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Politeness Strategies as Self-Presentation in Laufey's Podcast Interviews Based on Leech's Principles

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Abstract

This study examines the use of politeness strategies in Laufey's utterances in two podcast interviews, *Q with Tom Power* and *Royal Court with Brittany Broski*, based on Leech's Politeness Principle (1983). Grounded in pragmatic analysis, this research examines how politeness functions not only as a linguistic norm but also as a strategic resource for self-presentation in public digital discourse. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, 80 utterances were analyzed, revealing 87 realizations of politeness maxims. The findings show that four of Leech's six maxims are employed, namely modesty (47 instances), approbation (19), agreement (12), and tact (9). The dominance of the modesty maxim indicates a consistent tendency to minimize self-praise, even when discussing professional achievements. Drawing on Goffman's framework of self-presentation, these strategies function as forms of impression management, enabling the construction of a controlled, approachable, and professional public persona. This study highlights politeness as a strategic linguistic resource in shaping self-presentation within contemporary podcast discourse.

Keywords: politeness strategies, leech's politeness principle, self-presentation, podcast discourse, pragmatics

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, communication plays a crucial role in how public figures manage their self-presentation in front of a wide and diverse audience (Nugraha et al., 2022). Musicians, in particular, are no longer perceived solely through their musical works, but also through their public appearances in digital media such as social networking platforms and podcasts. Podcasts have emerged as a popular form of public discourse that combines elements of interview, casual conversation, and personal storytelling, allowing public figures to present themselves in a more relaxed and seemingly authentic manner (Heryani et al., 2023). This communicative setting positions language as a key resource through which public figures negotiate interpersonal relationships and construct their public personas.

Within podcast interactions, language functions not merely as a medium for conveying information, but also as a strategic tool for managing impressions and maintaining social harmony with both interviewers and audiences. Previous studies have emphasized that linguistic choices, including diction, communicative style, and pragmatic strategies, reflect how speakers position themselves socially and relationally. One prominent pragmatic framework that explains this phenomenon is

Leech's Politeness Principle (1983), which conceptualizes politeness as a set of strategies used to balance the speaker's self-interest with consideration for others (Leech, 1983). Leech proposes six politeness maxims, tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy, which guide speakers in selecting linguistic forms that support harmonious interaction. These maxims are particularly relevant in public yet personal communicative contexts, such as podcast interviews, where speakers are expected to appear sincere without appearing self-centered or socially insensitive.

In podcast discourse, politeness strategies become especially salient because speakers must negotiate a tension between personal expression and social appropriateness. This phenomenon can be observed in the utterances of Laufey, a contemporary jazz-pop musician of Icelandic-Chinese descent, who is widely recognized for her narrative-driven musical style and warm communicative persona. In various public interviews, Laufey frequently discusses her creative process, personal experiences, and professional achievements in a manner that appears reflective and approachable. Such communicative behavior suggests the strategic use of politeness to limit overt self-promotion while maintaining a positive public image.

The strategic function of politeness in public discourse can be further understood through Goffman's (1959) concept of self-presentation (Goffman, 1959). Goffman argues that individuals engaged in social interaction perform roles similar to actors on a stage, consciously managing the impressions they convey to others. In public interviews such as podcasts, speakers operate entirely within the front stage, where every utterance contributes to the construction of a public persona. Linguistic choices, including responses to praise, expressions of agreement, and displays of humility, function as impression management strategies that help speakers align their projected identity with audience expectations. Integrating Goffman's self-presentation framework with Leech's politeness principles therefore provides a comprehensive lens for analyzing how language operates both socially and performatively in digital public discourse.

Although numerous studies have examined politeness strategies using Leech's maxims, much of the existing research has focused on formal contexts such as political speeches, academic debates, or scripted media dialogues (Agustiningrum, 2020; Atmawijaya & Efryanti, 2023;Harianja et al., 2024). Studies that explore politeness in digital media often emphasize frequency and types of maxims without closely examining their strategic function in shaping self-presentation. Moreover, research that specifically investigates how young musicians employ politeness strategies across different levels of communicative formality in podcast settings remains limited. This gap indicates a need for further investigation into how politeness operates as a strategic resource for self-presentation in contemporary, informal digital interviews.

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Responding to this gap, the present study examines the use of politeness strategies in Laufey's utterances in two podcast interviews with contrasting interactional styles: *Q with Tom Power*, which adopts a relatively formal interview format, and *Royal Court with Brittany Broski*, which is more informal and conversational. By analyzing these two contexts, the study seeks to explore how politeness strategies are adapted to different communicative situations and how they function in the construction of Laufey's public persona. Specifically, this research aims not only to identify the realization of Leech's politeness maxims in Laufey's utterances, but also to explain how these strategies serve as forms of self-presentation within public digital discourse.

This study contributes to pragmatic research by extending the application of politeness theory to contemporary podcast discourse and by integrating it with Goffman's concept of self-presentation (Wibowo & Soraya, 2023). By focusing on linguistic strategies rather than audience perception, the research offers insight into how politeness functions as a deliberate and meaningful resource for managing identity and social relations in digital media interactions. As such, this study underscores the relevance of politeness not only as a normative aspect of language use, but also as a strategic practice in the construction of public identity in the digital era.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive narrative design to examine the use of politeness strategies in Laufey's utterances during two podcast interviews. The data were obtained from two podcast episodes with different interactional styles: *Q with Tom Power* and *Royal Court with Brittany Broski*. These podcasts were selected to represent relatively formal and informal public interview contexts.

The primary data consisted of 80 utterances produced by Laufey that indicated the use of politeness strategies, resulting in 87 realizations of politeness maxims. Data were collected through observation and note-taking techniques, involving the transcription of the podcast episodes and the identification of utterances relevant to Leech's Politeness Principle. The selection of utterances was based on their relevance to politeness strategies, particularly those reflecting evaluative, responsive, or self-referential expressions. The analysis focused on the speaker's utterances, while the interviewer's speech was considered as contextual support.

Data analysis was conducted by categorizing the selected utterances according to Leech's six politeness maxims and interpreting their pragmatic functions using Goffman's concept of self-

presentation. To ensure analytical consistency, the categorization of data was carried out systematically based on the theoretical framework, and each interpretation was supported by contextual analysis. The findings were presented descriptively and supported by frequency tables to illustrate patterns of politeness strategy use in public podcast discourse.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis identified 87 realizations of politeness maxims across 80 utterances produced by Laufey, indicating that some utterances simultaneously reflect more than one maxim. Among Leech's six politeness maxims, only four were observed in the data: modesty, approbation, agreement, and tact. The distribution of these maxims is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Politeness Maxims

No	Maxim	Frequency
1	Tact	9
2	Generosity	0
3	Approbation	19
4	Modesty	47
5	Agreement	12
6	Sympathy	0

The uneven distribution of maxims suggests that politeness in podcast discourse is not applied uniformly, but selectively mobilized in ways that align with the speaker's interactional goals. Rather than functioning solely as a mechanism for maintaining interpersonal harmony, these strategies operate as performative linguistic resources through which the speaker constructs and regulates a public identity. This indicates that politeness in this context is inherently strategic, serving both relational and self-presentational purposes.

Taken together, the findings suggest that politeness in podcast discourse operates not merely as interpersonal regulation, but as a performative mechanism of identity construction. Laufey's consistent use of modesty, alignment, and evaluative redirection reflects a deliberate effort to balance authenticity with public image management. In line with Goffman's (1959) concept of self-presentation, her utterances can be understood as carefully managed acts that project a persona which is simultaneously humble, relatable, and professionally composed. Thus, politeness strategies function not only to sustain interactional harmony but also to negotiate visibility, credibility, and likability within contemporary digital public discourse.

MODESTY MAXIM

The modesty maxim emerges as the most dominant pattern in the data, indicating a consistent tendency to minimize self-praise, particularly when discussing professional achievements.

> **Laufey**: *I mean, I didn't think for a second that I was going to win it, honestly. I completely blocked it out of my mind. I really thought that I pretty much had already won by just getting nominated.*

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Rather than emphasizing success, this utterance shifts the evaluative focus toward participation, thereby reducing the level of self-promotion. This pattern suggests that modesty is not merely a politeness strategy, but a recurring interactional stance through which Laufey systematically downplays personal achievement in public discourse.

From the perspective of Goffman's self-presentation, this behavior reflects a form of impression management, where the speaker constructs a front-stage identity that appears humble and unassuming. By avoiding explicit self-praise, Laufey maintains a socially acceptable balance between visibility and modesty, preventing the risk of being perceived as self-centered.

A similar pattern is observed when she reflects on her earlier work:

> **Laufey**: *Yeah, it was very sad and it was accompanied by a lack of experience.*

Here, the speaker foregrounds limitation rather than competence. This self-evaluative move reinforces a persona grounded in growth and imperfection, which enhances relatability. Such self-effacing discourse functions strategically to position the speaker not as a finished product, but as an evolving individual, thereby aligning with audience expectations of authenticity. Overall, the dominance of the modesty maxim indicates that self-effacement operates as a key front-stage strategy, enabling the speaker to maintain credibility while avoiding excessive self-promotion.

APPROBATION MAXIM

The approbation maxim is realized through the redirection of positive evaluation away from the self toward others or external elements.

> **Laufey:** *Great line! Great line. It's so fun to sing live as well.*

In this example, praise is directed toward the lyric rather than the performer. This evaluative shift suggests that the speaker actively avoids becoming the focal point of admiration. Such a pattern indicates that approbation functions as a strategy of deflecting self-centeredness while maintaining engagement in the interaction.

This becomes more explicit in moments of direct admiration:

> **Brittany**: *So, I'm honestly such a fan, I'm trying to hold it in.*
>
> **Laufey:** *No, no, no, I'm a fan, I'm trying to hold it in. I'm like kind of nervous, I'm sweating.*

Here, Laufey reverses the direction of admiration and introduces self-deprecating elements. This response reduces hierarchical distance and constructs a more symmetrical interactional relationship. From a Goffmanian perspective, this reflects a form of impression management where the speaker adjusts her interactional positioning and resists being positioned solely as an admired figure, instead performing a more reciprocal and approachable identity. By doing so, she maintains control over how admiration is received and reframed. Thus, the approbation maxim contributes to the construction of a relational persona, characterized by appreciation, humility, and interpersonal sensitivity.

AGREEMENT MAXIM

The agreement maxim is realized through expressions that align with the interlocutor's statements, reinforcing shared understanding.

> **Laufey:** *Exactly.*

> **Laufey:** *Exactly. And nothing's all up… it goes up and down.*

These utterances indicate active alignment, suggesting that agreement is used to sustain conversational flow and minimize potential conflict. However, beyond its interpersonal function, this pattern also reflects a broader self-presentational strategy. Through consistent alignment, Laufey positions herself as a cooperative and attentive participant, reinforcing a persona that values dialogue rather than dominance. This aligns with Goffman's notion of interaction as a collaborative performance, where speakers must coordinate their roles to maintain a coherent social situation.

In some cases, agreement is expressed indirectly:

> **Tom**: *…it's not the easiest thing to get into there as a musician.*

> **Laufey:** *It's definitely a remarkable place and I came from such a strict classical music world.*

Here, alignment is achieved through the evaluation of an external entity rather than explicit affirmation. This allows the speaker to agree without centering herself, thereby maintaining both harmony and modesty. Overall, the agreement maxim supports the construction of a socially attuned persona, emphasizing cooperation, responsiveness, and interactional balance.

TACT MAXIM

Although less frequent, the tact maxim plays a significant role in managing delicate interactional moments.

> **Tom**: *I don't want you to feel like you're in the conservatory right now.*

> **Laufey**: *Oh yeah, no, my God, it's so fine. I'm used to it.*

This response minimizes potential discomfort and reassures the interlocutor. Rather than emphasizing awkwardness, the speaker reframes the situation as manageable and unproblematic. From a self-presentation perspective, this reflects an effort to maintain a composed and adaptable front-stage identity. By downplaying potential tension, Laufey ensures that the interaction remains smooth and comfortable. This behavior demonstrates a high level of interactional awareness, where the speaker actively anticipates and mitigates potential disruptions. Thus, while less frequent, the tact maxim contributes to the construction of a persona that is socially aware, controlled, and emotionally stable.

POLITENESS AS SELF-PRESENTATION IN PODCAST DISCOURSE

The combined use of modesty, approbation, agreement, and tact reveals a consistent and systematic pattern of self-presentation in Laufey's podcast interactions. Rather than functioning independently, these strategies operate collectively as a coordinated system of impression management, through which the speaker regulates both interpersonal relations and public identity.

The dominance of the modesty maxim indicates a pattern of controlled self-disclosure, in which personal achievements are acknowledged but strategically downplayed. This allows the speaker to remain visible in the interaction without appearing self-promotional. At the same time, the use of approbation and agreement contributes to relational alignment, as the speaker consistently directs attention toward others and reinforces shared understanding. These strategies help maintain interactional balance and reduce potential asymmetry between the speaker and the interlocutor.

Meanwhile, the tact maxim plays a complementary role by ensuring interactional comfort, particularly in moments that could potentially disrupt the flow of conversation. By minimizing discomfort and reframing sensitive situations, the speaker maintains a stable and harmonious interactional environment.

From the perspective of Erving Goffman's framework of self-presentation, these patterns can be understood as part of a front-stage performance, in which the speaker actively manages how she is perceived by both the immediate interlocutor and the wider audience. The consistent use of these politeness strategies suggests that self-presentation in podcast discourse is not spontaneous, but strategically organized and interactionally achieved.

Taken together, these strategies construct a front-stage persona characterized by humility, relational warmth, cooperation, and emotional control. This persona reflects a careful balance between authenticity and performativity, where the speaker appears natural and sincere while still maintaining control over her public image.

These findings indicate that politeness in podcast discourse functions as a multifunctional communicative resource. It not only maintains social harmony at the interpersonal level but also enables speakers to shape how they are perceived in broader digital contexts. In this sense, politeness extends beyond normative language use and becomes a deliberate practice of identity construction, through which public figures negotiate credibility, relatability, and audience engagement in contemporary media environments.

CONSISTENCY OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES

Although this study involves two podcast interviews with differing interactional styles, the overall pattern of politeness strategy use remains consistent across both contexts. The realization of modesty, approbation, agreement, and tact appears in both Q with Tom Power and Royal Court with Brittany Broski, indicating that these strategies are not strongly dependent on situational variation but instead form a stable pattern of self-presentation.

