

THE GRAMMATICAL MEANING OF DESCRIPTIVE ADJECTIVES, DERIVATIONAL VERBS, AND EXPLETIVES IN ENGLISH NEWS TEXTS: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

Using the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), this study examines the grammatical meaning of descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions in English news stories. The study is to investigate how these lexical-grammatical elements support the development of meaning in news discourse, namely in the representation of events, participants, and information organization. Three English news stories from CNN Business, BBC News, and The Jakarta Post were used to gather data using a qualitative descriptive method. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model and Halliday and Matthiessen's SFL framework were used to examine the data. The results demonstrate that descriptive adjectives are the most prevalent feature and primarily serve in ideational and interpersonal meanings by characterizing and assessing people and economic occurrences. While expletive constructions contribute to textual meaning by structuring information and enhancing discourse coherence, derivative verbs contribute to ideational meaning by using morphological derivation to depict actions and processes. Even though they are uncommon, expletives are nonetheless useful for organizing news texts. The study comes to the conclusion that many lexical-grammatical resources interact to build grammatical meaning in news discourse rather than separate linguistic elements, with each feature contributing to textual, interpersonal, and ideational metafunctions in SFL.

Keywords: Expletive structures, descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, news discourse, and systemic functional linguistics.

INTRODUCTION

Language choices have a significant impact on human communication in modern culture because they not only transmit information but also create meaning and affect interpretation. Language serves as a social semiotic system in written discourse, particularly news reports, reflecting how people, events, and behaviors are portrayed to readers. According to (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) views language as a meaning-making tool rather than a neutral grammar system, with each linguistic decision helping to create reality. According to Halliday & Matthiessen, language structure in context is how meaning is realized. (Adenan, 2021), who emphasizes language as a bridge of social meaning, further supports the idea that understanding how meaning is formed in speech requires an analysis of grammatical patterns.

The public's sense of social reality is greatly influenced by news discourse. Even while news writings are supposed to be neutral, some academics contend that they frequently include ideological and evaluative overtones. According to (Mirzaghabeik M, 2022), linguistic patterns in news discourse might implicitly encode position and assessment. Similar to this, (Potter, 2016) shows how

linguistic order shapes ideological representations using thematic and informational analysis of news texts in Arabic and English. When compared to this research, it is evident that news discourse is interpretive as well as instructive. As a result, analyzing language use in news reporting becomes crucial to understanding meaning construction.

Descriptive adjectives are one linguistic device that greatly aids in the creation of meaning. In written speech, qualitative adjectives serve to convey position and assessment, according to (Deveci & Ayish, 2021). Furthermore, (Herman & Liberatore, 2022) contend that readers' judgment is influenced by the ideological and value-laden meanings of evaluative adjectives. Adjectives give authors the ability to emphasize or downplay specific aspects of events or actors, in contrast to neutral descriptions. This demonstrates how adjectives create views in addition to describing things. As a result, how adjectives are used has a significant impact on how readers understand news content.

Derivational verbs are another significant language tool. According to (Leontjev, 2023), vocabulary growth and expressive ability in language use are significantly influenced by derivational morphology. New lexical elements that may change grammatical function and meaning are created through derivational processes. Derivational verbs offer a more complex depiction of activities and processes in discourse than simple verb forms. This enables events to be presented in news texts in a variety of ways based on lexical choice. Derivational verbs, therefore, play a role in the creation of both structure and meaning.

Expletives like "it" and "there" are typically thought of as syntactic components devoid of lexical meaning. (Ali Amjad, 2021) contends, however, that expletives have crucial roles in discourse, particularly in coordinating the flow of information and preserving unity. Expletives are structural techniques that direct the reader's attention and introduce additional information, unlike lexical terms. They support discourse clarity and aid in controlling textual growth. This suggests that grammatical components that have little semantic substance nevertheless have a role in the creation of meaning. Therefore, rather than focusing solely on grammatical form, expletives should be examined from a functional-discourse perspective.

Different facets of discourse meaning have been studied in earlier Systemic Functional Linguistics research. (Mirzaghabeik M, 2022) explores evaluative meaning in news discourse, whereas (Van, 2021) concentrates on the metafunctions of language in meaning production. Theme-Rheme and information structure are used by (Potter, 2016) to examine how ideologies are represented in news reports written in Arabic and English. In contrast to these studies, the majority of studies tend to concentrate on ideology, evaluation, or theme structure independently. Additionally,

rather than using an integrated framework, other research looks at morphology, adjectives, or expletives separately. This suggests a disarray in the current methods of study.

