; Zeng, 2023; Zhang, 2022; Zhou, 2022). Current research has been classified into two strands. The former focuses on cross-cultural media discourses comparison. As an example, Zeng (2023) examines discourse in Chinese, American, and Japanese media, while Zhang (2022) and Zhao (2023) compare ecological discourse to reveal ideological differences across nations. The latter analyzes media discourse strategies within single national contexts, indicating how language choices reveal media attitudes or construct ideologies (Huang, 2024; Xu, 2025; Zhang, 2023a; Zhang, 2023b; Zhou, 2022). Both strands demonstrate that there is a transformation of the surface analysis of linguistics to some critical interpretation of the ideology. In one study, Zhang (2023a) shows how Japanese media legitimizes the DNW through discursive strategies, revealing the underlying ideology. Similarly, other studies apply critical metaphor analysis, discourse historical approach, and transitivity analysis to reveal ideologies (Li and Chen 2024; Yuan et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2024). This shows a similar concern of revealing legitimization and ideological construction in media

discourse by analyzing language. All in all, these works mark a shift from descriptive linguistic analysis to critical discourse analysis, emphasizing the connection between linguistic form and ideology. Most studies have focused on traditional media. Although some studies of DNW media discourse from other perspectives analyze social media, few have examined it from a linguistic perspective. Moreover, most cross-cultural studies focus on East Asia, with little attention to the West or other regions (Zeng, 2023; Zhao, 2023; Zhang, 2022), which weakens the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, it is important to note that existing studies mainly examine the media's role and influence, while giving little attention to other key stakeholders such as TEPCO and fishery groups. This limitation restricts the research framework, for example, neglecting stakeholder theory but also weakens the systematic understanding of complex realities.

Theoretical framework

Studies on DNW media discourse show a trend of diversified and integrated theoretical frameworks. In representative studies, scholars have combined corpus linguistics with discourse news value analysis or the social actor framework. Others combine critical cognitive linguistics with intentional schema theory and discourse space theory. These studies demonstrate the interdisciplinary integration of linguistics with communication studies or sociology (Liu et al., 2025; Xu, 2025; Chen and Liu, 2024; Sun et al., 2024). In addition, While SFL and CDA remain dominant, researchers also apply perspectives such as critical cognitive linguistics, critical metaphor analysis, and discourse historical analysis (Li and Chen, 2024; Zhang et al., 2024; Zeng, 2023; Zhou, 2022). These approaches push the field toward interdisciplinary integration beyond a single paradigm. These theories are often used together to address the complexity of DNW media discourse as demonstrated in Figure 1. Nonetheless, the depth and balance of integration are different, as some studies focus on certain dimensions while ignoring the others. This problem can be observed most of all in SFL based studies. In studies involving SFL, although the framework offers tools to examine linguistic structure and meaning construction in DNW media discourse, its application shows uneven functional distribution. Most studies combine SFL's three metafunctions with CDA's three-dimensional model, but mainly focus on transitivity analysis in the ideational function (Yuan et al., 2024; Zhao, 2023; Zhang, 2022), nominalization and passivization in the textual function (Zhang, 2023a; Zhou, 2022), and appraisal theory in the interpersonal function (Huang, 2024; Zhang, 2023b). However, the modality analysis of the interpersonal function is frequently overlooked. This bias leads to homogenization in language analysis and limits SFL's theoretical potential on the micro level, showing that research still needs to broaden dimensions and deepen interpretations of language practice. On the contrary, another research area places more focus on three-dimensional model of CDA and DHA's critical framework.

There is a tendency to rely on three-dimensional model of CDA and the DHA framework. In applying the three-dimensional model, studies differ greatly in analyzing discourse and social practices. Some lack contextual analysis and fail to build a solid explanatory framework at the social practice level. For example, Zhao (2023) shows weak contextual interpretation of discourse and social practices, while Zhang (2023a) is limited to intertextuality analysis without empirical support from social practice. In contrast, Yuan et al. (2024) reveal the evolution of media attitudes toward the government in discourse practice and analyze domestic and foreign policy discourse at the social practice level, showing deeper ideological analysis than earlier studies. These

studies show that although CDA research covers both discourse and social practice, it still fails to systematically integrate micro-level linguistic features with macro-level ideology. In applying the DHA, although some studies provide insightful applications of DHA in the Japanese media context and even combine corpus-based DHA with LDA topic modeling to explore media discourse construction (Zhang et al., 2024; Zhou, 2022). However, both fail to fully reveal the connection between state power structures and macro-ideology behind discourse strategies, limiting DHA's explanatory power at the macro-critical level.