This pattern suggests that the speaker maintains a relatively uniform approach to managing self-presentation, regardless of differences in communicative setting. While the tone and delivery of utterances may vary due to interactional dynamics, the underlying tendencies, such as minimizing self-praise, aligning with the interlocutor, and maintaining interactional comfort remain consistent.

From the perspective of Erving Goffman's framework, this indicates that the speaker sustains a coherent front-stage identity across multiple performances. Rather than fundamentally altering her self-presentation, Laufey adapts her linguistic expressions while preserving a consistent projected

persona. This finding reinforces the view that politeness strategies function not only as context-sensitive interactional tools but also as stable resources for identity construction. In this sense, politeness reflects a deliberate and sustained form of impression management, enabling the maintenance of a recognizable and coherent public identity across different instances of mediated interaction.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the realization of politeness maxims in 80 utterances produced by Laufey across two podcast interviews, identifying a total of 87 instances distributed across four types of maxims: modesty, approbation, agreement, and tact. Among these, the modesty maxim emerged as the most dominant, indicating a consistent tendency to minimize self-praise in public interaction.

The findings demonstrate that politeness strategies function not only to maintain interpersonal harmony but also as strategic resources for self-presentation. Through the consistent use of modesty, approbation, agreement, and tact, Laufey constructs a public persona characterized by humility, approachability, cooperation, and interactional sensitivity. These strategies operate systematically as forms of impression management, allowing the speaker to balance personal expression with socially appropriate conduct in a public communicative setting.

Furthermore, this study addresses the gap in previous research by showing that politeness strategies are not merely distributed patterns of language use, but function as meaningful and structured resources for managing public identity in digital discourse. The findings suggest that the use of politeness remains relatively consistent across different interactional contexts, indicating that such strategies contribute to the maintenance of a coherent and recognizable public persona.

By integrating Leech's politeness principles with Erving Goffman's framework of self-presentation, this study highlights how linguistic choices operate simultaneously at the interpersonal and performative levels. In this sense, politeness extends beyond its traditional role as a means of maintaining social harmony and becomes a key mechanism in the construction and regulation of identity in contemporary media environments.

However, this study is limited to a relatively small dataset and focuses on a single public figure within podcast discourse. Future research may expand the scope by examining a wider range of speakers, platforms, or cultural contexts to further explore how politeness strategies function across different forms of digital communication.

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Representing Trauma Through Fragmented Memory in Charlotte Wells' Aftersun (2022): A Caruthian Analysis

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Abstract

Trauma is often represented in films through memory, emotional distance, and fragmented storytelling rather than direct explanation. This study aims to analyze how trauma is represented through fragmented memory in Charlotte Wells' *Aftersun* (2022) by using Cathy Caruth's trauma theory. The study applies a qualitative descriptive method with a film studies approach. The primary data source is *Aftersun* (2022), while the data consists of scenes, dialogues, visual elements, and cinematic techniques related to trauma representation. The data were collected through repeated viewing, note-taking, and scene selection. The analysis focuses on Caruth's concepts of unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition. The findings show that trauma in *Aftersun* (2022) is represented through fragmented memories that gradually reveal emotional meaning. Through the use of camcorder footage, silence, visual repetition, spatial separation, and fragmented editing, the film portrays trauma as an unresolved experience that cannot be fully understood when it occurs. The study also finds that Sophie reconstructs her understanding of her father through retrospective interpretation, allowing traumatic meaning to emerge over time. Therefore, *Aftersun* (2022) represents trauma not through direct narrative explanation but through fragmented memory and cinematic form.

Keywords: Trauma, Fragmented Memory, Cathy Caruth, Aftersun, Film Studies

INTRODUCTION

Trauma is one of the psychological experiences that is frequently represented in films. However, trauma is often difficult to express directly because traumatic experiences may not be fully understood when they occur. Rather than simply reflecting reality, film represents psychological experiences by constructing meaning through narrative and visual forms (Hall, 2019). Instead of presenting trauma through explicit explanation, filmmakers often use memory, silence, emotional distance, and fragmented storytelling to portray its effects. Through cinematic techniques such as editing, framing, lighting, and sound, films are able to represent psychological experiences that cannot always be communicated through dialogue (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019).

One film that explores trauma and memory in a unique way is Charlotte Wells' *Aftersun* (2022). The film tells the story of Sophie as she recalls a holiday she spent with her father, Calum, at a Turkish resort when she was eleven years old. Rather than presenting the story in a linear structure, Wells combines childhood memories, camcorder recordings, and fragmented

visual sequences that blur the boundary between past and present. As the film progresses, viewers gradually realize that Sophie is attempting to understand aspects of her father's emotional struggles that she could not fully comprehend during childhood. This fragmented narrative structure makes *Aftersun* an interesting object for trauma studies.

Previous studies have examined *Aftersun* from different perspectives. Whitehouse (2025) discusses nostalgia as a therapeutic tool that allows individuals to reconnect with the past. Alari (2025) focuses on analogue aesthetics and the role of recorded media in shaping memory. Ningsih, Amelia, and Pasang (2024) analyze identity issues through framing techniques, while Kotaman (2025) explores remembrance as a narrative strategy. In addition, Apriliana and Tandyonomanu (2023) examine the representation of depression in the film. These studies contribute to the understanding of memory, identity, nostalgia, and mental health in *Aftersun*. However, they do not specifically focus on how trauma is represented through fragmented memory.

Although previous studies have examined *Aftersun* from the perspectives of nostalgia, memory, identity, and depression, limited attention has been given to the representation of trauma through fragmented memory. Most studies focus on the emotional atmosphere of the film or its visual aesthetics rather than examining how cinematic techniques represent traumatic experience. Therefore, this study focuses on trauma representation by applying Cathy Caruth's trauma theory to analyze how fragmented memory functions throughout the film.

Memory scholars have also emphasized that remembering is not a fixed reproduction of past events, but a reconstructive process shaped by later interpretation and cultural context (Erll, 2017; Radstone, 2017). These perspectives help explain why memories often change over time as individuals reinterpret past experiences. However, while memory studies provide a broader understanding of recollection, this study adopts Cathy Caruth's trauma theory because it specifically explains how traumatic experiences emerge through delayed understanding, fragmentation, and repetition.

Cathy Caruth is one of the most influential scholars in trauma studies. According to Caruth (1996), trauma is not simply a response to a shocking event, but an experience that cannot be fully understood when it occurs. Because of this delayed understanding, trauma often returns through fragmented memories, repetition, and indirect recollection. Caruth introduces several concepts related to trauma, including unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition.

These concepts explain how traumatic experiences continue to affect individuals long after the original event has passed. In film studies, Caruth's theory is frequently used to examine how trauma is represented through narrative structure, memory, and visual storytelling.

To address this gap, this study applies Cathy Caruth's trauma theory. According to Caruth, trauma is not fully experienced at the moment it occurs. Instead, it returns later through fragmented memories, repetition, and delayed understanding. Caruth explains trauma through several important concepts, including unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition. These concepts are relevant to *Aftersun* because the film presents memories that are incomplete, emotionally ambiguous, and continuously revisited by the protagonist.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze how trauma is represented through fragmented memory in Charlotte Wells' *Aftersun* (2022) using Cathy Caruth's trauma theory.

The research question of this study is:

How is trauma represented through fragmented memory in Charlotte Wells' *Aftersun* (2022) based on Cathy Caruth's trauma theory?

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the representation of trauma in Charlotte Wells' *Aftersun* (2022). A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study focuses on interpreting meanings, emotions, and cinematic representations rather than examining numerical data. In addition, this study applies a film studies approach since the object of analysis is a film. Therefore, the analysis focuses not only on the narrative but also on cinematic elements such as editing, framing, lighting, silence, visual composition, and temporality. These cinematic elements are treated as meaningful components of film language through which psychological experiences can be communicated beyond spoken dialogue (Monaco, 2009).

The primary data source of this study is *Aftersun* (2022), directed by Charlotte Wells. The data consists of scenes, visual images, dialogues, and cinematic techniques that represent trauma and fragmented memory throughout the film. The seven analyzed scenes were selected through purposive sampling because they most explicitly illustrate Cathy Caruth's concepts of unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition. The selection was based on the presence of significant cinematic elements, including fragmented editing, visual repetition, silence, spatial separation, and temporal shifts, which directly contribute to the representation of trauma. Scenes that did not provide sufficient evidence of these concepts were excluded from detailed analysis.

The data were collected through repeated viewing of the film, note-taking, and scene documentation. During the viewing process, scenes related to trauma representation were identified and recorded. Screenshots and timecodes were also documented to support the analysis.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis, the selected scenes and their interpretations were discussed with the research supervisor through peer debriefing. This process helped ensure that the interpretation remained consistent with Cathy Caruth's theoretical framework while reducing excessive subjective bias. In addition, repeated viewing of the film and cross-checking among visual elements, dialogue, and narrative context were employed to maintain analytical consistency throughout the study.

The data were analyzed using Cathy Caruth's trauma theory, particularly the concepts of unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition. The analysis began by identifying scenes that represent fragmented memory and emotional ambiguity. The selected scenes were then interpreted in relation to Caruth's concepts to examine how trauma is represented through cinematic language. Each scene was coded according to the Caruth's concept that most strongly characterized its representation of trauma before being interpreted in relation to the film's cinematic elements. Finally, the findings were organized according to the three concepts of trauma theory to explain how fragmented memory functions as the primary medium through which trauma is represented in *Aftersun* (2022).

Since this study is based on a qualitative interpretation of a single film, the findings are inherently interpretive and cannot be generalized beyond the context of *Aftersun* (2022).

Nevertheless, the study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of trauma representation through fragmented memory within the selected cinematic text.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Trauma Representation Through Fragmented Memory

The analysis shows that trauma in *Aftersun* (2022) is represented through fragmented memory rather than direct narrative explanation. Instead of presenting a clear traumatic event, Charlotte Wells constructs trauma through incomplete recollections, emotional ambiguity, and recurring visual patterns. Sophie's memories of her holiday with Calum are presented through camcorder recordings, fragmented editing, silence, and temporal shifts that blur the boundary between past and present. These cinematic elements reflect Cathy Caruth's view that trauma often resists direct representation and can only be understood through fragmented recollection.

The findings are organized into three concepts proposed by Caruth: unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition.

Unclaimed Experience

According to Caruth, traumatic experiences are often not fully understood when they occur. Their emotional significance emerges later through memory and reflection. In *Aftersun*, this concept is represented through several moments in which Sophie witnesses changes in Calum's behavior but cannot fully understand their meaning during childhood.

Figure 1. Calum on the balcony at night (00.08.34 - 00.10.29).

One example can be found in the balcony scene, where Calum stands alone outside the hotel room while Sophie sleeps inside. The scene contains minimal dialogue and relies heavily on silence, framing, and body language. Although nothing explicitly dramatic occurs, the visual separation between Calum and Sophie suggests emotional isolation. At the time of the holiday,

Sophie does not recognize the emotional significance of the moment. However, when the memory is revisited from an adult perspective, the scene acquires a deeper emotional meaning and appears to reflect Calum's psychological struggle.

Another example appears in the recurring camcorder recordings. The footage captures seemingly ordinary moments between Sophie and Calum, such as conversations and shared activities. However, these recordings do not reveal Calum's internal condition directly. Instead, they preserve fragments of experience that only gain traumatic significance when Sophie revisits them years later. The recordings therefore function as incomplete memories that require retrospective interpretation.

Figure 2. Sophie recorded her moments with Calum using a camcorder (00.24.07 - 00.24.31).

These scenes demonstrate Caruth's concept of unclaimed experience because the emotional meaning of the events is not fully understood when they occur. Trauma emerges later through reflection, allowing Sophie to reinterpret moments that once appeared ordinary.

Belatedness

Another important concept in Caruth's trauma theory is belatedness. According to Caruth, trauma is often understood only after the event has passed. The emotional meaning of an experience does not emerge immediately but returns later through memory and reflection. In *Aftersun*, belatedness is represented through Sophie's attempt to reconstruct and reinterpret memories of her father from an adult perspective.

Figure 3. Adult Sophie tries to reach Calum in a nightclub (01.30.35 - 01.30.52).

One of the clearest representations of belatedness appears in the nightclub sequences. These scenes are visually different from the rest of the film, featuring flashing lights, fragmented editing, blurred imagery, and unstable continuity. Throughout these sequences, Sophie repeatedly tries to approach Calum but never fully reaches him. His appearance within the frame is brief and inconsistent, creating a sense of emotional distance and uncertainty. Rather than functioning as a realistic location, the nightclub becomes a psychological space where memory, longing, and trauma overlap.

The nightclub sequences also blur the boundary between past and present. Through fragmented editing, adult Sophie and memories of her childhood become emotionally connected within the same visual space. This suggests that trauma continues to affect Sophie long after the holiday has ended. The delayed understanding of her father's emotional condition reflects Caruth's idea that traumatic meaning emerges retrospectively rather than at the moment of experience.

Figure 4. Adult Sophie watching her moments with Calum (01.33.35 - 01.34.29).

Belatedness is also represented through Sophie's repeated viewing of camcorder recordings from the holiday. Although the footage remains unchanged, Sophie's interpretation of it changes over time. Small details that once appeared ordinary gradually acquire emotional significance. Moments of silence, emotional withdrawal, and subtle changes in Calum's behavior become more noticeable when viewed from an adult perspective. As a result, memory functions not as a fixed record of the past but as an evolving process of emotional interpretation.

Through these examples, *Aftersun* (2022) demonstrates that trauma is not fully understood when it occurs. Instead, its meaning emerges gradually through retrospective reflection, supporting Caruth's concept of belatedness.

Repetition

The final concept used in this study is repetition. Caruth argues that trauma often returns repeatedly through memories, images, and emotional patterns. Rather than remaining in the past, traumatic experiences continue to resurface in the present. In *Aftersun* (2022), repetition is represented through recurring visual motifs, repeated emotional patterns, and cyclical narrative structures.

Figure 5. Calum pushes Adult Sophie as she tries to hug him (01.30.59 - 01.31.52).

One example of repetition can be seen in the nightclub sequences also demonstrate repetition. Each time the sequences appear, Sophie attempts to reach Calum but ultimately fails. The same emotional pattern is repeated through flashing lights, fragmented cuts, and disrupted movement. This repetition creates a cyclical structure that prevents emotional resolution and suggests that Sophie remains trapped within an unresolved memory. The repeated inability to reach Calum symbolizes the difficulty of fully understanding the past.