This disarray creates a glaring research gap. First, rather than analyzing linguistic traits collectively, the majority of studies, including those by (Deveci & Ayish, 2021), (Herman & Liberatore, 2022), and (Leontjev, 2023), examine them individually. Second, ideological meaning is prioritized over grammatical meaning at the clause level in earlier studies (e.g., (Potter, 2016); (Mirzaghabeik M, 2022)). Third, different grammatical resources are not fully integrated into a unified SFL-based framework. The relationship between adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletives has not received enough attention in the literature currently in publication. Consequently, a more comprehensive linguistic approach is required.

In order to close this gap, the current study examines the grammatical meaning of expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives in English news texts using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework. In particular, the study looks at how these language elements act in meaning production and how they contribute to the depiction of events and individuals. The current study examines these three linguistic characteristics within a single SFL framework, in contrast to other research that looked at descriptive adjectives, derivational morphology, and expletive constructions independently ((Deveci & Ayish, 2021); (Deveci & Ayish, 2021); (Ali Amjad, 2021)). The comprehensive analysis of lexical-grammatical resources as interrelated meaning-making tools in news discourse is what makes this study novel. It is anticipated that the results will offer a more thorough comprehension of how grammatical meaning is constructed and further discourse analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Descriptive Adjectives in News Discourse

In news discourse, descriptive adjectives are essential because they serve as tools for meaning construction in addition to being linguistic components that describe individuals, things, events, or circumstances. According to (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) views language as a meaning-making system in which lexical choices influence how experience is represented and reality is interpreted. As a result, readers' perceptions of specific events, social actors, and concerns can be influenced by the choice of descriptive adjectives in

news reports. Journalists can highlight particular traits, highlight particular viewpoints, and influence readers' perceptions of recorded events by using these linguistic choices.

Previous research has demonstrated the significance of descriptive adjectives in the creation of meaning in news discourse. According to (Zhipeng, 2022), evaluative language is an essential technique for journalists to convey opinions and judgments while seeming impartial. Journalists have the power to shape readers' perceptions of events, problems, and social actors through word choices. This result implies that adjectives serve purposes beyond than basic description since they aid in the assessment of the data contained in news texts. In a similar vein, (Sabao, 2016) used the appraisal framework to study objectivity in news discourse and discovered that vocabulary choices in news stories frequently include implicit evaluative connotations. The study showed that language resources may quietly convey specific viewpoints, despite the fact that journalistic writing is typically associated with objectivity. (Kurniawati & Wijana, 2022) discovered that descriptive adjectives play a major role in how events and participants are portrayed in news discourse, which supports their conclusions. According to their research, adjective choices aid in the formation of specific interpretations and assessments, suggesting that descriptive adjectives serve as crucial tools for the production of meaning rather than just being descriptive components.

When combined, these findings show that descriptive adjectives are crucial linguistic tools for creating meaning in news discourse (Zhipeng, 2022) (Sabao, 2016) (Kurniawati & Wijana, 2022). They aid in the expressing of assessment and viewpoint in addition to the depiction of events, people, and circumstances. Descriptive adjectives can actualize both ideational and interpersonal meanings from the standpoint of Systemic Functional Linguistics because they reflect attitudes toward the reported phenomena while also representing attributes (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). Descriptive adjectives have mostly been studied from the viewpoints of evaluation, appraisal, and ideological representation in earlier research (Zhipeng, 2022) (Sabao, 2016) (Kurniawati & Wijana, 2022).

2.2 Derivational Verbs and Morphological Meaning

The process of generating new lexical items by adding affixes that can change a base word's meaning and grammatical category is known as derivative morphology. Because it allows speakers and writers to increase vocabulary and more accurately convey concepts, derivation is one of the most prolific word-formation processes, according to (McCarthy, n.d.). A noun can

become a verb, an adjective can become a noun, or a verb can take on a new semantic meaning through derivational processes. Derivational morphology thus plays a role in both lexical development and the production of meaning in discourse. Derivational forms assist journalists in succinctly and meaningfully presenting events, activities, and thoughts in written texts, especially news speech.

Previous study work has mostly concentrated on recognizing and categorizing derivational processes in different types of written discourse. According to (Pratama et al., 2025) analysis of derivational suffixes in BBC News stories, derivation plays a major role in vocabulary growth through a variety of class-changing mechanisms. According to their findings, lexical expansion and semantic evolution are significantly influenced by derivational morphology. (Sitinjak et al., 2023), who discovered that derivational affixes were very productive in articles published by The Jakarta Post, reported similar findings. (Zakiyah & Mada, 2026) provided evidence to support these conclusions by showing that derivational suffixes improve communicative clarity in written texts and aid in the creation of new vocabulary items. Similarly, (Suryani & Wibowo, 2025) contended that derivational forms aid in the efficient and cost-effective dissemination of information by journalists. These studies consistently demonstrate that derivational morphology is a significant linguistic resource in written speech, despite the fact that they looked at various corpora. These results imply that derivational processes play a role in the creation of meaning in communication in addition to word production.