Research methodology

In recent years, research on DNW media discourse has shown a certain trend toward methodological diversification, with a combination of qualitative and quantitative becoming the mainstream paradigm (Chen and Pan, 2025; Liu et al., 2025; Xu, 2025; Sun et al., 2024; Yuan et al., 2024; Zeng, 2023; Zhao, 2023; Zhang, 2022; Zhou, 2022). This approach aligns with trends in CL and enhances the systematization and comprehensiveness of discourse analysis. However, despite the extensive use of CL in DNW media discourse and can quantify word frequency and collocation, it is still not adequate to reveal subtle meaning construction such as emotional tone, rhetorical devices, and metaphors (Xu, 2025). Moreover, although corpus tools become more various, the innovation is rather scarce. Various corpus tools appear in prior studies, such as UAM Corpus Tool, Wordsmith, Chamame and NVivo 11, AntConc, and Sketch Engine (Liu et al., 2025; Sun et al., 2024; Zhao, 2023; Zhou, 2022). However, some do not use corpus tools, leaving corpus processing superficial (e.g., Zhang, 2023a). Zhang et al. (2024) and Sun et al. (2024) are exceptional in terms of integrating methods and applying technologies. The former integrates LDA topic modeling, AntConc retrieval, and visualization analysis, making full use of R language and corpus tools. The latter uses cognitive linguistic tools such as the PATH and CONTAINER schemas to analyze metaphors and narrative strategies. However, such methodological innovations are rare. Most studies still rely on traditional methods, which limits both data breadth and interpretive depth. Overall, the current methods exhibit some weaknesses: although some studies use coding, almost none of them includes reliability testing, which limits the interpretability of researching findings. Furthermore, the coding procedure and the selection of the corpus lack transparency, restricting research reproducibility. Notably, quantitative analysis does not usually go deeper with data mining, as it often stops at news counts or word frequencies, making the results less explanatory.

Corpus source

Current research on DNW media discourse features broad time spans, a variety of source nations, and self-constructed closed corpora, reflecting researchers' initiative and control in data collection. This study critically reviews existing corpora based on three dimensions: time frame, size, and source. Certain studies extend the time frame to the period after the formal discharge (Xu, 2025; Li and Chen, 2024; Sun et al., 2024; Yuan et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2024), moving beyond earlier research limited to the span from the April 2021 policy announcement to the discharge (Zhang, 2023a; Zhang, 2023b; Zhao, 2023; Zhou, 2022). This expansion enhances research timeliness and reference value. Notably, Zhou (2022) builds a dataset spanning 2011–2021, aligning well with DHA's emphasis on historical context. However, some studies adopt narrow

time frames, making it difficult to track the dynamic evolution of discourse (Chen and Pan, 2025; Huang, 2024; Sun et al., 2024). The corpus size is diverse, including about 10 texts (Huang, 2024; Sun et al., 2024; Zhang, 2023a), medium-sized 20–100 texts (Liu et al., 2025; Zeng, 2023; Zhao, 2023; Zhang, 2023b; Zhang, 2022), and large corpora exceeding 2,000 texts (Zhou, 2022). Moreover, corpus techniques are also used by the researchers to enhance analysis effectiveness. Notably, small-scale research focuses on making detailed analysis, but large-scale research aims at statistics and pattern recognition. Current studies show diversity in corpus languages and national origins, including English (Liu et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2024; Zeng, 2023; Zhao, 2023; Zhang, 2022), Japanese (Zhang, 2023a; Zhou, 2022), Korean (Yuan et al., 2024). These corpora belong to different countries: China, Japan, South Korea, the US, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, and Singapore, demonstrating broad geographical coverage and cross-cultural representativeness. However, this diversity has not led to systematic cross-cultural integration (e.g., Zeng, 2023; Zhang, 2022). Furthermore, some studies rely on one medium or nation, limiting cross-comparisons and weakening the generalizability of findings (Xu, 2025; Li and Chen, 2024; Yuan et al., 2024).