Figure 6. Calum recorded Sophie using a camcorder (00.12.44 - 00.13.05).

Another representation of repetition appears in the recurring camcorder footage. Earlier in the analysis, the recordings were discussed in relation to Sophie's delayed recognition of her father's emotional condition. Here, however, the emphasis shifts to their repeated recurrence across the film, through which Wells continually returns the audience to the same unresolved memories.

Throughout the film, Wells repeatedly returns to recordings of Sophie and Calum during their holiday. However, these repeated images do not provide new information or narrative closure. Instead, each return to the footage reinforces the incompleteness of memory and highlights Sophie's continued effort to understand her father. The footage gradually functions

less as a record of the past and more as a recurring reminder of an unresolved emotional experience.

Figure 7. Reflection as form from different perspectives (00.57.57 - 00.58.04).

The film further reinforces repetition through the use of mirrors and reflective imagery. Reflections appear throughout the narrative and often present fragmented or unstable images rather than clear representations. These visual motifs emphasize the idea that memory is incomplete and continuously revisited from different perspectives. As a result, repetition in *Aftersun* (2022) functions as a cinematic representation of trauma's persistence, showing how unresolved experiences continue to resurface over time.

The findings indicate that trauma in *Aftersun* (2022) is represented through fragmented memory rather than through direct narrative explanation. By applying Cathy Caruth's concepts of unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition, this study demonstrates that trauma in the film emerges through a gradual process of remembering and reinterpretation rather than through a single identifiable traumatic event.

Sophie's childhood perspective reflects ***unclaimed experience***, as she is unable to fully understand her father's emotional struggles at the time they occur. This delayed understanding develops into ***belatedness***, where memories are reinterpreted from adulthood through recurring nightclub sequences and camcorder recordings, allowing traumatic meaning to emerge retrospectively. At the same time, ***repetition*** is conveyed through recurring visual motifs, emotional silences, fragmented editing, and repeated returns to the same memories, emphasizing that unresolved trauma continues to resurface instead of reaching narrative closure. Together, these three concepts demonstrate that trauma in *Aftersun* is represented not as a single event but as an evolving psychological experience reconstructed through fragmented memory.

An important finding of this study is that cinematic techniques play a significant role in representing trauma. Fragmented editing, visual repetition, spatial separation, silence, and unstable temporality communicate psychological experiences without relying on explicit

dialogue or exposition. These techniques position the audience within Sophie's perspective, encouraging viewers to experience the same uncertainty and emotional ambiguity that characterize traumatic memory. Consequently, cinematic form functions not merely as an aesthetic choice but as the primary medium through which traumatic experience is represented and interpreted.

The findings of this study also extend previous scholarship on *Aftersun* by offering a distinct perspective on the film's fragmented narrative. Whitehouse (2025) interprets *Aftersun* through nostalgia as a therapeutic process, while Alari (2025) emphasizes the role of analogue aesthetics and recorded media in shaping memory. Likewise, Ningsih et al. (2024) examine the film through identity construction, Kotaman (2025) focuses on remembrance as a narrative strategy, and Apriliana and Tandyonomanu (2023) analyse the representation of depression. Rather than approaching fragmented memory primarily as an expression of nostalgia, identity, or mental health, the present study demonstrates that these cinematic elements also function as representations of trauma when interpreted through Caruth's concepts of unclaimed experience, belatedness, and repetition. This finding suggests that the film's fragmented form is not merely an aesthetic or narrative choice but a cinematic strategy through which unresolved trauma is communicated and gradually reconstructed by both the protagonist and the audience.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how trauma is represented through fragmented memory in Charlotte Wells' *Aftersun* (2022) by applying Cathy Caruth's trauma theory. The findings demonstrate that trauma is represented not through direct narrative explanation but through fragmented recollections, emotional ambiguity, and recurring cinematic patterns. Through the concepts of ***unclaimed experience***, ***belatedness***, and ***repetition***, the film portrays trauma as an unresolved psychological experience whose meaning gradually emerges through memory and retrospective interpretation. Rather than depicting a single traumatic event, *Aftersun* constructs trauma through fragmented editing, visual repetition, silence, spatial separation, and temporal discontinuity, allowing traumatic meaning to emerge gradually through cinematic form.

Beyond addressing a gap in previous *Aftersun* scholarship, this study demonstrates that fragmented cinematic form functions not merely as an aesthetic style but as a medium through

which traumatic experience is represented. By applying Caruth's trauma theory, the study highlights how cinematic language can communicate psychological experiences that resist direct representation and therefore contributes to broader discussions in trauma studies and film studies. Future research may extend this approach by comparing trauma representation across multiple contemporary films or by integrating Caruth's framework with broader memory theories to further examine the relationship between trauma, memory, and cinematic form.

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The Effectiveness of the Baamboozle Game Strategy on Vocabulary Mastery among Seventh-Grade Students of MTs Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda

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Abstract

This research aimed to examine whether the Baamboozle game strategy is effective on the vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students of MTs. Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda in academic year 2025/2026. This research employed a quantitative experimental design. The population consisted of seventh-grade students of MTs. Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda. The sample was divided into two classes, namely class VII-B as the experimental class and class VII-A as the control class. Each class consisted of 16 students. The instrument used in this research was a test in the form of multiple-choice questions administered through pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed using the normality test, homogeneity test, and hypothesis test (independent sample t-test) to determine whether there was a significant difference between both classes. The finding showed that the mean score of the experimental class in the pre-test was 44.75 and increased to 72.50 in the post-test. Meanwhile, the control class obtained a pre-test mean score of 55.00 and the post-test mean score of 63.25. The result of the independent sample t-test showed a significance value of 0.037, which is lower than 0.05. Therefore, the H0 was rejected and Ha was accepted. It indicated that the use of the Baamboozle game strategy had a statistically significant effect on the vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students of MTs. Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda in academic year 2025/2026.
Keywords: Effectiveness, Baamboozle Game, Vocabulary Mastery.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary mastery is one of the fundamental components in learning English because it serves as the basis for developing the four language skills (Suryanto et al., 2021). A limited vocabulary may hinder learners from understanding texts, expressing ideas, and comprehending spoken language effectively (Zeng et al., 2025). However, vocabulary learning is still considered challenged because learners often experience difficulties in memorizing new words and maintaining motivation during the learning process (Telaumbanua et al., 2024). As a result, their capacity to comprehend and use English thoroughly remains limited. Therefore, appropriate and engaging learning strategies are needed to support vocabulary mastery more effectively.

In the contemporary educational landscape, technological developments have encouraged teachers to implement more innovative and interactive teaching methods (Zou et al., 2025). Conventional teaching techniques are gradually being integrated with digital learning platforms to create more engaging classroom activities (Sinaga et al., 2024). Teachers can use a method known as Game-Based Learning (GBL), which utilizes game elements such as challenges, rewards, and

competition to increase student engagement and retention (Jihan & Maharsi, 2024). Learning through games encourages interaction, cooperation, and teamwork (Rahman, 2022).

One of the digital platforms that supports the implementation of Game-Based Learning (GBL) is Baamboozle, a quiz-based platform designed to create a more engaging and interactive learning environment (Alawiyah, 2025). The platform is adaptable and suitable for both online and offline classroom teaching (Krisbiantoro, 2020). Therefore, the use of Baamboozle can become a creative way to enhance vocabulary mastery, reduce learning boredom, and encourage active classroom participation.

Several previous studies have investigated the use of Baamboozle in English language learning. Previous research found that Baamboozle effectively increased students' motivation and created a more enjoyable learning process (Gurning, 2024). Similarly, the use of Baamboozle was reported to improve students' academic achievement in English subjects (Susanti et al., 2024). In addition, the implementation of Baamboozle as an evaluation medium positively affected students' English learning outcomes and increased classroom engagement (Murti et al., 2023). These findings indicate that Baamboozle has potential benefits in supporting English learning activities.

However, previous studies have mainly focused on students' motivation and general English achievement rather than specifically examining vocabulary mastery. Thus, limited studies have examined the effectiveness of the Baamboozle game strategy on vocabulary mastery among junior high school students. This issue is particularly important because vocabulary mastery serves as the foundation for developing other English language skills. Furthermore, learning activities at MTs Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda still rely heavily on textbooks and have not fully utilized interactive learning media in classroom instruction. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate whether the implementation of the Baamboozle game strategy can effectively improve students' vocabulary mastery.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design involving an experimental group and a control group. The study was conducted at MTs Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda in the academic year 2025/2026 to examine the effectiveness of the Baamboozle game strategy on students' vocabulary mastery. The population of this study consisted of all seventh-grade students at MTs Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda, totaling 32 students. The sample was selected using purposive sampling because the researcher specifically chose the two available seventh-grade classes that were considered suitable for the research objectives. Class VII-B was assigned as the experimental gorup

and class VII-A was assigned as the control group, with 16 students in each class. The experimental group received treatment using the Baamboozle game strategy, while the control group was taught using conventional teaching methods.

The instrument used in this study was a vocabulary test consisting of 25 multiple-choice questions administered through pre-test and post-test to measure students' vocabulary mastery before and after the treatment. Data were collected through three stages, namely pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS version 25. Before testing the hypothesis, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the quality of instrument. Furthermore, normality and homogeneity tests were conducted before the hypothesis testing to ensure that the data met the required assumptions. The hypothesis was tested using an independent sample t-test to determine whether there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups.

RESULTS

In order to assess whether there was a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after the treatment was implemented, the pre-test and post-test scores of both the experimental and control classes were analyzed. The data were first described using descriptive statistics. The results are presented as follows:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Control	16	48	32	80	55.00	14.569
Post-test Control	16	44	44	88	63.25	13.163
Pre-test Experiment	16	40	28	68	44.75	12.583
Post-test Experiment	16	36	56	92	72.50	10.621
Valid N (listwise)	16					

The descriptive statistics showed that the control class obtained a mean score of 55.00 in the pre-test and increased to 63.25 in the post-test. Meanwhile, the experimental class improved from 44.75 in the pre-test to 72.50 in the post-test. The minimum and maximum scores in both classes also increased after the learning process. However, the improvement in the experimental class was higher than that of the control class, indicating that the use of the Baamboozle game strategy contributed positively to students' vocabulary mastery.

Before conducting further statistical analysis, it was necessary to examine whether the distribution of the data met the assumption of normality. The data were considered normal if the

significance value was greater than 0.05. The results obtained from the normality test are presented below:

Table 2. Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test Control	.160	16	.200*	.940	16	.349
Post-test Control	.209	16	.060	.929	16	.232
Pre-test Experiment	.211	16	.055	.910	16	.118
Post-test Experiment	.163	16	.200*	.937	16	.316

The results of the normality test showed that the significance values of the pre-test and post-test scores in both classes were greater than 0.05. The pre-test of the control class obtained a significance value of 0.349, while the post-test was 0.232. In the experimental class, the pre-test significance value was 0.118 and the post-test was 0.316. Since all significance values were higher than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data were normally distributed.

After confirming that the data is normally distributed, further analysis is conducted to examine whether the variances of the experimental group and the control group are the same. The data were considered homogeneous if the significance value was greater than 0.05. The results obtained from the homogeneity test are presented below:

Table 3. Homogeneity Test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Score	Based on Mean	1.193	1	30	.283
	Based on Median	1.141	1	30	.294
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.141	1	29.294	.294
	Based on trimmed mean	1.220	1	30	.278

Based on the result of Levene's Test, the significance values of all data were higher than 0.05. It indicates that there was no significant difference in variance between the groups. Therefore, the data were homogeneous and fulfilled the assumption for conducting the hypothesis test.

The hypothesis testing aimed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the students who were taught using the treatment and those who were taught using the conventional method. The decision of hypothesis testing was based on the level of significance. If the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. Conversely, if the significance value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
						Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df				Lower	Upper
Score	Equal variances assumed	1.193	.283	-2.188	30	.037	-9.250	4.228	-17.885	-.615
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.188	28.717	.037	-9.250	4.228	-17.902	-.598

Based on the results of the Independent Sample T-Test shows that the Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.037, which is lower than 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. The general overview of the data distribution in each group is as follows:

Table 5. Group Statistics

Group Statistics					
	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score	PostTest Control	16	63.25	13.163	3.291
	PostTest Experiment	16	72.50	10.621	2.655

The group statistics show that the experimental class obtained a higher mean score than the control class in the post-test. The experimental group achieved a mean score of 72.50, while the control group obtained 63.25. This indicates that students who were taught using the Baamboozle game strategy demonstrated better vocabulary performance compared to those who received conventional instruction, suggesting that the implementation of the Baamboozle game strategy had a meaningful effect on students' vocabulary mastery.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of this research, the pre-test results showed that the control class obtained a mean score of 55.00 while the experimental class obtained a mean score of 44.75, indicating that the experimental group started with lower vocabulary mastery. After the treatment, both groups showed improvement in the post-test results. However, the experimental class achieved

a higher mean score of 72.50 compared to 63.25 in the control class. This result indicates that the use of the Baamboozle game strategy contributed to greater improvement in students' vocabulary mastery.

The findings of this research support Nation's theory of vocabulary mastery, which emphasizes that vocabulary learning involves understanding word meaning and using words appropriately in context (Nation, 2006). Through the Baamboozle game strategy, students were encouraged to interact with words actively through contextual and interactive activities rather than relying only on memorization. The findings also align with Schmitt's theory, which highlights the importance of repeated exposure and meaningful interaction in strengthening vocabulary knowledge (Schmitt, 2008). The interactive and collaborative nature of Baamboozle provided students with opportunities to practice vocabulary repeatedly in an enjoyable learning environment.

This finding is consistent with previous studies conducted by Aryansyah (2024), which reported that the use of Baamboozle significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery and created a more engaging classroom environment. Similarly, Walidaina et al. (2024) found that the implementation of Baamboozle encouraged active participation and positive classroom interaction during the learning process. In addition, Vasya et al. (2025) concluded that the use of Baamboozle provide significant benefits in English learning by creating a more adaptive and supportive learning environment. These previous findings support the present research and indicate that Baamboozle can serve as an effective instructional strategy for improving students' vocabulary mastery at the junior high school level.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed a statistically significant effect of the Baamboozle game strategy on students' vocabulary mastery. The independent sample t-test showed a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.037, which is lower than 0.05, indicating a significant difference between the experimental and control groups after the treatment. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. The experimental group demonstrated greater improvement than the control group, suggesting that the Baamboozle game strategy positively contributes to students' vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students of MTs. Al-Mujahidin 1 Samarinda in the academic year 2025/2026.