When viewed together, the earlier research shows that derivational morphology has a major role in lexical development and written discourse communication (Pratama et al., 2025) (Sitinjak et al., 2023), (Zakiyah & Mada, 2026), (Suryani & Wibowo, 2025). These studies demonstrate how derivational processes support effective communication, semantic development, and vocabulary growth. Derivational verbs can serve as lexical-grammatical resources that convey activities, processes, and experiencing meanings in texts, according to Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). Derivational verbs are hence significant linguistic components that aid in the production of meaning in news discourse.

2.3 Expletives and Grammatical Meaning

Grammatical elements that hold syntactic places without bearing significant lexical meaning, especially in forms like *it* and *there*, have historically been classified as expletive constructions. Expletives are frequently seen in conventional grammar as structural placeholders whose main purpose is to fulfill syntactic requirements. However, modern linguistic studies acknowledge that

expletives play a role in discourse organization, meaning creation, and grammatical structure. This viewpoint has inspired scholars to investigate expletives' communicative roles in real-world language use and to look beyond their formal traits.

Expletive constructs play significant roles in discourse structuring, according to earlier research. Expletives help organize messages and direct readers to specific information, according to (Booth & Groothuis, 2024). According to their research, expletives have an impact on how information is presented, organized, and understood in a text. In a similar vein, (Nuranti & Anam, 2024) contend that the arrangement of information in conversation is intimately linked to textual meaning. Their research shows how linguistic resources that support textual meaning contribute to coherence and enhance communication flow. These results suggest that grammatical structures should be interpreted both formally and in terms of how they contribute to the creation of meaning in discourse.

When put together, these investigations show how crucial expletive constructions are for information organization and discourse coherence (Booth & Groothuis, 2024) (Nuranti & Anam, 2024). According to Systemic Functional Linguistics, expletives help writers organize information and control the conversation flow, which enhances textual meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). Expletives are important grammatical tools that facilitate clear communication and meaning development in written texts, despite their minimal lexical richness.

2.4 Systemic Functional Linguistics and Meaning Construction

According to (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), language is more than just a set of grammatical rules; it is a social semiotic system and a tool for meaning-making. Every linguistic decision influences the production and perception of meaning, according to (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). Language operates in relation to social circumstances. According to this concept, grammar is seen as a useful tool that speakers and writers use to organize messages, create social connections, and represent experiences rather than as an independent system. As a result, SFL offers a thorough method for examining the ways in which language forms support communication in a variety of discourse contexts, including news reporting.

Additionally, (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) suggest that language simultaneously fulfills three metafunctions: textual, interpersonal, and ideational meanings. The interpersonal metafunction concentrates on social contact and the expression of attitudes, the ideational metafunction represents human experience and logical linkages, and the textual metafunction

arranges information into meaningful and cohesive language. Because these metafunctions work together anytime language is employed, SFL is very helpful when analyzing the connection between grammar and meaning. From this angle, grammatical structures can be examined as both functional tools that support communication and formal patterns.

Systemic functional linguistics has been shown to be applicable to discourse analysis in numerous research. (Sukiman et al., 2023) used the transitivity system to examine how events were portrayed in reports on the Kanjuruhan catastrophe and discovered that the discourse was dominated by material and behavioral processes. In a similar vein, (Doran, 2026) demonstrated how SFL offers a useful framework for analyzing how language decisions affect the creation of meaning in various speech circumstances. Furthermore, research on interpersonal meaning has shown that mood and modality systems are crucial for communicating attitudes, judgments, and interpersonal connections. Additionally, (Kirana et al., 2025) discovered that interpersonal meaning contributes to the explanation of how writers and presenters convey their viewpoints through language choices. Additionally, studies on topic structure have shown that textual order affects readers' prioritization and interpretation of information. The idea that grammatical decisions are essential to the realization of meaning in speech is supported by all of these research taken together.

Additionally, a number of recent research have shown how adaptable Systemic Functional Linguistics is for examining different types of speech. According to (Doran, 2026), SFL offers a thorough framework for analyzing how linguistic decisions create meaning in various communicative contexts, including media texts. In a similar vein, (Kirana et al., 2025) discovered that interpersonal meaning significantly influences readers' interpretations through linguistic decisions that convey opinions and attitudes. These results corroborate the hypothesis put forth by (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) that language concurrently realizes textual, interpersonal, and ideational meanings. (Kirana et al., 2025) concentrate more intently on the interpersonal aspect of meaning creation, whereas (Doran, 2026) highlights the wide applicability of SFL as a discourse-analytic paradigm. Collectively, these investigations suggest that language elements should be considered as functional resources that support communication rather than only as grammatical forms. Consequently, SFL offers a suitable theoretical framework for examining expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives as resources for meaning-making in English news discourse.