Findings

Studies of DNW media discourse have achieved certain results in revealing media attitudes, stances, and discourse strategies, but limitations exist in the explanation of the central concepts, linking language strategies with ideology, and exploring discourse dynamics. Firstly, some studies have examined media attitudes and stances (Liu et al., 2025; Chen and Liu, 2024; Zhang, 2023b), but key concepts are often poorly defined. For example, Zhang (2023b) finds that China Daily reports show a “negative and concerned” attitude, but fails to distinguish clearly between concern and opposition, causing ambiguity in interpreting attitudes. Secondly, some studies compare the stances of different media (Liu et al., 2025; Chen and Liu, 2024; Zeng, 2023; Zhao, 2023; Zhang, 2022). The findings of these cross-cultural and single-media studies are largely consistent: Japan emphasizes scientific rationality and adopts a supportive stance; China highlights marine ecological protection and adopts an opposing stance; Western countries (especially the U.S.) tend to view DNW as both technically safe and politically legitimate, adopting an accepting stance; while the Philippines, South Korea, and Singapore adopt a neutral or supportive stances, reflecting their alignment as U.S. allies. This suggests that media positions on DNW are relatively stable across countries and regions. Notably, Zeng (2023) uses proximization to reveal cross-national differences in media stances. However, this approach overlooks the contextual dependence and dynamism of media ideology.

Finally, existing studies employ various theories to examine discourse strategies, such as predicate strategies, intensification and weakening strategies, nomination, identification and positioning strategies, some of which mention linguistic devices such as nominalization and passivization (Zhang, 2023a; Zeng, 2023; Zhou, 2022). However, they have not explored the connection between linguistic strategies and ideological construction in depth. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2024) show how Japanese mainstream media weaken public perception through strategies such as positive evaluation, authoritative discourse, and marginalization of public voices, but they do not examine how these strategies relate to social acceptance. In interdisciplinary research, Yuan et al. (2024) combine linguistics and international relations to explore the “complex

relationship” between discourse and practice, but their discussion remains limited in depth.

Future research directions and implications

Future studies may enlarge the range of media to encompass social media, so fully capturing the trends of public opinion. It may also increase the diversity of non-East Asian sources of media. Since DNW is a continuous event, it has research potential in the long term. Theoretically, integrating the analysis of three metafunctions of SFL, improving the comprehensiveness of linguistic analysis. Although the recent use of CDA framework in research is still based on qualitative analysis, future research can employ both quantitative methods like sentiment analysis alongside the three-dimensional of CDA to handle the complexity of media discourse. Methodologically, clearly describing data processing procedures and coding process, making findings more verifiable, advancing methodological integration and technological innovation, and clarifying the implementation pathways for combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. Meanwhile, a phased corpus could be established, creating an “event, phase, discourse” framework aligned with the progression of DNW, to effectively track the dynamic shifts in media discourse. Theoretically, this study critically reviews the existing media discourse studies from a multi-dimensional perspective and finds out the common trends and shortcomings. It focuses on the significance of theoretical integration, interdisciplinarity, and methodological innovation. Therefore, it will enrich the scholarly dialogue and suggest future research directions, offering insights for the linguistic analysis of risk communication issues. Practically, through studying the case of DNW as an environmental risk, the research offers solutions to policy makers and organizations to improve risk communication practices.

Conclusion

The study provides a critical linguistic overview of media discourse studies related to DNW, covering the themes, strengths and weaknesses, and future directions. The past research concentrates on seven themes, namely, CL, SFL, CDA, transitivity analysis, nominalization and passivization, media discourse strategies, and ideology. These themes are interconnected and tend to overlap in their application. Regarding strengths and weaknesses: most studies analyze media strategies, ideology, and media stances, but pay less attention to social media. Theoretically, while SFL and CDA are common, integration and innovation are limited. Methodologically, mixed methods dominate, but coding transparency and reliability testing are often lacking. Corpus sources span diverse topics and vary in size, covering both the pre-discharge and post-discharge stages. However, problems remain, including reliance on single media, narrow time frames, and limited cross-cultural perspectives. Although progress has been made, studies remain weak in theoretical construction and comparative perspectives, further development is needed to better reveal the relationship between media discourse and ideology. Five expansions should be applied to future research: type of media, geographical coverage, disciplinary integration, theoretical integration, and methodological innovation, to encourage the development of a new paradigm of media discourse research.

Acknowledgement

This study is self-funded.

Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involved with any parties in this study.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abid, K., Polo, F. (2025): **RETRACTED**: Narrative review on talent management: evaluating two decades and exploring future research directions. – *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research* 13(1): 1-31.
- [2] Akram, W., Imran, S., ul Hassan, S.S. (2025): Tweets, Hashtags, and Campaigns: A multimodal analysis of Donald Trump's social media strategy. – *Journal of Arts and Linguistics Studies* 3(2): 1729-1748.
- [3] Behnam, B., Khodadust, M.R. (2012): The event of September 11th in American and Syrian written media discourse. – *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 2(1): 139-154.
- [4] Biber, D., Conrad, S., Reppen, R. (1998): *Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use*. – Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 300p.
- [5] Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G.N., Conrad, S., Finegan, E. (1999): *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. – Longman, London 1204p.
- [6] Canning, P., Walker, B. (2024): *Discourse analysis: A practical introduction*. – Routledge 346p.
- [7] Chen, A. (2007): A comment on Habermas' technological ethical thoughts-An explanation of Technology and Science as Ideology. – *Studies in Ethics* 67(3): 68-75.
- [8] Chen, C., Liu, R. (2024): Discrepancies in the portrayal of Japan's nuclear water release in Chinese and US media outlets: A corpus-based news values analysis. – *Marine Policy* 165: 16p.
- [9] Chen, J.Z., Pan, M.X. (2025): "The sea is not a dump yard": A comparative corpus-assisted analysis of media representations of the Fukushima nuclear water release in China and Japan. – *Language, Discourse & Society* 13(1(25)): 131-147.
- [10] Chen, X., Xu, Q. (2022): Reflections on international dispute settlement mechanisms for the Fukushima contaminated water discharge. – *Ocean & Coastal Management* 226: 16p.
- [11] Chilton, P. (2004): *Analysing political discourse: Theory and practice*. – Routledge, London 241p.
- [12] Clark, K. (1992): The linguistics of blame: Representations of women in The Sun's reporting of sexual violence. – In *Language, Text and Context*, Routledge, London 17p.
- [13] Dahlberg, L. (2011): Discourse theory as critical media politics? Five questions. – In *Discourse Theory and Critical Media Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 23p.
- [14] Entman, R.M. (1993): Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. – *Journal of Communication* 43(4): 51-58.
- [15] Fairclough, N. (2010): *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. – Longman, London 608p.
- [16] Fairclough, N. (2003): *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. – Routledge, London 288p.
- [17] Fairclough, N. (2001): *Language and power*. – Longman, London 226p.
- [18] Fairclough, N. (1995): *Media discourse*. – Edward Arnold, London 214p.
- [19] Firth, J.R. (1950): Personality and language in society. – *The Sociological Review* 42(1): 37-52.

- [20] Foucault, M. (1969): *L'archéologie du savoir*. – Gallimard, Paris 254p.
- [21] Fowler, R. (1991): *Language in the news: Discourse and ideology in the press*. – Routledge, London 254p.
- [22] Fowler, R., Hodge, B., Kress, G., Trew, T. (1979). *Language and Control* (1st ed.). – Routledge. 232p.
- [23] Fu, Y.T. (2024): 日本媒体对福岛核污染水排海事件的报道分析—以日本政府决策翌日各报社社论为例 [An analysis of Japanese media reports on the discharge of Fukushima nuclear contaminated water: A case study of editorials from major newspapers the day after the Japanese government's decision]. – *Journal of News Research* 15(6): 89-92.
- [24] Goatly, A. (2004): *Corpus linguistics, systemic functional grammar and literary meaning*. – *Ilha do Desterro* 46: 115-154.
- [25] Halliday, M.A.K., Matthiessen, C.M.I.M. (2004): *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). – Routledge, London 480p.
- [26] Halliday, M.A.K. (1994): *An introduction to functional grammar*. – Edward Arnold, London 480p.
- [27] Halliday, M.A.K. (1978): *Language as social semiotic*. – Edward Arnold, London 268p.
- [28] Halliday, M.A.K. (1956): *Grammatical categories in modern Chinese*. – *Transactions of the Philological Society* 55(1): 177-224.
- [29] Haq, N., Aslam, F., Saeed, N. (2022): *Same event, different representation: A CDA of post-titles of print media discourses*. – *Annals of Human and Social Sciences* 3(2): 832-840.
- [30] Hashimoto, Y., Ohama, A. (2014): *The role of social media in emergency response: The case of the Great East Japan Earthquake*. – *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security* 15: 99-126.
- [31] Huang, Q. (2024): *Analysis of attitude resources in China Daily news reports on Japan's nuclear wastewater discharge from the perspective of appraisal theory*. – *Academic Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences* 7(5): 53-57.
- [32] Jha, A., Kumar, S. (2023): *Linguistic strategies in media discourse analysis of global politics*. – *IJPMOnline* 2(2): 8-12.
- [33] Jung, J.Y., Moro, M. (2014): *Multi-level functionality of social media in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake*. – *Disasters* 38(s2): s123-s143.
- [34] Juntunen, M., Lehenkari, M. (2021): *A narrative literature review process for an academic business research thesis*. – *Studies in Higher Education* 46(2): 330-342.
- [35] Lazic, D., Kaigo, M. (2013): *US press coverage of the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident: Frames, sources and news domestication*. – *Media Asia* 40(3): 260-273.
- [36] Lin, Y., Miao, X. (2016): *Discursive strategies of war legitimation: A critical discourse analysis of American presidential speeches on the Afghanistan War*. – *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching* 10p.
- [37] Li, S., Chen, Z. (2024): *War and liar: A semiotic account of metaphors in reports on the discharge of Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water in Chinese media*. – *Language and Semiotic Studies* 10(3): 437-459.
- [38] Liu, D., Hoskin, M. (2023): *Contemporary international law: Regulating the upcoming Fukushima radioactive wastewater discharge*. – *Ocean & Coastal Management* 234: 16p.
- [39] Liu, R., Yang, X., Chen, C. (2025): *A comparative corpus-based news values analysis of Philippine, South Korean, Singapore and Chinese media reactions to Japan's nuclear wastewater release*. – *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 12(1): 1-19.
- [40] Martin, J.R. (2016): *Meaning matters: A short history of systemic functional linguistics*. – *Word* 62(1): 35-58.
- [41] Martin, J.R. (1992): *English Text: System and Structure*. – John Benjamins, Amsterdam 620p.