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A Study of Alex Rose's Self Actualisation in *The Life List* (2025) Using Kaufman's Theory

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Abstract

This article examines Alex Rose's self-actualisation journey in Adam Brooks's film *The Life List* (2025) through Scott Barry Kaufman's contemporary theory of human needs. The study focuses on how Alex's internal conflicts create tensions between security needs and growth needs, and how her development later moves toward transcendence. Using a qualitative film analysis and close reading method, the data were taken from selected dialogues, scenes, subtitles, and narrative events that reveal Alex's psychological development. The analysis shows that Alex's dependence on her mother, fear of leaving her comfort zone, identity crisis after learning the truth about her biological father, disappointment with Johnny, and conflict with Garrett function as turning points in her movement toward self-understanding. These conflicts reveal unstable security needs, especially safety, connection, and self-esteem, while gradually opening the possibility of growth through exploration, love, and purpose. The article further finds that Alex's journey does not end in personal fulfilment. Her growth develops toward transcendence when she shares her mother's messages with her brothers, reconciles with Samuel, accepts grief, and forms a broader community of love and meaning. The film therefore represents self-actualisation as a dynamic, relational, and non-linear process rather than a final achievement.

Keywords: self-actualisation; transcendence; internal conflict

INTRODUCTION

Film has increasingly become a productive object of literary and cultural analysis because it presents character, conflict, and psychological development through narrative, dialogue, visual situation, and performance. Like literary texts, films can represent the inner life of characters and invite viewers to interpret emotional experiences as part of a broader human condition. Studies of film in literary contexts therefore do not only examine plot, genre, or entertainment value, but also the ways in which narrative constructs identity, desire, grief, and personal transformation (Dwi Hutami & Max, 2023; Leite et al., 2021). This perspective is relevant to *The Life List* (2025), a romantic comedy-drama directed by Adam Brooks, because the film is centred on Alex Rose, a young woman who is forced to reconsider her life after the death of her mother and after receiving a childhood list of dreams that she must complete.

The Life List follows Alex as she faces grief, family secrets, romantic uncertainty, and the pressure to build a life that feels more honest to herself. The premise of completing a list of childhood dreams may initially seem simple, but the narrative gradually turns the list into a psychological instrument. It forces Alex to confront the distance between the life she has been living and the life she once imagined for herself. The film is therefore not only about completing

tasks, but also about the process of recognizing fear, dependency, avoidance, self-doubt, and the desire to be loved without losing the self. These aspects make the film suitable for a psychological reading of character development.

The concept of self-actualisation is useful for understanding Alex's development. In classical humanistic psychology, self-actualisation refers to the process of becoming fully oneself and realizing one's potential. However, contemporary scholarship has questioned the view that human needs develop in a fixed and hierarchical sequence. Kaufman (2018, 2020), in particular, revisits Maslow's theory and proposes the sailboat model of needs. In this model, psychological development is shaped by the interaction between security and growth. Security includes safety, connection, and self-esteem, while growth includes exploration, love, and purpose. Rather than describing self-actualisation as a final stage, Kaufman presents it as an ongoing and dynamic process that continues to be influenced by life events, relationships, emotions, and adversity.

Kaufman's framework is particularly appropriate for reading Alex Rose because the film does not portray her development as a clean movement from weakness to success. Alex grows while still grieving, doubting herself, longing for validation, and fearing rejection. Her security needs are repeatedly disrupted: she loses the emotional presence of her mother, questions her belonging in the family, and experiences disappointment in romantic and biological relationships. At the same time, these disruptions push her toward growth. She explores uncomfortable truths, learns to choose a more authentic form of love, and finds purpose through teaching and meaningful relationships. Her journey shows that self-actualisation does not require the absence of insecurity; it develops through the negotiation between the need to feel safe and the need to move forward.

Another important dimension of the film is transcendence. For Kaufman (2020), self-actualisation can open into transcendence when personal growth moves beyond self-focus and becomes connected to meaning, love, contribution, and something larger than the individual. This idea is also connected to studies of meaning and well-being that emphasize relatedness, beneficence, and the capacity to move beyond narrow self-interest (Martela & Ryan, 2016; Wong, 2016). In *The Life List*, Alex's development does not end when she becomes more confident or finds romantic love. It continues when she learns to reinterpret her mother's love, share emotional healing with her brothers, reconcile with Samuel, and accept grief as part of a meaningful life. Thus, the film connects self-actualisation with relational healing and acceptance.

Previous studies on self-actualisation in literature and film have often focused on ambition, career development, moral growth, resilience, or the fulfilment of personal potential. Farid (2022), for example, examines self-actualisation through artistic ambition in Tick, Tick... Boom!, while Wicaksono (2024) discusses professional development and independence in The Devil Wears Prada. Fathurohman et al. (2023) emphasize interpersonal relationships and moral values in 12 Cerita Glen Anggara, whereas Roselyn and Koiri (2025) discuss family relationships and life reflection in How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies. Vidyarini (2021) analyses endurance and hope in Rita Hayworth and The Shawshank Redemption, and Putri et al. (2025) connect ambition, identity, and modern womanhood in The Queen's Gambit. These studies show that self-actualisation remains a relevant concept for character analysis, but they tend to understand it as achievement, aspiration, personal growth, or emotional resolution.

This article contributes to that discussion by focusing on the role of internal conflict as the force that drives self-actualisation and by extending the analysis toward transcendence. Instead of treating Alex's conflicts only as obstacles, this study reads them as psychological pressures that reveal her unmet needs and push her toward a more authentic life. The article asks two questions: first, how do Alex Rose's internal conflicts drive her movement toward self-actualisation in *The Life List*? Second, how does the film portray Alex's movement from self-actualisation toward transcendence? By answering these questions, this article argues that *The Life List* represents self-actualisation as a dynamic, non-linear, and relational process shaped by security, growth, and the capacity to move beyond personal fulfilment toward meaning, connection, and acceptance.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative film analysis method. The research design was interpretative because it aimed to understand the psychological development of a fictional character through selected narrative evidence rather than to measure data statistically. A psychological approach was applied to examine Alex Rose's inner conflicts, emotional responses, motivations, choices, and relationships as they are represented in the film. This approach is suitable because psychological readings of film can reveal how character development is shaped by inner experience, dialogue, and narrative context (Priyanti & Tustiawati, 2025).

The main source of data for this study was *The Life List* (2025) directed by Adam Brooks. The researcher rewatched the entire film several times to fully comprehend the story and to locate the scenes that are relevant to the psychological growth of Alex Rose. During this process, ten scenes that reflected security needs, growth needs, self-actualisation, and transcendence were initially identified. These scenes were then evaluated purposively based on their relevance to Kaufman's Sailboat model. After this evaluation, eight scenes that most clearly represented Alex Rose's progression toward self-actualisation were selected for detailed analysis, as presented in Table 1. Dialogues, subtitles, narrative events, and timings from selected scenes were used to create data, which have been analyzed from these scenes to provide analytical traceability.

The data collection process involved several stages. First, the film was watched closely to identify its overall narrative structure and Alex's major emotional turning points. Second, the dialogues and subtitles related to Alex's psychological development were noted. Third, the selected scenes were grouped according to Kaufman's sailboat model: security needs, growth needs, and the movement from self-actualisation toward transcendence. This process follows the logic of film analysis in which scenes, dialogue, and character behaviour become interpretative evidence for understanding narrative meaning (Leite et al., 2021; Masyitah et al., 2023).

The data were then analysed through close reading. The analysis first examined Alex's internal conflicts as tensions between the need to protect herself and the need to grow. It then interpreted the selected evidence through Kaufman's three security needs, namely safety, connection, and self-esteem, and three growth needs, namely exploration, love, and purpose. Finally, the study analysed the scenes that show Alex moving beyond personal fulfilment toward transcendence. The interpretation focused on meaning, relational healing, reconciliation, acceptance, and the way Alex's growth affects people around her.

RESULTS

The analysis produced three main findings. First, Alex Rose's internal conflicts functioned as the starting point of her movement toward self-actualisation. These conflicts were not merely emotional disturbances; they showed the instability of her security needs. Alex relied strongly on her mother for emotional safety, stayed close to familiar situations to avoid risk, questioned her identity after learning the truth about her father, felt rejected when Johnny did not appear, and realized that her relationship with Garrett required her to shrink parts of herself.

Each conflict exposed a tension between self-protection and the need to move toward a more truthful life.

Second, Alex's self-actualisation developed through the interaction between security and growth. Her safety need appeared in her tendency to remain in what felt familiar. Her connection need was shown through her desire to be accepted by her family and father figures. Her self-esteem need appeared in her negative self-perception and her need to feel capable. However, the film also showed the emergence of growth needs. Exploration appeared when Alex searched for Johnny despite fear. Love appeared when she chose a relationship with Brad that allowed her to be vulnerable and honest. Purpose appeared through her gradual recognition that teaching could become a meaningful role in her life.

Third, the film portrayed transcendence as a continuation of self-actualisation. Alex's development did not stop at self-recognition or personal happiness. It moved beyond the self when she shared her mother's DVDs with her brothers, reaccepted Samuel as her father, and participated in a final gathering that included family, friends, students, and Brad. These scenes showed that her growth had become relational. She did not simply become more confident; she learned to live with grief, preserve love, and create meaning with others.

Table 1. Selected narrative evidence and psychological categories in Alex Rose's development

No.	Scene / timestamp	Narrative evidence	Psychological category
1	Alex fears losing her mother (00:09:01-00:09:03)	Alex asks what she will do without her mother.	Connection and emotional security
2	Elizabeth says Alex has settled for what is safe (00:32:58-00:33:07)	Alex is confronted with her avoidance of risk and uncertainty.	Safety vs. exploration
3	Alex learns the truth about her father (00:45:50-00:46:13)	Alex questions who she is and whether she has been equally loved.	Connection and self-esteem
4	Johnny does not appear (01:31:57-01:33:04)	Alex feels rejected and realizes a stranger cannot fix her life.	Self-esteem and self-recognition
5	Alex confronts Garrett (01:36:02-01:37:03)	Alex says that her messy place, friends, and books are part of who she is.	Authenticity and love
6	Alex shares the DVDs with her brothers (01:43:25-01:44:52)	Her private grief becomes a space of family healing.	Transcendence

7	Alex calls Samuel Dad (01:44:53-01:45:17)	Alex accepts emotional fatherhood beyond biological certainty.	Acceptance and reconciliation
8	New Year gathering (01:54:33-01:56:34)	Alex is surrounded by family, friends, students, and Brad.	Meaning, belonging, and connection

Internal conflicts as the beginning of self-actualisation

Alex Rose's development begins with the loss of emotional certainty. The early scene in which Alex asks her mother, Elizabeth, what she will do without her reveals that her mother is not only a parent but also the centre of Alex's emotional security. In Kaufman's model, connection is part of the security system because people need to feel attached, accepted, and emotionally held before they can move toward healthier growth. Alex's question shows that she does not merely fear death; she fears the collapse of the emotional structure that has guided her life. This dependence does not make her weak in a simple sense. Rather, it indicates that her sense of safety has been organized around her mother's presence.

The list that Elizabeth leaves behind begins to disturb that dependence. When Elizabeth's recorded message tells Alex that she has been settling for what is safe, the film identifies one of Alex's deepest internal conflicts. Alex has chosen familiarity because it protects her from failure, rejection, and uncertainty. In Kaufman's terms, safety is necessary, but it becomes restrictive when it prevents movement toward exploration and purpose. The conflict therefore appears as a tension between security and growth. Alex wants emotional protection, but the life list repeatedly pushes her to enter situations that require risk. The list becomes a narrative device that turns her mother's absence into an active call toward growth.

The revelation about Alex's biological father intensifies this conflict. When Alex learns that Samuel is not her biological father, she asks who she is and wonders whether Samuel could have loved her the same way he loved her brothers. This moment is important because it shifts the conflict from grief to identity. The question is not only about family history; it is also about belonging and worth. Alex's connection need becomes unstable because she begins to doubt whether the family bond she trusted was real. Her self-esteem is also affected because she interprets the truth as possible evidence that she may have been less loved. In this sense, the film shows identity as relational: Alex's understanding of herself is deeply connected to how she believes she has been loved by others.

Alex's disappointment with Johnny further exposes the problem of external validation. After learning about her biological father, she hopes that meeting Johnny might fill the missing part of her identity. When he does not appear, she feels foolish and says that a stranger cannot

fix her life. The statement is painful but psychologically significant. It marks a shift from looking for completion outside the self to recognizing that validation from Johnny cannot become the basis of her worth. Kaufman's model helps clarify this movement. Alex's need for connection and self-esteem is real, but self-actualisation requires her to stop handing her sense of self to someone who is emotionally absent.

A similar realization occurs in her relationship with Garrett. Garrett represents comfort and stability, but he does not fully enter Alex's personal world. When Alex tells him that her messy place, friends, and books are part of who she is, she articulates a clearer sense of authenticity. This scene is one of the strongest signs of her movement toward self-actualisation because she recognizes that love should not require self-erasure. Alex has previously tried to remain acceptable, manageable, and safe, but here she refuses a relationship that cannot hold her whole self. Her internal conflict therefore produces growth: she moves from seeking approval to protecting her own truth.

Security and growth in Alex Rose's self-actualisation

Kaufman's sailboat model makes it possible to see that Alex's needs do not appear in a fixed order. Security and growth develop together, sometimes supporting each other and sometimes pulling Alex in different directions. The safety need is visible in Alex's tendency to choose what is predictable. She is not simply passive; she is trying to remain protected from emotional disruption. However, the film shows that excessive safety can produce stagnation. Elizabeth's message functions as a loving confrontation because it points out that Alex's safe choices have not allowed her to become herself.

Connection is the second security need that shapes Alex's development. At first, connection is fragile because Alex associates belonging with biological truth and romantic acceptance. The secret about Johnny makes her doubt Samuel's love, and Garrett's emotional distance makes her question whether she is accepted as a whole person. Yet connection is gradually repaired when Alex recognizes that family is built not only by blood but also by care, memory, and presence. Her return to Samuel as Dad is not a denial of biological truth. It is a more mature acceptance that emotional fatherhood can be meaningful even when the family story is complicated.