2.5 Position of the Present Study

Previous research has examined news discourse, expletive constructions, descriptive adjectives, and derivational morphology from several linguistic angles. While studies on derivational morphology have focused on word creation processes and morphological classification, research on descriptive adjectives has primarily focused on assessment, appraisal, and ideological representation. Similar to this, studies of expletives have typically focused on pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic explanations. Additionally, transitivity, topic structure, mood, modality, and assessment systems in news discourse have all been examined in several studies using Systemic Functional Linguistics. Together, these findings show that language decisions have a significant impact on interpretation and meaning.

The majority of research examines these linguistic characteristics separately, despite the fact that the body of current literature offers insightful information about language use in news texts. The link between descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletives as related grammatical resources has therefore received less study. Furthermore, rather than focusing on how particular lexical-grammatical elements together contribute to meaning creation, prior SFL-based research has tended to concentrate on larger metafunctional systems. Therefore, to understand how various grammatical resources interact within conversation, a more integrated viewpoint is required.

By analyzing descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletives as resources for grammatical meaning in English news reports, the current work builds on earlier research and places itself within the discipline of Systemic Functional Linguistics. This study examines how these language elements work together to represent events, people, and information in journalistic speech rather than examining them independently. The project aims to provide a more thorough knowledge of grammatical meaning construction in news reporting and advance SFL-based discourse analysis through this integrated method.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In order to examine the grammatical meanings realized through descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions in English news texts, this study used a qualitative descriptive research design. Because the study's goal was to investigate and analyze linguistic meanings buried in written discourse rather than measure variables quantitatively, a qualitative technique was chosen. (Creswell, n.d.) asserts that qualitative research is suitable for analyzing

interpretations and meanings present in textual data. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which sees language as a tool for meaning-making rather than just a collection of grammatical rules, served as the foundation for the study (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). From this angle, language may be examined in terms of how it organizes messages, creates connections, and represents experience. Consequently, the researcher was able to investigate lexical-grammatical elements in their natural contexts and explain how they contribute to the creation of meaning in news discourse by using a qualitative descriptive approach.

3.2 Data Source and Data Selection

Data for this study were sourced from three English-language news articles published by CNN Business, BBC News, and The Jakarta Post. These news outlets were selected because they published English-language news articles on similar economic issues, providing comparable data for linguistic analysis. The chosen articles provided rich linguistic information pertinent to the goals of this study and focused on trade relations and economic cooperation between Indonesia and the United States. Instead of examining the articles as whole texts, the study focused on clauses, phrases, and sentences that contained expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives. Due to their representation of the lexical-grammatical resources investigated in this study, these linguistic units functioned as the primary data.

Purposive sampling was used to choose the articles. Purposive sampling, according to (Creswell, n.d.)^{makasih ya}, allows researchers to choose data that are most pertinent to the study's goals. The selection process was guided by a number of criteria. The articles had to be written in English, fall within the news category, be published by CNN Business, BBC News, The Jakarta Post, and have language elements pertinent to the study, such as expletives, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives. The articles also had to be available to the general public in their full published form. These standards made sure that the chosen data were suitable for answering the research objectives and offered enough linguistic evidence for analysis.

Table 3.1 Criteria for Selecting News Articles

No	Criteria
1.	The article is written in English.
2.	The article belongs to the news category.
3.	The article is published by BBC News, CNN Business, or The Jakarta Post.
4.	The article contains descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and/or expletive constructions relevant to the study.

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5. The article is publicly accessible and complete.
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3.3 Data Collection Method

This study used note-taking and documenting techniques to gather the data. Documentation was thought to be the best approach because the data were written texts rather than human subjects. Using the preset criteria, the researcher first chose three English news stories from CNN Business, BBC News, and The Jakarta Post. After that, the chosen articles were downloaded and saved for examination. To fully comprehend the substance and linguistic elements of each piece, it was read multiple times. The researcher was also able to find linguistic patterns that were pertinent to the study's goals through repeated reading.

The strategy of taking notes was utilized to document linguistic components present in the chosen articles. During the reading process, clauses, phrases, and sentences with expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives were noted and emphasized. To enable methodical arrangement and analysis, the identified data were then entered into a data identification sheet. The three linguistic characteristics that were being studied were then used to categorize the data. Before conducting additional analysis, this process made sure that all pertinent linguistic data was precisely recorded and uniformly arranged.