- [42] Martin, J.R., White, P.R. (2005): *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. – Palgrave Macmillan, New York 99p.
- [43] Matthews, J. (2021): *News Narratives across Borders: The Convergence of Interests and Patterns of Meaning in International Media Coverage of Disaster*. In *Narratives Crossing Borders*. – Stockholm University Press 19p.
- [44] McCurry, J. (2023): Fukushima water discharge approved. – *The Lancet* 402(10398): 277-278.
- [45] McEnery, T., Hardie, A. (2011): *Corpus linguistics: Method, theory and practice*. – Cambridge University Press 312p.
- [46] McLellan, D. (1995): *Ideology*. – University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 111p.
- [47] Mimura, N., Yasuhara, K., Kawagoe, S., Yokoki, H., Kazama, S. (2011): Damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami-A quick report. – *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* 16(7): 803-818.
- [48] Ng, K.H., Yoong, D., Gong, J. (2022): Overcoming the Fukushima wastewater crisis: What the Japanese authorities could do to address opposing views. – *Health Physics* 122(6): 696-704.
- [49] Norio, O., Ye, T., Kajitani, Y., Shi, P., Tatano, H. (2011): The 2011 eastern Japan great earthquake disaster: Overview and comments. – *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science* 2(1): 34-42.
- [50] Pezzali, L. (2024): Fukushima's wastewater release: a corpus-based analysis of the lemma "water" in the Japanese and German press. – *Aprendo Con NooJ* (4): 1-12.
- [51] Pu, X., Jiang, Q., Fan, B. (2022): Chinese public opinion on Japan's nuclear wastewater discharge: A case study of Weibo comments based on a thematic model. – *Ocean & Coastal Management* 225: 9p.
- [52] Ranghieri, F., Ishiwatari, M. (Eds.) (2014): *Learning from Megadisasters: Lessons from the Great East Japan Earthquake*. – World Bank Publications 391p.
- [53] Reyes, A. (2011): Strategies of legitimization in political discourse: From words to actions. – *Discourse & Society* 22(6): 781-807.
- [54] Sato, Y., Waragai, I. (2017): The function of religious language in the media: A comparative analysis of Japanese, German and American newspaper coverage about the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. – *International Journal on Advanced Science Engineering Information Technology* 7(2): 406-417.
- [55] Simpson, P., Mayr, A. (2009): *Language and Power: A Resource Book for Students*. – Routledge 272p.
- [56] Smith, J., Marks, N., Irwin, T. (2023): The risks of radioactive wastewater release. – *Science* 382(6666): 31-33.
- [57] Spicer, A., Alvesson, M. (2025): Critical management studies: A critical review. – *Journal of Management Studies* 62(1): 446-483.
- [58] Sukhera, J. (2022): Narrative reviews: Flexible, rigorous, and practical. – *Journal of Graduate Medical Education* 14(4): 414-417.
- [59] Sun, C., Wang, C., Liu, W. (2024): A critical cognitive analysis of Japan's nuclear-contaminated water discharge discourse. – *Frontiers in Communication* 9: 13p.
- [60] Talbot, M. (2007): *Media Discourse: Representation and Interaction*. – Edinburgh University Press 208p.
- [61] Tehseem, T., Talaat, M. (2022): Obfuscating agency in Pakistani newspaper reporting: A discourse-based perspective. – *Global Educational Studies Review* 7(3): 53-69.
- [62] Tempone, I. (2006): The use of Excel in qualitative pedagogical research. – Swinburne University of Technology 6p.
- [63] Thompson, G. (2013): *Introducing Functional Grammar*. – Routledge 328p.
- [64] Van Dijk, T.A. (2006): Ideology and discourse analysis. – *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11(2): 115-140.
- [65] Van Dijk, T.A. (2000): *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*. – SAGE Publications Ltd. 390p.