Self-esteem is also unsettled throughout Alex's journey. The film shows Alex describing herself through self-loathing and failure. She interprets disappointment as evidence that

something is wrong with her. This fragile self-esteem is important because it explains why she looks for reassurance from others. When Elizabeth's message tells her that she can become a great teacher, Alex receives a different mirror of herself. The message does not solve her insecurity, but it helps her imagine herself as capable and valuable. Her self-esteem begins to shift from external approval to a more internal recognition of her potential.

Growth, however, is what moves Alex forward. Exploration appears when she decides to search for Johnny. This decision is not presented as fearless. Alex panics when the meeting becomes real and almost withdraws. The scene matters because it shows exploration as something that can coexist with fear. Alex does not wait until she is fully secure before she moves; she moves while still afraid. This supports Kaufman's view that self-actualisation is dynamic rather than linear. People do not finish security and then begin growth. They often grow while trying to repair security.

Love appears as a growth need when Alex begins to distinguish between attachment and authentic love. Her relationship with Garrett provides a form of social stability, but it does not allow her to be fully herself. By contrast, her relationship with Brad develops through honesty, vulnerability, and emotional recognition. When Alex tells Brad that he helps her become her best self, the statement suggests that love has become a space for growth rather than a requirement to perform acceptability. Love in this sense is not merely romantic completion. It is a relational condition in which Alex can integrate the messy, grieving, creative, uncertain, and hopeful parts of herself.

Purpose appears through Alex's growing relationship with teaching. The life list initially feels like an obligation, but teaching turns it into a source of meaning. Alex begins to understand that her life is not only about recovering what she lost or completing what her mother assigned. She can also affect others. Her care for her student and her recognition of herself as a teacher show purpose as a movement beyond self-repair. This does not yet equal transcendence, but it prepares the ground for it because purpose helps Alex see that her growth can matter in the lives of others.

From self-actualisation to transcendence

Alex's self-actualisation becomes visible when she can name what is true about herself, choose love without self-erasure, and recognize a meaningful role in teaching. Yet the film does not end the journey there. It moves Alex toward transcendence, which, in Kaufman's framework, is connected to meaning, contribution, love, and a reduced focus on the isolated

self. Transcendence does not mean that Alex becomes free from grief. Rather, it means that grief is transformed into connection, memory, and shared meaning.

The first clear movement toward transcendence occurs when Alex shares Elizabeth's DVDs with her brothers. At the beginning, the DVDs seem to belong only to Alex. They are private messages that guide her through the life list and preserve her emotional connection with her mother. When she shares them, the meaning changes. The messages become a space where the family can grieve together. Alex's action shows that she is no longer only protecting her own relationship with Elizabeth. She recognizes that her brothers also need access to the mother's love, memory, and guidance. Her healing becomes shared healing.

The reconciliation with Samuel deepens this movement. After the secret about her biological father, Alex's anger is understandable because the truth has disturbed her sense of belonging. However, when she calls Samuel Dad again, she moves beyond the need for biological certainty as the only proof of family. This is not a simple return to the past. It is a new understanding of family as care, presence, commitment, and memory. The scene therefore represents transcendence because Alex's growth enables her to hold pain and love at the same time. She does not erase the wound, but she no longer allows it to be the only meaning of the relationship.

The final New Year gathering brings these strands together. Alex is surrounded by family, friends, students, Brad, and Samuel in her mother's house. The scene is not a fantasy of a life without loss. Elizabeth is still absent, family history remains imperfect, and Alex's future is not fully settled. However, the emotional meaning of the scene lies in Alex's ability to live within a broader circle of belonging. Her mother's love continues through the connections Alex now chooses to nurture. The film therefore portrays transcendence as a relational state: Alex's self-actualisation expands into family healing, acceptance, and a life shaped by meaning with others.

DISCUSSION

The findings support Kaufman's view that self-actualisation should be understood as a dynamic process rather than a final stage of human development. Alex does not reach self-actualisation by eliminating insecurity. Instead, her insecurity becomes part of the process. Her fear of losing her mother, her confusion about her father, her need for romantic acceptance, and

her self-doubt all become moments that reveal what she needs and what she has avoided. This pattern is consistent with Kaufman's sailboat model, which presents security and growth as interdependent systems rather than separate steps (Kaufman, 2018, 2020).

The study also suggests that internal conflict is not merely a narrative problem to be solved. In *The Life List*, internal conflict has a constructive psychological function. It exposes Alex's dependence on safety, fragile connection, and unstable self-esteem, but it also pushes her toward exploration, love, and purpose. This finding develops previous studies that have examined self-actualisation through ambition, career success, resilience, or interpersonal growth (Farid, 2022; Fathurohman et al., 2023; Roselyn & Koiri, 2025; Wicaksono, 2024). While those studies are valuable, the present article shows that self-actualisation in contemporary film can also be driven by grief, family secrets, emotional dependency, and the difficult work of accepting one's own truth.

The role of transcendence is another contribution of this study. Many readings of self-actualisation stop at the point where a character becomes independent, confident, or successful. *The Life List* complicates that pattern. Alex's development is not complete simply because she chooses a healthier relationship or finds a meaningful profession. The film extends her growth into the relational sphere. She shares her mother's messages, reconciles with Samuel, and participates in a community of love and memory. This movement supports Wong's (2016) argument that self-transcendence involves moving beyond narrow self-interest and connects with the idea that meaning and well-being are strengthened by relatedness and beneficence (Martela & Ryan, 2016).

This interpretation also clarifies why Alex's journey is non-linear. There are moments when she moves forward and moments when she retreats. She searches for Johnny but panics before meeting him. She wants love but recognizes that the wrong kind of love can reduce her. She is hurt by Samuel's secret yet eventually accepts him again. These movements show that self-actualisation is not a smooth rise toward fulfilment. It is a process of negotiating fear, truth, memory, and desire. In this respect, the film represents a contemporary understanding of human growth that is closer to the sailboat model than to a rigid pyramid of needs (Yu, 2026).

The discussion also points to the importance of maternal memory in the film. Elizabeth's DVDs are not simply plot devices or sentimental objects. They function as posthumous guidance that moves Alex from dependency to autonomy. At first, the messages continue Elizabeth's role as emotional anchor. Later, they encourage Alex to take responsibility for her

own life and eventually become a shared family memory. This transformation is significant because it shows that Alex does not overcome grief by forgetting her mother. Instead, she learns to carry her mother's love differently. The memory of Elizabeth becomes a source of connection rather than a reason to remain emotionally frozen.

The study has several limitations. It focuses only on Alex Rose as the main character and does not examine the development of supporting characters in detail. The analysis also prioritizes psychological development rather than cinematic techniques such as camera movement, colour, editing, sound, or mise-en-scene. Future studies may explore how film form contributes to the representation of grief and self-actualisation in *The Life List*. Other researchers may also examine Elizabeth, Samuel, Brad, Garrett, Johnny, Lucas, or Julian to understand how the film constructs family, romantic intimacy, and memory from multiple perspectives. In addition, trauma studies, psychoanalysis, or adaptation theory may offer different insights into the relationship between grief, identity, and the life list as a narrative object.

Although this study interprets Alex Rose's development as reflecting transcendence within Kaufman's sailboat model, alternative interpretations remain possible. The transformation of Alex is not just a transcendence, as her loss and uncertainty is not fully overcome by the end of the film, for some viewers it was more of an emotional recovery. However, in Kaufman's model, self-actualisation and transcendence are not considered a lack of suffering, but a continuous process of growth, making sense and connecting. Therefore, Alex's unresolved emotions do not contradict her psychological growth but instead demonstrate that personal development can coexist with continuing vulnerability.

CONCLUSION

This article concludes that *The Life List* portrays Alex Rose's self-actualisation as a conflictual, dynamic, and relational process. Alex's internal conflicts drive her toward self-actualisation because they expose the instability of her security needs and push her to confront what she has avoided. Her dependence on her mother, fear of leaving her comfort zone, identity crisis after learning about Johnny, disappointment with biological validation, and realization that she cannot shrink herself for love all become turning points. Through these conflicts, Alex gradually learns to choose honesty, self-worth, and authentic connection over fear and approval.

The film also shows that Alex's growth is shaped by Kaufman's security and growth needs. Safety, connection, and self-esteem explain why Alex initially seeks protection, belonging, and validation. Exploration, love, and purpose explain how she begins to move forward, accept uncertainty, choose a healthier relationship, and recognize teaching as a meaningful direction. Her self-actualisation is therefore not represented as perfection or final success, but as a gradual process of becoming more truthful about who she is and what kind of life she wants to live.

Finally, Alex's journey moves beyond self-actualisation toward transcendence. Her growth becomes transcendent when it extends into family healing, reconciliation, acceptance, and shared meaning. By sharing her mother's DVDs, accepting Samuel as her father, and joining a broader community at the end of the film, Alex learns to live with grief without being defined only by loss. *The Life List* thus suggests that becoming oneself is inseparable from learning how to love, remember, forgive, and belong with others.

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PATTERNS OF DIGITAL INTERACTION THROUGH TIKTOK REPOSTING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EMOTIONAL STATE OF GENERATION Z

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Abstract

The development of social media in the digital era has transformed patterns of social interaction, especially among Generation Z who have grown up with digital technology. TikTok, as a short-video-based platform, functions not only as an entertainment medium but also as a space for emotional expression and symbolic communication. One emerging form of interaction is reposting activity, which refers to resharing content perceived as relevant to users' personal emotional conditions. This study aims to analyze digital interaction patterns through TikTok reposting and their relationship with Generation Z's emotional conditions. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques including in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving five Generation Z informants who are active TikTok users. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, supported by source triangulation to ensure data validity. The findings reveal that reposting is not merely a content-sharing activity but carries deeper psychological meaning. It functions as indirect self-expression, emotional regulation, and a form of social validation seeking within digital spaces. Reposted content reflects users' emotional states such as sadness, anxiety, psychological pressure, as well as positive emotions. This activity generates psychological effects including emotional relief, social connectedness, and emotional fluctuations influenced by responses received from other users in social media environments.

Keywords: Digital, reposting, emotion, interaction, generationZ

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the contemporary digital era has brought fundamental changes in the pattern of human social interaction. Social media has become a new social space where individuals build identities, negotiate meaning, and express their psychological states dynamically. Generation Z as a group born and raised in a digital environment shows a high level of engagement in the use of social media, including short video-based platforms such as TikTok. The platform features a variety of interactive features that encourage active user participation in the production and distribution of digital content. One of the features that has increased usage is reposting , which is the activity of resharing other people's content as part of

participatory and reflective digital social interactions (Anderson & Jiang, 2019). This activity forms a new communication pattern that is more implicit and full of symbolic meaning.

Reposting on TikTok shows a transformation in the way individuals express themselves in the digital space. Generation Z tends to use reposted content as a medium of self-representation that is not always expressed directly through verbal language. The content chosen to reshare often reflects personal experiences, emotional states, and psychological dynamics that are being experienced. Reposting serves as a form of indirect communication that allows individuals to symbolically convey emotional messages to their social environment (Bayer et al., 2020). This shift suggests that digital interaction has evolved towards a more interpretive and subjective experience-based form of communication.

Along with the increasing intensity of TikTok use among Generation Z in recent years, there is a tendency that reposted content has a strong emotional charge. Content related to sadness, anxiety, interpersonal relationships, and reflection on life is the dominant part of repotting activities. This phenomenon indicates a link between reposting activities and individual emotional states. Reposting is a means to channel feelings that are difficult to express directly as well as an effort to gain social validation from the digital environment. In many situations, users expect that the content shared can be understood as a representation of the inner state they are experiencing (Nesi et al., 2021). This shows that digital activities have a significant emotional dimension.

The pattern of digital interaction through reposting is also closely related to the process of emotion regulation carried out by individuals. Generation Z shows a tendency to use social media as a means of managing emotions, both in the form of venting, seeking support, and self-reflection. Reposting content that is appropriate to certain emotional conditions can have psychological effects such as a sense of relief, connection, and strengthening of emotional experiences. This activity reflects a transformation in the mechanism of emotion regulation, where the digital space becomes an alternative medium in the process of processing emotions (Gross, 2022). These changes show that digital technology has an important role in shaping individual emotional adaptation patterns.

Digital interaction through reposting opens up opportunities for the formation of emotional relationships between users. Reshared content can trigger responses from other users in the form of comments, likes, or follow-up interactions that have implications for an individual's psychological state. Positive responses tend to reinforce feelings of acceptance and appreciation, while limited responses can lead to feelings of loneliness or unrecognition. These dynamics suggest that digital

interactions are closely related to the emotional well-being of individuals in daily life (Valkenburg et al., 2022).

The main problem in this phenomenon lies in the complexity of the meaning contained in the reposting activity that is not yet fully understood academically. Reposting activities are often seen as a simple act of using social media, even though there are complex and layered psychological processes within them. A lack of understanding of the emotional dimension in this activity has the potential to lead to the neglect of the individual's psychological state that is actually being expressed implicitly. In addition, the tendency to continue consuming and sharing emotional content can reinforce certain affective conditions repeatedly, potentially affecting emotional stability in the long term (Kross et al., 2021). This condition is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of the increasing use of TikTok among Generation Z.

Another problem that arises is the limitation of studies that specifically discuss reposting as a form of digital interaction that has an emotional dimension. Most studies focus more on the use of social media in general without examining specific practices that have a significant role in users' lives. Reposting as a form of symbolic communication is still relatively rarely analyzed in depth from the perspective of psychology and digital communication. In fact, this feature allows individuals to express their inner states indirectly and contextually, so it has high analytical value in understanding the emotional dynamics of Generation Z (O'Reilly et al., 2020). This limitation shows that there are research gaps that need to be filled through a more comprehensive study.