Table 3.2 Data Identification Sheet

No	Data Extract	Linguistic Feature	Source
1.	Extraordinary struggle	Descriptive Adjective	CNN Business
2.	Grueling process	Descriptive Adjective	CNN Business
3.	Mutual economic prosperity	Descriptive Adjective	BBC News
4.	Volatile trade policy	Descriptive Adjective	CNN Business
5.	To finalise an agreement	Derivational Verb	BBC News
6.	Industrialize	Derivational Verb	The Jakarta Post
7.	There are several challenges ahead	Expletive Construction (there)	CNN Business
8.	It could take years	Expletive Construction (it)	CNN Business

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

(Miles et al., n.d.) interactive model, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drafting and verification, was used to analyze the data. Because it offers a methodical

process for arranging, analyzing, and deriving conclusions from qualitative data, this model was chosen. The analysis was carried out in accordance with (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, which sees language as a tool for meaning-making. Using this approach, the grammatical meaning of descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions in English news texts was analyzed.

Table 3.3 Analytical Framework

No	Linguistic Feature	Analytical Focus	SFL Perspective
1.	Descriptive Adjectives	Description and evaluation of participants, events, and situations	Ideational and Interpersonal Meaning
2.	Derivational Verbs	Representation of actions and processes	Ideational Meaning
3.	Expletive Constructions (<i>it</i> and <i>there</i>)	Organization of information and textual flow	Textual Meaning

Condensing the data was the initial step in the analysis process. At this point, the researcher chose, recognized, and categorized language elements pertinent to the study's goals. The purpose of descriptive adjectives in characterizing and assessing individuals, occasions, and circumstances led to their identification. According to (McCarthy, n.d.) derivational morphology theory, derivational verbs, especially those created by affixation processes—were recognized. The presence of expletives and their use as grammatical components in clause structures allowed for the identification of expletive constructions. To keep the analysis focused, linguistic elements unrelated to the study's goals were left out.

Data display was the second step. To make comprehension and comparison easier, the detected linguistic characteristics were categorized and displayed in tables. The data were categorized based on the news text's source, grammatical function, contextual meaning, and type of linguistic feature. The researcher was able to find recurrent patterns and connections between expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives by organizing the data in this manner. Additionally, the presentation method gave a more comprehensive picture of how grammatical meaning was realized in various news settings.

Drawing conclusions and verifying them was the last step. At this point, the researcher used the Systemic Functional Linguistics framework developed by (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) to analyze the results. Derivational verbs were analyzed for their role in representing actions and experiential meanings, descriptive adjectives for their contribution to ideational and interpersonal

meaning, and expletive constructions for their contribution to textual meaning and information organization. Through repeated analysis of the data and comparison with pertinent theories and earlier research, the interpretations were consistently confirmed. This procedure made sure that the findings appropriately represented the grammatical meanings found in the chosen English news articles.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

This study used theoretical triangulation, drawing on a number of pertinent theories and academic sources to assure validity. (McCarthy, n.d.) theory of derivational morphology, (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) Systemic Functional Linguistics framework, and earlier research on descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions served as the main foundation for the analysis. The researcher was able to interpret the results from several angles and increased the analysis's credibility by utilizing a variety of theoretical views. Additionally, linguistic data derived directly from the selected news articles served as the foundation for all interpretations.

A methodical and open research process ensured reliability. Before the research started, precise standards for data selection and classification were set, and the same coding techniques were used continuously throughout the investigation. To guarantee uniformity and openness, thorough records of data collection, classification, and interpretation were kept. To ensure that classifications and interpretations were accurate, the researcher also went over the data several times. These methods reduced subjective bias and increased the reliability of the results, making it possible for future researchers to comprehend and assess the analytical methodology used in this investigation.

RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Adjectives

In all, sixteen descriptive adjectives were found in the three news stories. Clauses outlining trade talks, economic cooperation, policies, and commercial agreements between Indonesia and the United States contained these descriptors. The descriptive adjectives found in the data are shown in Table 4.1. Nouns pertaining to economic activities, policies, products, agreements, and negotiations were transformed by the identified adjectives. There were six descriptive adjectives in CNN Business, five in each of BBC News and The Jakarta Post.