- [66] Van Dijk, T.A. (1992): Discourse and the denial of racism. – *Discourse & Society* 3(1): 87-118.
- [67] Wang, G. (2020): Legitimization strategies in China's official media: the 2018 vaccine scandal in China. – *Social Semiotics* 30(5): 685-698.
- [68] Wodak, R. (2001): The discourse-historical approach. – In: R. Wodak, M. Meyer (Eds.) *The Discourse-Historical Approach*, SAGE Publications, Ltd. 34p.
- [69] Wodak, R. (1996): *Disorders of Discourse*. – Longman, London 256p.
- [70] Xu, T. (2025): Applications and limitations of corpus linguistics: A corpus-based study on nuclear wastewater discharge coverage in Asahi Shimbun. – *Journal of Linguistics and Communication Studies* 4(2): 117-126.
- [71] Yang, Y. (2023): Ideology in critical discourse study: A review of literature. – *Journal of the University of Ruhuna* 11(2): 53-63.
- [72] Yazgan, P., Utku, D.E. (2017): News discourse and ideology: critical analysis of Copenhagen gang wars' online news. – *Migration Letters* 14(1): 145-160.
- [73] Young, L., Harrison, C. (Eds.) (2004): *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: Studies in Social Change*. – Continuum, London 306p.
- [74] Yuan, Y.Y., Xie, T.Y., Che, A.L. (2024): 韩国主流媒体对日本核污水排放的报道话语分析：以《朝鲜日报》《中央日报》《东亚日报》为中心 [Critical Discourse Analysis of ROK's Media Reports on Japan's Nuclear Sewage Discharge-Take Chosun Daily, JoongAng Ilbo and Dong-A Ilbo as Examples]. – *Contemporary Korea* 12p.
- [75] Zeng, X. Q. (2023): 日本核废水报道的批评认知话语分析 [A critical cognitive discourse analysis of news reports on Japan's nuclear wastewater]. – Master's thesis, Southwest Minzu University 75p.
- [76] Zhang, L. (2023a): 福島原発処理水の海洋放出に関連するメディア報道の批判的ディスコース分析：『朝日新聞』の社説を中心に [A critical discourse analysis of media reports on the ocean release of treated water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant: Focusing on editorials in Asahi Shimbun]. – *East Asian Language and Culture Studies* 10p.
- [77] Zhang, L. (2023b): Discourse analysis of “Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water” news reports from the perspective of attitude in appraisal theory. – *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation* 6(8): 174-182.
- [78] Zhang, Q. (2022): 中美媒体关于日本福岛核废水入海计划报道的生态话语分析 [An ecological discourse analysis of Chinese and American media coverage of Japan's Fukushima nuclear wastewater discharge]. – Master's thesis, Central China Normal University 76p.
- [79] Zhang, Y., Wang, H.L., Liang, L.L. (2024): 日本主流媒体对福岛核污水排海行为的话语建构 [The discursive construction of Japan's mainstream media on the discharge of Fukushima nuclear wastewater]. – *Foreign Languages in China* 21(6): 42-49.
- [80] Zhao, Z. (2023): 生态批评话语分析视角下福岛核污水新闻的及物性系统对比研究 [A comparative study of the transitivity system in Fukushima nuclear wastewater news from an ecocritical discourse analysis perspective]. – Master's thesis, Liaoning University 82p.
- [81] Zhou, Y. (2022): 日本媒体关于福岛核污染水报道的批评话语分析—以《朝日新闻》报道为中心 [A critical discourse analysis of Japanese media coverage of Fukushima nuclear contaminated water: a case study of Asahi Shimbun]. – Master's thesis, Liaoning University 46p.