The development of TikTok's algorithm has also strengthened the digital interaction pattern that has been formed. Algorithms tend to display content that matches user preferences, including content with emotional content similar to those frequently consumed or posted. This condition has the potential to create a pattern of repetition of emotions in the digital space, where individuals are continuously exposed to certain types of emotions. In the long term, this situation can affect the way individuals interpret their emotional experiences as well as shape perceptions of social reality (Bayer et al., 2020). This shows that digital technology also shapes the structure of users' emotional experiences. The pattern of digital interaction through TikTok reposting has a complex relationship with the emotional state of Generation Z. This activity reflects a representation of the psychological dynamics that take place in individuals. This research is important to conduct in order to examine in depth the relationship between reposting as a digital interaction practice and the emotional condition of Generation Z in the context of contemporary social media developments (Smith, 2023). This study

is expected to contribute to the development of communication science and psychology and enrich understanding of the dynamics of interaction and emotions in the digital era.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type to understand in depth the patterns of digital interaction through TikTok reposting activities and their relationship with the emotional condition of Generation Z. This approach was chosen because it is able to explore subjective meanings, personal experiences, and how individuals interpret reposting activities as a form of emotional expression in digital life. The focus of the research is directed at how Generation Z interprets reposting, why they do it, and how the activity reflects the emotional state they are experiencing.

The research subjects are Generation Z who actively use TikTok and have experience reposting content. Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on certain criteria, such as the intensity of TikTok use and involvement in reposing activities. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews to explore the informants' emotional experiences, observations of digital activities, especially reposted content, and documentation in the form of screenshots or traces of relevant activities. This technique is used to obtain comprehensive and contextual data according to the focus of the research.

Data analysis is carried out interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The data that has been collected is selected and categorized based on themes related to digital interaction patterns and emotional states, then presented in the form of a descriptive narrative to facilitate interpretation. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation techniques of sources, techniques, and time to ensure the consistency and validity of research findings. This research is expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the relationship between TikTok reposting activities and the emotional dynamics of Generation Z.

RESULTS

Based on the results of in-depth interviews with five informants who are included in the Generation Z category and actively use TikTok, it was found that reposting activities contain complex psychological meanings and are closely related to the dynamics of individual emotional states. Each informant shows a different pattern of meaning to reposting activities which ultimately shows that

the practice is part of the mechanism of self-expression, symbolic communication, and emotional management in the digital space. The intensity of reposting, the type of content chosen, and the response received from the digital social environment also affect the emotional experience felt by each informant.

Figure 1. Reposting TikTok as a Form of Digital Interaction for Generation Z

Informant S (20 years old) revealed that reposting activities have a very significant role in his daily emotional life. She explained that she tends to have difficulty expressing her feelings directly to others, especially when she is in an unstable emotional state such as sadness, anxiety, or overthinking. In this situation, she prefers to look for content on TikTok that has a match for the inner state she is feeling. The content is then reshared as an indirect representation of the feelings they experience. He said that the act of reposting provides a sensation of emotional relief because he feels that the message he wants to convey can be conveyed without having to go through explicit verbal communication. He explained that when the reposted content gets a response from other users, such as likes or comments that show empathy, it has a positive impact on his emotional state. He feels more understood, appreciated and does not feel alone in dealing with the feelings he is experiencing. In his view, reposting has become a more convenient form of emotional communication compared to in-person interaction.

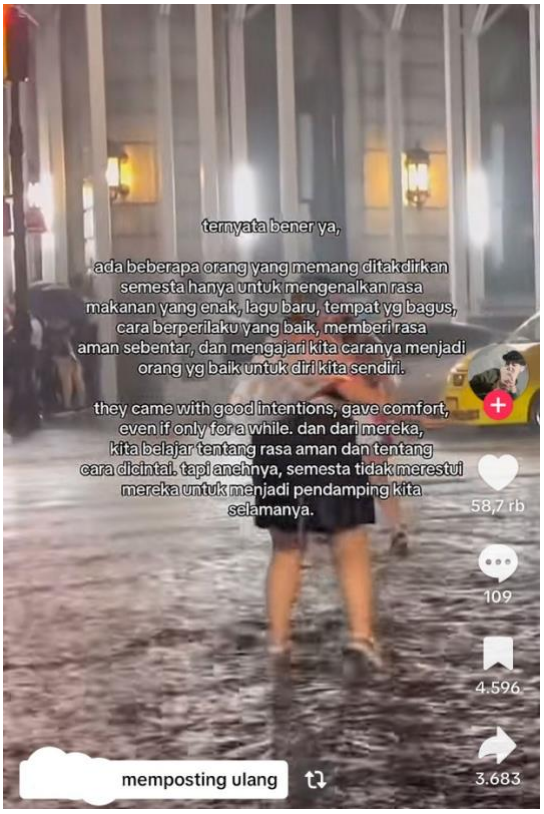

Figure 2. Reposting TikTok as a Form of Digital Interaction for Generation Z

Informant A (19 years old) explained that the reposting activity was greatly influenced by the situational conditions being faced, especially related to academic pressure and the dynamics of social relations. He revealed that when he experiences pressure from lecture assignments or conflicts with friends, he tends to be more active in reposting. The content you choose usually contains an implicit message that reflects the feelings of tiredness, disappointment, or confusion that you are experiencing. He views reposting as a form of communication that is secure because it does not demand direct openness, but is still able to convey an emotional message to the people around him. In his telling, there is a desire for others to understand his condition through the content shared, even without an explicit explanation. He also revealed that social responses have an important role in shaping his emotional experiences. When the reposted content gets attention, he feels a validation of his feelings. Conversely, when there is no significant response, a feeling of neglect arises that indirectly affects his mood.

Figure 3. Reposting TikTok as a Form of Digital Interaction for Generation Z

Informant R (21 years old) gave a different perspective by emphasizing that reposting is also a means to express positive emotions. He stated that he often reshares content that is motivational, inspiring, or describes certain achievements. This activity is seen as a way to maintain a positive emotional state while building a self-image on social media. He feels that by sharing positive content, he can influence his personal mood while having a positive impact on others who see him. In his explanation, reposting is part of a personal strategy in maintaining emotional balance, where the chosen content serves as a reminder of the positive values that you want to maintain in daily life. He also added that the interaction that emerges from the content strengthens the sense of social connection and increases confidence.

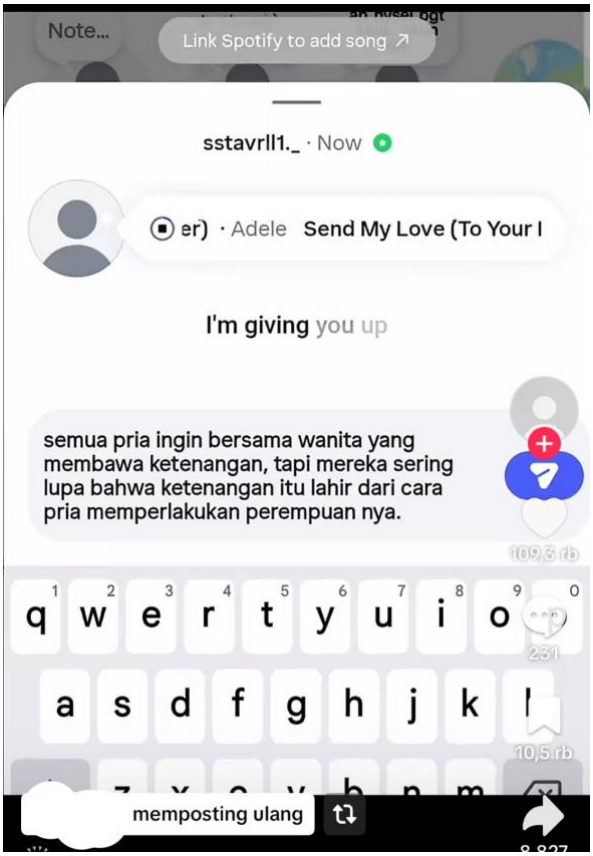

Figure 4. Reposting TikTok as a Form of Digital Interaction for Generation Z

Informant D (22 years old) revealed a more reflective experience related to repotting activities. He stated that at first he was not directly aware of the reason behind the reposting habit . These activities are carried out spontaneously without deep consideration. However, after reflecting on the pattern of the reposted content, he realized that there was a strong connection between the content and the emotional state he was experiencing, especially when he felt anxious, unconfident, or experienced uncertainty in life. He also revealed that TikTok's algorithm plays an important role in shaping the pattern of reposting that is done. Content that appears frequently on the homepage tends to have a fit for his emotional state, thus encouraging him to continue consuming and resharing content with similar themes. In his view, there is a kind of emotional cycle formed through the interaction between the user and the algorithm, where the emotional state influences the choice of content, and the content again reinforces the existing emotional state.

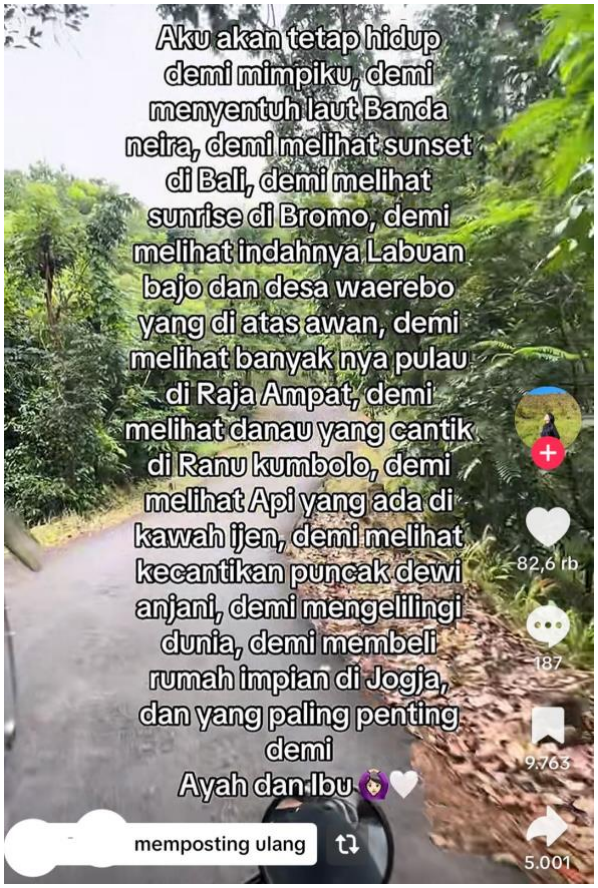

Figure 5. Reposting TikTok as a Form of Digital Interaction for Generation Z

Informant M (18 years old) stated that reposting has become part of a daily habit that is done almost unknowingly. He revealed that he often reshares content spontaneously when he feels that the content is interesting or has a connection with him, although it is not always accompanied by deep reflection at the time. However, when looking back at the history of content that has been posted, he realized that there are certain patterns that describe the emotional state that has been experienced at certain times. He views reposting as a kind of digital archive that records his emotional journey over time. In addition, he also revealed that this activity provides a sense of connection with other users who have similar experiences. In her telling, reposting is a means to feel part of a community that has similar emotional experiences.

The results of this interview show that TikTok reposting has a much more complex dimension compared to just content sharing activities. This practice is closely related to the individual's need to express themselves, seek social validation, manage emotions, and build connections with others in the digital space. The variety of experiences conveyed by each informant shows that reposting can

function as a medium of emotional expression, an emotion regulation mechanism, and a means of symbolic communication that reflects the psychological condition of Generation Z more broadly.

Table 1. Interview Results Answers

No	Name	Age	Questions	Informant's Answer
1	S	20	Why do you often repost on TikTok	To be honest, it's easier to express my feelings through reposts than to speak directly. If I'm sad or overthinking, I look for videos that are very related to my condition, and I repost them. It felt like a relief, as if other people could understand without me having to tell a long story.
			How do you feel after reposting	Usually I feel lighter. Especially if someone likes or comments, like "I also feel the same thing", it makes me feel like I'm not alone.
			Does the repost reflect your feelings	Yes, almost everything I reposted was in accordance with the condition of my heart at that time.
2	A	19	When do you usually repost content	Usually when I am tired, have a lot of tasks, or have problems with friends. So it seems like it needs to be vented.
			Why choose a repost from a live story	And if the repost is more secure, it's not too open, but people can understand what it means. So you don't have to explain in detail.
			What influences the response of others	If there are many responses, I feel cared for, but if it's quiet, sometimes I think too, like "why doesn't anyone notice".

3	R	21	What type of content do you often repost	I often repost that is motivated or that has positive vibes. Sometimes it is also related to life achievements.
			Why repost positive content	Because I want to keep my mood too, so that I don't carry negativity continuously. It's like sharing positive energy with others.
			What effect does it have on you	Not bad, it makes me more enthusiastic and feel more confident.
4	D	22	Are you aware of the reason for the repost?	At first it wasn't, it was just spontaneous. But if you think about it again, it turns out that what I reposted is in accordance with what I feel again.
			What type of content is frequently reposted	Usually the ones about anxiety, overthinking, or no longer care.
			What does TikTok have to do with you	It's like I'm trying to figure out what I'm going through, so the more I see the same stuff, the more I repost it.
5	M	18	How often do you repost	It's quite common, almost every day if you find someone who relates immediately.
			Do you think before reposting	Sometimes not, it's more spontaneous. But I still feel like it's "me".
			What does a repost mean to you?	It's like a diary, but a digital version. When I look back at the old posts, I remember what I was doing.

DISCUSSION

TikTok Reposting as a Fulfillment of Generation Z's Emotional Needs

Based on the results of research that has been obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, TikTok reposting activities show that Generation Z actively uses digital media as a means to meet emotional needs that cannot always be channeled through direct interaction in daily life. In the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, individuals are seen as actors who have awareness and purpose in choosing the media used so that media use is driven by certain psychological needs (Anderson & Jiang, 2019). This is reflected in the findings of the study, where informants such as S and A consistently show that reposting activities are carried out when they are in certain emotional states, such as sadness, anxiety, academic pressure, and interpersonal conflicts that affect their psychological stability.

Reposting activities can be understood as a form of indirect emotional channeling mechanism. Informant S, for example, revealed that he prefers to reshare "relevant" content rather than verbally expressing his feelings to others. This phenomenon suggests that reposting serves as a symbolic medium that allows individuals to express their inner state without having to engage in communication that is confrontational or open. In the study of media psychology, the use of digital content as a means of emotional expression is often associated with individual efforts to seek emotional comfort and reduce perceived psychological distress (Bayer et al., 2020).

The results of the study also showed that there was a close relationship between the type of content reposted and the emotional conditions that were being experienced by the individual. Informants tend to choose content that has the same meaning as the personal experience they are feeling, such as content about overthinking, mental fatigue, or feeling unappreciated (Adawiyah & Junaidi, 2026). This pattern indicates that the reposting activity is a direct reflection of the individual's affective state at any given time. Social media acts as an affective space that allows individuals to channel, strengthen, and understand the emotions experienced (Nesi et al., 2021). This selective content selection process shows that individuals are actively constructing their emotional experiences through interaction with digital content.