Table 4.1. Descriptive Adjectives Identified

Adjective	Noun Modified	Source
Extraordinary	Struggle	CNN Business
Grueling	Process	CNN Business
Mutual	Economic prosperity	BBC News
Beneficial	Deal	BBC News
Volatile	Trade policy	CNN Business
Dramatic	Higher rates	CNN Business
High-quality	Copper	CNN Business
Natural	Rubber	BBC News
Top	Export product	BBC News
Reciprocal	Trade	The Jakarta Post
Comprehensive	Economic ties	The Jakarta Post
Bilateral	Trade	The Jakarta Post
Economic	Investment	The Jakarta Post
Worn	Clothing	The Jakarta Post
Shredded	Clothing	The Jakarta Post
Critical	Minerals	BBC News

The analysis findings show that, with a total of sixteen instances in the three chosen news items, descriptive adjectives were the most prevalent linguistic feature found in the corpus. These adjectives were mostly used to describe business circumstances, trade agreements, investment policies, and economic activities that were covered in the news texts. The use of descriptive adjectives suggests that journalists use evaluative and descriptive language to help readers better comprehend and appreciate complicated economic issues. In addition to describing events, news writers use these linguistic choices to offer specific viewpoints on economic conditions.

Descriptive adjectives aid in the creation of meaning, as demonstrated by a number of examples. While "beneficial" in "beneficial deal" evaluates the trade agreement favorably and suggests positive consequences, the adjective "extraordinary" in "extraordinary struggle" portrays the negotiation process as noteworthy and important. In a similar vein, the word "volatile" in "volatile trade policy" emphasizes unpredictability and instability in the state of the economy. These examples show that descriptive adjectives serve as tools for evaluating and influencing readers' perceptions of economic events in addition to being descriptive aspects.

4.2 Derivational Verbs

The three news stories had a total of eight derivational verbs. Derivational prefixes or suffixes were added to basic forms to create these verbs. The derivational verbs found in the data are shown in Table 4.2. The derivational verbs represented various word-formation processes and were dispersed among the three articles. There were three derivational verbs in BBC News, one in CNN Business, and four in The Jakarta Post.

Table 4.2. Derivational Verbs Identified

Derivational Verb	Base Form	Affix(es)	Source
Finalise	Final	-ise	BBC News
Facilitate	Facile	-ate	BBC News
Strengthen	Strength	-en	BBC News

Broaden	Broad	-en	CNN Business
Industrialize	Industrial	-ize	The Jakarta Post
Reconstruct	Construct	re-	The Jakarta Post
Diversify	Diverse	-ify	The Jakarta Post
Cooperate	Operate	co-	The Jakarta Post

Eight derivational verbs were found in the three news pieces, according to the research. Prefixes and suffixes affixed to nouns, adjectives, or preexisting verbs were used in a variety of derivational procedures to create these verbs. Finalize, facilitate, strengthen, expand, industrialize, rebuild, diversify, and collaborate are some of the recognized forms. These derivational verbs show how word-formation processes enhance the portrayal of actions and processes in news discourse and contribute to lexical variety.

The text's derivational verbs show several morphological formation patterns. For example, "strengthen" is produced from the noun "strength" with the suffix -en, whereas "finalize" is created from the adjective "final" by adding the suffix -ize. Similarly, the prefix re- is added to the basic verb "construct" to get "reconstruct," which denotes the repetition or restoration of an action. Journalists are able to succinctly and meaningfully convey economic activity, negotiations, and policy developments thanks to these derivational processes. Derivational verbs thus play a major role in how actions and processes are portrayed in the chosen news sources.

4.3 Expletive Constructions

The data revealed one expletive construction. The anticipatory construction was used in the CNN Business story. The recognized expletive construction is shown in Table 4.3. The profanity anticipated the delayed clause by acting as a grammatical subject. The Jakarta Post and BBC News pieces did not contain any offensive language.

Table 4.3. Expletive Construction Identified

Expletive	Clause Extract	Source
It	"Manufacturing facilities may not be operational for years."	CNN Business

Among the chosen news items, just one expletive construction was found. The anticipatory expletive "it" was used in the construction that was mentioned in the CNN Business story. The expletive construction had a crucial grammatical purpose within the clause structure despite its infrequent usage. The expletive functioned as a structural component that enabled information to be presented in a more organised and natural way rather than immediately adding lexical meaning.

The low frequency of expletives may suggest that direct and succinct sentence forms are prioritized in economic news pieces. Factual information is frequently presented by journalists in an effective manner, which minimizes the need for anticipatory constructions. However, the identified expletive shows that these grammatical resources are still helpful for facilitating textual flow and organizing information when needed. Therefore, even though they are uncommon, expletives nonetheless play a role in the creation of meaning in journalistic discourse.

4.4 Frequency Distribution of Linguistic Features

The distribution of expletives, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives among the three news sources is compiled in Table 4.4. The results revealed a total of twenty-five linguistic characteristics. The most commonly identified language trait was descriptive adjectives, which were followed by expletives and derivational verbs. All three articles had derivative verbs, however CNN Business was the only one that used expletives. The results show that the distribution of grammatical and lexical elements varies among the chosen news stories.

Table 4. 4. Frequency Distribution of Linguistic Features

Source	Descriptive Adjectives	Derivational Verbs	Expletive Constructions
CNN Business	6	1	1
BBC News	5	3	0
The Jakarta Post	5	4	0
Total Number	16	8	1

With sixteen occurrences, the frequency distribution shows that descriptive adjectives were the most prevalent linguistic component found in the chosen news items. Only one expletive construction was found among the three news sources, however eight instances of derivative verbs were found. These results imply that descriptive lexical resources—rather than morphological or syntactic devices—are used more frequently by journalists to depict and assess economic events. Each of the three linguistic characteristics has a distinct communicative role in news discourse, as evidenced by their unequal distribution. Derivational verbs aid in the description of acts and processes, descriptive adjectives principally enhance the portrayal of individuals and settings, and expletive constructions are mostly employed to arrange information within the text.

DISCUSSION

5.1 Descriptive Adjectives and Meaning Construction

The results showed that the most common language element found in the chosen news items was descriptive adjectives. There were sixteen descriptive adjectives in all, suggesting that while reporting on commercial relations and economic cooperation between Indonesia and the United States, media heavily relied on adjectival options. The preponderance of descriptive adjectives indicates that news writers used lexical resources to give readers evaluative interpretations that aid in understanding economic issues in addition to describing occurrences. By emphasizing particular aspects of talks, agreements, and economic situations, adjectives like extraordinary, difficult, helpful, and complete transmitted meanings beyond factual knowledge.

These results corroborate (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.) theory that language serves as a meaning-making system from the standpoint of systemic functional linguistics. Both ideational and interpersonal meanings are influenced by descriptive adjectives. By offering particular

qualities, they aid in the ideational representation of persons, situations, and occurrences. Interpersonally, they convey their opinions and attitudes on the topic at hand. Adjectives affect readers' perceptions of economic links and events in news discourse through several functions.

The outcomes align with other research on descriptive adjectives in news discourse. According to (Zhipeng, 2022), journalists can express opinions while appearing objective by using evaluative language. In a similar vein, (Sabao, 2016) showed that word choices in news speech frequently include implicit evaluative connotations. Additionally, (Kurniawati & Wijana, 2022) discovered that descriptive adjectives play a major role in how events and individuals are portrayed in news broadcasts. These conclusions are corroborated by the current study, which demonstrates the significance of descriptive adjectives in describing trade agreements, economic cooperation, and policy issues. In addition to describing events, journalists use these vocabulary choices to influence readers' perceptions of economic realities.

The communicative goal of economic news itself may account for the use of descriptive adjectives. Uncertainty, opportunities, difficulties, and assessments of results are frequently included in reports on trade negotiations and economic policy. As a result, journalists need to use descriptive language to assist readers comprehend complicated economic concerns and to make events more understandable. This explains why in the chosen articles, descriptive adjectives were more common than derivational verbs and expletive formulations.

5.2 Derivational Verbs and Morphological Meaning

Although they were less common than descriptive adjectives, the results indicated that derivational verbs were present in all three articles. Finalize, facilitate, strengthen, broaden, industrialize, reconstruct, diversify, and cooperate were among the recognized derivational verbs. By producing lexical items that express particular actions, processes, and developments connected to economic activities, these verbs illustrated how derivational morphology contributes to the formation of meaning in news discourse.

(McCarthy, n.d.) theory of derivational morphology, which highlights that derivation is a fruitful process for creating new lexical items and extending communicative possibilities, is supported by these findings. Writers can produce verbs that more accurately convey intricate economic processes by using derivational affixes. In the current study, journalists were able to effectively and precisely summarize economic activity by using derivational verbs. Derivational morphology thus served as a crucial tool for depicting economic processes in news discourse.

Furthermore, the results align with earlier research on derivational morphology. (Pratama et al., 2025) found that derivational processes had a significant impact on vocabulary expansion in news texts. According to (Sitinjak et al., 2023), derivational affixes are commonly employed in journalistic writing to produce significant lexical variants. Similarly, derivational suffixes support vocabulary growth and communicative clarity in written discourse, according to (Zakiyah & Mada, 2026). Derivational forms facilitate effective information delivery in news communication, according to (Suryani & Wibowo, 2025).