Reposting activities also provide psychological effects in the form of emotional relief or catharsis. The informants in this study revealed that after reposting, they felt a lighter feeling than before. This suggests that reposting can serve as a coping mechanism that assists individuals in managing emotional distress. In the study of emotion regulation, the act of expressing emotions, either directly or indirectly, is one of the strategies used by individuals to reduce the intensity of negative emotions (Gross, 2022). Reposting can be understood as a form of digital media-based emotion regulation that allows individuals to cope with psychological distress without having to rely entirely on face-to-face interactions (Junaidi, 2025).

The research findings also show that the emotional needs met through reposting have a social dimension. Informants reveal that they feel better when the reposted content gets a response from other users, such as likes or comments that show empathy. This shows that fulfilling emotional needs through social media is also related to the need for recognition and social connection. In the theory of Uses and Gratifications, the need for social integration and interpersonal interaction is one of the main motivations in the use of media (Valkenburg et al., 2022). Reposting here is an effort to gain social support in the digital space.

There is a tendency to repeat emotions through repotting activities. Informants like D point out that TikTok's algorithm tends to display content that matches the emotional state they are experiencing, so individuals are constantly exposed to similar types of content. This condition has the potential to reinforce certain emotions repeatedly, both in the form of positive and negative emotions. Social media serves as an environment that shapes and amplifies an individual's emotional experiences (Kross et al., 2021). In other words, there is a reciprocal relationship between the individual's emotional state and the content consumed and reshared.

Reposting as a Form of Indirect Self-Expression in Digital Interaction

The results of the study show that reposting activities on the TikTok platform are a form of self-expression that is implicit and symbolic. Generation Z in this context shows a strong tendency to use digital media as a space of self-representation, where emotional messages are conveyed through the selection and redissemination of content that is considered relevant to their psychological condition. In the Uses and Gratifications Theory, individuals actively use media to meet needs for self-expression, personal identity, and psychological actualization that cannot always be met in direct

social interaction (Anderson & Jiang, 2019). This shows that reposting is part of a communication process that has a deep psychological dimension.

The findings of the study on informants such as D and M reinforce this understanding, where both state that reposting activities are often carried out spontaneously without careful planning, but still represent their own condition at a given moment (Junaidi, 2025). Informant D revealed that after reflecting, he realized that the reposted content was closely related to feelings of anxiety, lack of confidence, and uncertainty that he was experiencing. Meanwhile, Informant M explained that reposting has become part of everyday digital habits, where reshared content is often considered a "self-reflection" even though it is not fully realized at the time of the process. This pattern suggests that self-expression in digital spaces can arise spontaneously in response to emotional stimuli received from the social media environment.

This shows a significant shift in the way individuals express their identity in the digital age. If in traditional communication self-expression is generally done through verbal language or direct interaction, then in the context of social media, digital symbols such as videos, captions, and repost content are the main medium in conveying emotional meaning. Reposting in this case serves as a form of nonverbal communication that allows individuals to convey psychological messages in a safer, more flexible, and less socially risky manner. Individuals do not need to explicitly explain the feelings they are experiencing, as the content shared is already considered to represent the emotional state. This shows that social media has changed the structure of communication from being direct to more representational and symbol-based.

In the framework of Uses and Gratifications, the need for self-expression is one of the main motives for the use of digital media, especially among Generation Z who grow up in a highly interactive technology ecosystem. Reposting is a form of fulfilling these needs because it provides space for individuals to build self-narratives indirectly. The identities that are formed come from the digital footprints left behind through activities such as reposting. Social media has become a dynamic and ever-evolving identity construction space along with changes in the emotional state of individuals (Bayer et al., 2020).

The results of the study also showed that reposting activities have a role in forming a sense of connection with others who have similar emotional experiences. When individuals find content that matches their feelings, then re-share it, it creates a feeling that they are not alone in experiencing the condition. This process reinforces the social function of digital self-expression, where individuals express themselves to establish an emotional connection with their digital social environment. Self-

expression through reposting is inseparable from the social dimension inherent in the use of modern social media.

Reposting as a Means of Seeking Social Validation and Its Impact on Emotions

The research findings show that reposting activities within the TikTok platform cannot be separated from the need for individuals to gain social recognition from the digital environment. The responses given by other users to the reposted content have a very significant role in shaping an individual's emotional state. In the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, one of the main needs in the use of media is the need for interpersonal relationships, social integration, and recognition from others (Valkenburg et al., 2022). This is clearly seen in the results of interviews with informants S and A who stated that the existence of responses such as likes, comments, and other forms of interaction had a real emotional impact on how they felt after reposting.

Informant S explained that when the reposted content received a positive response, he felt an increase in mood and feelings of being valued. He feels that his feelings are acknowledged and understood by others in the digital space. On the other hand, when the content shared does not get the expected response, there is a feeling of emptiness, lack of attention, and sometimes even doubts about one's own worth. This pattern of experience shows that social validation in the digital space has a close relationship with the emotional stability of individuals, where acceptance from others is one of the important factors in determining a person's psychological state.

The same thing was also expressed by Informant A who stated that reposting is often done in the hope that others can understand the condition they are experiencing without the need for verbal explanation. He considers that the response from the digital environment is a form of indirect recognition of the feelings he expresses through content. When such responses appear, he feels more cared for and not alone in the face of emotional distress. However, when the response is not present or very minimal, he admits that it can lead to feelings of neglect and negatively affect his mood. These findings suggest that digital interactions have a significant psychological impact on individuals.

The results of the study show that reposting serves as a strategy to seek social validation in the digital environment. Individuals indirectly expect an acknowledgment of the emotional state they convey through the reshared content. This relates to the need for social integration and a sense of belonging, where individuals use media to strengthen social relationships as well as derive

psychological satisfaction from the interactions that occur (Bayer et al., 2020). Reposting is part of the process of seeking emotional legitimacy carried out through social media.

It also shows that an individual's emotional experience in the digital space is not only influenced by the content reposted, but also by the social response that follows the activity. Responses from other users become a kind of indicator of social acceptance that directly affects an individual's perception of himself. When the response received is positive, individuals tend to experience increased confidence and emotional comfort. Conversely, a lack of response can lead to feelings of worthlessness or lack of attention. This shows that social media has become a space where social validation has a very strong role in shaping the emotional state of individuals (Kross et al., 2021).

Table 2. The Use of Uses and Gratifications Theory in Research

No	Aspects of Theory Uses and Gratifications	Form in TikTok Reposting	Research Findings	Impact on Emotional Conditions
1	Emotional needs	Reposting sad, overthinking, motivational, or "relevant" content	Informants S and A often repost when they are sad, anxious, or depressed	Provides a sense of relief, emotional vent, and reduces inner stress
2	Self-expression	Reposting as a representation of feelings without verbal explanation	Informants D and M admitted that they reposted spontaneously but according to the condition of the heart	Helps individuals express emotions indirectly
3	Social validation	Hope to get likes, comments, or responses from others	Informants S and A feel cared for when they receive a response	Increases a sense of being valued, but can trigger feelings of being ignored if there is no response
4	Social integration	Reposting content that "relates" to others	Informants feel connected to other users	Fostering a sense of community and reducing loneliness

			who have had similar experiences	
5	Self-identity	Selection of content that reflects one's character or condition	Informant R often reposts motivational content to build a positive image	Shaping digital self-image and boosting confidence
6	Coping or emotion management	Reposting as a way to cope with psychological stress or pressure	All informants show reposting when the emotional state is unstable	Becomes a mechanism for venting and regulating emotions
7	Selective consumption of media	Choosing emotional content	Informant D said the algorithm adjusts the user's emotions	Reinforcing emotions (positive or negative)
8	Digital social interaction	Reposting followed by responses from other users	Response affects the feelings of the informant after the repost	Increase or decrease emotional well-being

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the pattern of digital interaction through TikTok reposting and its relationship with the emotional state of Generation Z, it can be concluded that the reposting activity is not just an act of resharing content, but has a complex psychological meaning. Generation Z is actively utilizing reposting features as a means to meet emotional needs that can't always be conveyed directly in real life. The content that is reposted tends to reflect inner conditions such as sadness, anxiety, social pressure and other emotional experiences that are being experienced by individuals.

Reposting also serves as an indirect form of self-expression in the digital space. Individuals use content as a symbolic medium to convey feelings and psychological conditions without having to express them verbally. This activity shows a shift in communication patterns, where self-expression no longer depends on direct interaction, but through implicit digital representations. Reposting is also closely related to the need for social validation, where responses from other users such as likes and comments can affect an individual's emotional state, both positively and negatively.

TikTok reposting has a significant role in the emotional lives of Generation Z, both as a means of emotional regulation, self-expression, and the search for social validation. This activity reflects that social media has become an important space in the formation of individual emotional experiences in the digital age. In the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, the use of media by Generation Z is active and aims to meet certain psychological needs so that reposting can be understood as part of an emotional adaptation strategy in daily life.

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Social Media in Practice Digital Literacy Among Parents

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Abstract
This study aims to analyze the role of social media in improving digital literacy practices among parents in the digital era. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to gain a deeper understanding of parents' experiences, perceptions, and habits in using social media. The research subjects consisted of parents actively using social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings indicate that social media significantly contributes to improving parents' digital literacy by increasing their ability to use digital features, access information, and understand digital security and privacy. Social media also serves as an informal learning medium through online communities and parenting groups that facilitate knowledge sharing and interaction. However, several challenges remain, including difficulties in distinguishing valid information from misinformation and limited technological understanding among some parents. Family support, especially from children, also contributes positively to improving parents' digital skills. Therefore, continuous education and guidance are needed to ensure parents use social media wisely, safely, and effectively.
Keywords: Social Media, Digital Literacy, Parents, Digital Learning, Digital Technology

INTRODUCTION

Social media moment This own an increasing role important in life everyday, including in practice digital literacy among parents. Many parents who previously No used to with technology now start Study using platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram to communicate and obtain information. This process in a way No direct push improvement ability their digital literacy, especially in understand method digital media work. According to (Fitria Khairum Nisa, 2023), social media play a role as means education for parents in increase understanding about use technology in a way safe and responsible answer. Social media used For socialization about digital parenting, content dangerous, and protection children in the digital space. Research results This show that parents are active using social media own improvement understanding related basic digital literacy like ethics media and digital security.

In context digital literacy, social media become means easy learning accessible for parents. They can learn various matter start from method use application, understanding feature security, up to recognize valid and invalid information. With existence experience direct this, parents No only

become users passive, but also starting active evaluate the information they meet in the digital world. According to (Ridho Azlam Ambo Asse, 2025), digital literacy of parents own influence significant to ability child in using gadgets healthy. Parents who have ability more digital literacy Good tend capable direct child in choose content, control use of social media, as well as build effective communication in the digital environment. This show that social media in a way No direct strengthen the role of parents in children's digital education.

In addition, social media also plays a role as room interaction between people old people who are mutual share experience. Groups conversations, parenting communities, and online discussion forums allow parents exchange information about education children, health, to use secure technology. Interaction This strengthen understanding they about digital literacy through learning based community.(Nuri Fitrianingrum Chasanah, 2025) explain that social media like Instagram becomes room for parents For sharenting (sharing) activity children). However, the practice this also shows that Still many parents have not understand risk digital privacy, data security, and children's digital footprints. Lack of digital literacy can cause error in management family digital identity.

However, the use of social media in practice digital literacy also brings challenge. One of the challenge main is the rise information false or easy hoax spread. Parents who have not own skills strong digital literacy often have difficulty differentiate true and false information, so that risky spread information that is not accurate.(Nur Cholimaha, 2025) find that parents Still face various challenge in control digital literacy, such as difficulty understand digital content, monitoring children's use of gadgets, as well as manage emotion child in use of digital media. Therefore Well, social media works too as room informal learning for increase parents ' digital competence.

On the other hand, social media can also become tool effective education If used with right. Lots of content educational that discusses method use technology in a way safe, recognize online fraud, as well as importance guard digital privacy. Content like This helping parents increase awareness they to risks in the digital world at once strengthen ability digital literacy. The role of children in helping parents also becomes aspect important in this process. In lots family, children often become " little teachers " who teach parents method use digital devices and applications. Interaction This creating a two- way learning process that strengthens connection family at a time increase parents ' digital literacy.(Susri Adeni, 2026) say that the parents who received digital education shows improvement understanding about use safe and wise technology.

In addition, social media participate helping parents understand development technology that continues to changed. Information about application new, features security, or digital trends can with fast accessible through social media platforms. This is make parents more adaptive to change technology that occurs in a way fast in the digital age. (Yenny, 2025)parents need increase digital

literacy to be able to understand technology latest and provide proper assistance to child in using social media. This shows that social media No only become means entertainment, but also a means Study for parents For follow development technology.

Although Thus, it is important for parents For own awareness critical in using social media. Digital literacy is not only limited to ability use devices, but also includes ability think critical, digital ethics, and responsibility answer in interact in online spaces. Without understanding this, the use of social media Can cause impact negative.

With thus, social media can become very useful tool in increase digital literacy among parents if used in a way wise. Support from family, community, and Continuous education is very necessary for parents can utilizing social media optimally. Ultimately, good digital literacy will helping parents more believe self and safety in facing the ever-growing digital era develop.

METHOD

Study This use approach qualitative with type study descriptive (Sugiyono, 2023). Approach qualitative chosen Because study This aim For understand in a way deep How the role of social media in increase digital literacy among parents based on experiences, views, and habits they in using social media.

Subject study This is an active parent using social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. The selection informant done use purposive sampling technique, namely choose appropriate respondents with criteria certain, such as parents who have child age school and active use social media at least once year.

Data collection techniques were carried out through interview in-depth, observation, and documentation. Interviews used For dig parents ' experiences in using social media and how they understand digital information. Observation done For see in a way direct activity they in using social media, while documentation used For supports data in the form of catch screen or relevant digital activities.

Instrument main in study This is researchers Alone as a human instrument, assisted with guidelines interviews that have been arranged previously. Guidelines This covers question related frequency use of social media, types content accessed, as well as understanding they to digital information and online security.

Data analysis techniques are carried out through three stage, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data extraction conclusion. Data reduction is carried out with choose relevant

information, data presentation is done in form narrative descriptive and conclusion taken based on pattern or emerging findings from results study.