Given the nature of economic journalism, derivational verbs are comparatively less common than descriptive adjectives. Clarity and accessibility for a wide audience are given top priority in news stories. As a result, journalists typically only employ derivational verbs when they offer precise meanings that are more difficult to convey using more straightforward lexical alternatives. However, in the chosen articles, the detected derivational verbs were crucial in illustrating economic acts, policies, and advancements.

5.3 Expletive Constructions and Textual Meaning

Only one expletive construction was found in the chosen data, according to the findings. The anticipatory framework made the construction visible in the CNN Business report. The existence of the expletive construction shows that such grammatical elements nevertheless contribute to meaning creation in news discourse, despite their restricted frequency. Expletives offer literary and organizational functions that promote communication rather than acting as lexical transmitters of meaning.

This result validates the notion of textual meaning in the framework of systemic functional linguistics proposed by (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). By enabling authors to arrange clauses in ways that enhance readability and information flow, expletive constructs aid in the arrangement of information. By delaying the clause's logical topic, the discovered anticipatory allowed the author to convey information more organically and successfully. As a result, the expletive served as a textual resource to facilitate message organizing.

These findings align with other research highlighting the discourse functions of expletives. Expletives help readers organize and assimilate information in a text, according to (Booth & Groothuis, 2024). In a similar vein, (Nuranti & Anam, 2024) emphasized the significance of textual meaning in preserving coherence and promoting information flow in discourse. These conclusions are corroborated by the current investigation, which demonstrates that, despite its

infrequency, the identified expletive construction aided in the efficient organization of information. This study looks at expletives from a functional standpoint, highlighting their contribution to textual meaning in news discourse, in contrast to studies that primarily concentrate on syntactic features.

The features of economic news writing may account for the small quantity of expletives. In order to effectively convey factual information, economic reports typically use straightforward and succinct sentence styles. Because expletives can make sentences more difficult, journalists may refrain from using them frequently. This could account for the significantly lower frequency of expletives compared to descriptive adjectives and derivational verbs in the chosen articles.

5.4 The Contribution of the Three Linguistic Features to Meaning Construction

The findings demonstrate that descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions all contribute to the production of meaning in different but complimentary ways when combined. Descriptive adjectives primarily assisted in the representation and evaluation of economic events, derivational verbs depicted acts and processes, and expletive structures helped with textual order and information flow. These findings support the functional theory of language put forward by (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.), which holds that a variety of lexical-grammatical resources interact to actualize grammatical meaning in news discourse rather than acting as discrete linguistic pieces.

The research goal of examining the roles of descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions in English news articles is also addressed by the findings. According to the study, each of these three linguistic characteristics influences the several metafunctional aspects of meaning that are outlined in Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, n.d.). Expletive structures were associated with textual meaning, descriptive adjectives with interpersonal and ideational meanings, and derivative verbs with ideational meaning.

This work theoretically improves Systemic Functional Linguistics by providing an integrated analysis of three lexical-grammatical resources within a single analytical framework. Previous studies have often examined descriptive adjectives, derivational morphology, and expletives separately. However, the current study demonstrates how these traits combine to create meaning in news discourse. (Doran, 2026), who highlights that meaning is realized through the interaction of multiple linguistic resources rather than isolated grammatical forms, is also consistent with this

finding. This integrated approach expands our current understanding of grammatical meaning from an SFL perspective.

The results may be helpful to teachers, students, and language scholars by showing how grammatical choices impact meaning in actual news articles. By understanding the functions of descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions, readers can critically examine news discourse and determine how language resources affect representations of economic events. The findings may also serve as a reference for future studies that look at lexical-grammatical traits in different conversation formats.

CONCLUSION

This study used the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework to examine the grammatical meaning of descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions in English news stories. The results show that various linguistic characteristics have distinct roles in the creation of meaning. In order to realize ideational and interpersonal meanings, descriptive adjectives mainly serve to portray and assess economic events and actors. Through morphological construction, derivative verbs promote ideational meaning by helping to represent actions and processes. Expletives, on the other hand, organize information and promote consistency in news discourse, fulfilling a textual purpose.

The study shows that rather than using discrete linguistic components, grammatical meaning in news reports is achieved through the interaction of several lexical-grammatical resources. This study advances systemic functional linguistics by offering a more comprehensive understanding of how grammatical resources interact to create meaning in news discourse by analyzing descriptive adjectives, derivational verbs, and expletive constructions within a single analytical framework.

The study is constrained by its rather tiny corpus, which consists of just three English news stories, despite these contributions. It is therefore advised that future studies examine a larger dataset and use a greater range of news sources or discourse genres. To give a more thorough explanation of meaning-making in discourse, future research may also include other SFL elements like transitivity, modality, or theme structure.

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