Study This expected can give clear picture about how social media play a role in increase parents ' digital literacy, as well as the challenges they face face it in its use. With Thus, the results study can become base For development of educational programs digital literacy for parents in the digital era.

RESULTS

Research result show that social media own sufficient role significant in increase digital literacy among parents. Most of them informant state that they start used to using social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram to communicate, search information, as well as follow development education children. Use of social media This become door beginning for parents For get to know the digital world better in. In addition, the results interview show that parents experience improvement ability in understand features social media basics, such as send message, share information, and manage privacy account. Some the informant also stated that they start more be careful in receive and distribute information, especially after often find news that is not Correct or hoaxes on social media.

research results also found that social media functioning as means informal learning for parents. Through group family, parenting communities, and online forums, parents each other exchange information about parenting children, health, and education. Interaction This help they increase understanding to digital literacy in general gradually through experience directly. However, research this also found existence challenge in practice digital literacy. Some parents Still difficulty differentiate valid and invalid information, so that potential become victims of misinformation. In addition, the limitations understanding technology in some parents make they need help from child or member other families in use features certain.

Observation results show that role child in helping parents is very important in the process of improvement digital literacy. Children often become companion in explain method use application, set arrangement privacy, and provide understanding about digital security. This is creating a two- way learning process in family. Research this also shows that parents are more often using social media tend own level greater digital literacy Good compared to with those who are rare use it. Intensity use influential to ability adaptation to technology and understanding to digital information.

Table 1 Results Study

No	Observed Aspects	Findings	Information
1	Use of social media	Parent active using WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram	Used For communication and searching information
2	Ability digital basics	Increase in use feature basic (chat, share, comment)	Happen after routine use
3	Understanding information	Some parents start more be careful to hoax	However Still there is something easy believe information
4	Social media as means Study	Used For parenting groups and online communities	Help exchange information parenting
5	Challenge digital literacy	Difficulty differentiate valid and invalid information	Still need mentoring
6	The role of the family	Children help parents in use of social media	A two- way learning process occurs
7	Intensity use	Users active own more digital literacy Good	The more often used, the more skilled
8	Digital security	Some parents start understand privacy account	However Not yet maximum
9	Attitude to technology	Majority behave positive and open	Social media considered beneficial

In a way overall, results study This conclude that social media own role positive in increase parents ' digital literacy, although Still there is constraint like lack of understanding critical to information and limitations skills technology. Therefore that, is necessary mentoring and education sustainable so that parents can using social media in a way more wise and safe.

DISCUSSION

Research result show that social media own role important in increase digital literacy of parents, especially in matter introduction technology and use feature basic findings This seen from increasing parental abilities in use application such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram to communicate and search information. This is in line with draft digital literacy that is not only covers knowledge, but also skills practical in use this technology in line with findings from (Yohana Kristi Purwadi, 2023)that state that parents play a role in access, evaluate, and use digital information. as

well as Use technology influenced by needs education children. and also digital literacy includes access evaluation use information.

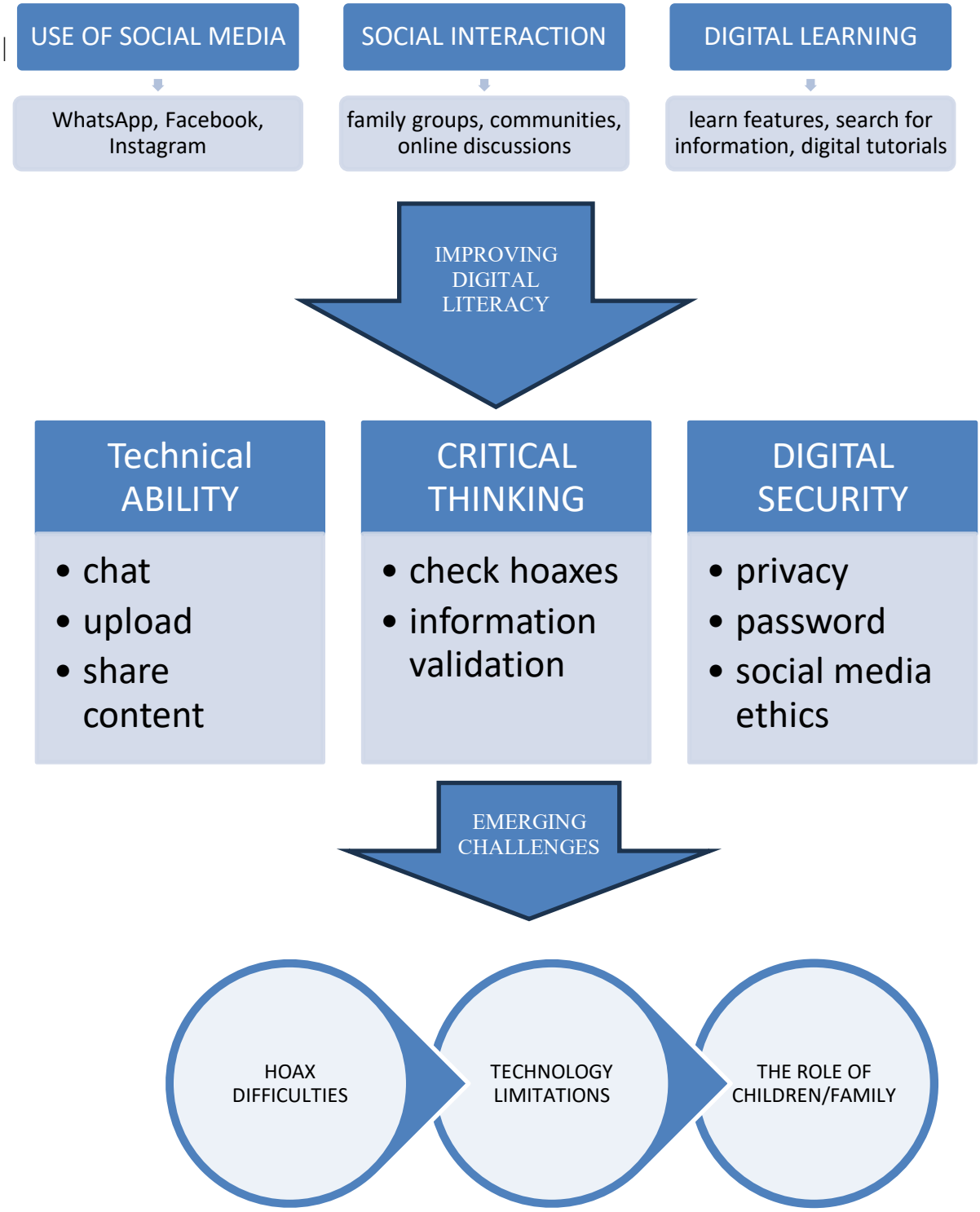
Apart from that, social media also works as means informal learning for parents. Through group family and parenting community, parents can exchange information about parenting children, education, and health. Interaction social This strengthen the learning process based experience, where parents No only accept information, but also active participate in digital discussion. Conditions This show that social media support formation culture Study collaborative in digital space. this in line with study from (Hutapea, 2022)that state that parents utilise digital technology for parenting child and digital media becomes means share parenting experiences and strategies and also a learning process social based community

However, research this also found that parents ' digital literacy Still are at varying stages. Some parents Already capable sorting information with more critical, but part other Still prone to to distribution hoax. This is show that ability think critical in digital literacy yet fully develop in a way evenly, so that Still required mentoring and education more carry on.

Other findings show that role family, especially child, very helpful in increase digital literacy of parents. Children often become companion in teach use technology, starting from method operate application until arrange privacy account. Interaction This creating a two- way knowledge transfer process that accelerates improvement parents ' digital capabilities.

In addition, the intensity the use of social media also has an influence to level digital literacy. Parents who are more often using social media tend own more digital skills Good compared to the rare ones using. This is show that experience directly (learning by doing) becomes factor important in development literacy digital.Although however, still there is challenges that need to be overcome noticed, such as lack of understanding to digital security and risks distribution information fake. Therefore that, is necessary effort education sustainable For increase parental awareness about ethics and safety in using social media.

Chart 1 The Role of Social Media in Parents' Digital Literacy



In a way overall, results study This show that social media own role positive in increase parents ' digital literacy, both as means communication, learning, and interaction social. However,

success it really depends on the ability critical, mentoring family, and continuous digital education so that parents can using social media in a way wise, safe, and effective.

CONCLUSION

Based on results research, can concluded that social media own important role in increase digital literacy among parents. Social media like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram do not only functioning as tool communication, but also as means informal learning that helps parents know and understand digital technology in more good. Use of social media regularly provide impact positive to improvement ability parents ' digital foundations, such as send message, share information, as well as understand feature privacy and security account. In addition, social media also encourages parents For more critical in accept information, although ability the Not yet evenly distributed across all circles.

However, research this also found existence a number of challenges, such as Still low ability some parents in differentiate valid information and hoaxes, as well as limitations understanding to digital technology. This is show that parents ' digital literacy Still need improved in a way sustainable. The role of the family, especially children, also very helpful in the process of improvement parents ' digital literacy through mentoring and learning directly. With thus, it can concluded that social media play a role positive in increase parents ' digital literacy, but still need education, mentoring, and awareness critical for its use more wise, safe and useful..

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Clause Complex Analysis in CNN and Reuters News Reports: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Perspective

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Abstract

Within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), clause complex relations play an important role in organizing information and constructing meaning in discourse. While previous studies have primarily focused on identifying and classifying clause complex patterns, limited attention has been given to how such grammatical choices reflect communicative purposes in news reporting. Therefore, this study investigates the clause complex structures employed in CNN and Reuters news reports concerning the trade agreement between Indonesia and the United States. Specifically, the study aims to identify interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations, compare the clause complex patterns used by both news organizations, and explain how these patterns reflect different journalistic communication strategies. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study analyzed two online news reports through Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) clause complex framework. The findings revealed that hypotaxis was the dominant interdependency relation, occurring 34 times in CNN and 10 times in Reuters, while enhancement and projection: locution were the most frequent logical-semantic relations, each occurring 19 times. The results suggest that both news organizations employed clause complex structures to contextualize events and support source attribution. However, CNN utilized more hypotactic constructions and contextual explanations, indicating a tendency toward explanatory reporting, whereas Reuters emphasized concise reporting through direct presentation of facts and official statements. These findings demonstrate that clause complex relations function not only as grammatical resources but also as strategic communicative tools through which journalists organize information and shape audience interpretation. The study contributes to clause complex research by extending the analysis from structural description to the examination of communicative functions in international news discourse. This study contributes to media discourse studies by demonstrating that clause complex relations function not only as grammatical resources but also as strategic communicative tools that shape audience interpretation in economic news reporting.

Keywords: clause complex, systemic functional linguistics, news discourse, CNN, Reuters

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a crucial role in constructing meaning and facilitating communication within social contexts. From the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), language is viewed as a social semiotic system that enables individuals to represent experiences, establish interpersonal relationships, and organize messages effectively (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Similarly, Pasaribu et al. (2020) argue that linguistic structures function as meaning-making resources that allow language users to communicate ideas across various discourse contexts. Consequently, the study of grammatical structures is essential for understanding how meaning is organized and conveyed in different types of texts.

One discourse genre that heavily relies on grammatical organization is news discourse. News texts are designed not only to report events but also to explain, interpret, and contextualize information for readers. In contemporary journalism, journalists frequently employ complex

grammatical constructions to compress large amounts of information into concise and coherent reports (Nurjamin et al., 2023). Moreover, linguistic choices influence how readers interpret events, evaluate information, and understand social realities represented in news discourse (Aisaro & Suhardi, 2023). Therefore, examining grammatical patterns in news texts can provide valuable insights into how media organizations construct meaning and present information.

Within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics, one important aspect of grammatical organization is the clause complex. A clause complex consists of two or more clauses linked through interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). According to Brata (2012), clause complexes enable language users to represent complex experiences and establish logical connections between ideas. Through clause complex structures, writers can elaborate information, extend meanings, provide circumstantial explanations, and project statements or thoughts. As a result, clause complexes play an important role in organizing information and constructing coherent discourse.

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) classify interdependency relations into parataxis and hypotaxis. Parataxis refers to relationships between clauses of equal status, while hypotaxis involves relationships between dependent and independent clauses. These grammatical choices are not merely structural variations but serve different communicative purposes. Hypotactic constructions are often used to provide explanations, causes, conditions, and background information, whereas paratactic constructions are commonly employed to present information in a more direct and coordinated manner (Brata, 2012). Consequently, analyzing the distribution of parataxis and hypotaxis may reveal how writers organize information and achieve particular communicative goals.

In addition to interdependency relations, clause complexes involve logical-semantic relations, including expansion and projection (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Expansion consists of elaboration, extension, and enhancement, while projection includes locution and idea. These relations allow writers to clarify information, add new meanings, establish causal and temporal connections, and report speech or thought. According to Salam et al. (2018) and Kailani (2017), logical-semantic relations contribute significantly to the complexity and informativeness of a text. Therefore, investigating these relations can help explain how grammatical structures support meaning construction in discourse.

Previous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of Systemic Functional Linguistics in analyzing various discourse genres. Salam et al. (2018) found that complex grammatical structures contribute to the scientific characteristics of academic texts. Jupply and Widyastuti (2021) reported that linguistic resources play an important role in organizing meaning within research article abstracts. Similarly, Salaras et al. (2025) revealed that grammatical patterns provide insights into students' writing development. These studies indicate that clause-level

analysis is valuable for understanding meaning construction across different forms of discourse.

Systemic Functional Linguistics has also been applied to other discourse contexts. Yuliawan and Shomary (2024) analyzed exposition texts and demonstrated that SFL effectively reveals textual organization and meaning construction. Harahap et al. (2024) examined narrative discourse through SFL and found that grammatical patterns contribute to the development of narrative meanings. Furthermore, Lubis and Cahya (2025) investigated headline construction on social media and reported that linguistic choices are closely related to communicative purposes. Ulfiana, Sunra, and Fauzan (2025) also demonstrated that integrating grammar and writing instruction through SFL improves students' cohesion and coherence in EFL writing. These studies collectively suggest that grammatical structures function as strategic resources for achieving particular discourse objectives.

In the field of media discourse, several researchers have employed Systemic Functional Linguistics to investigate news texts. Aisaro and Suhardi (2023) analyzed transitivity and context of situation in news discourse, while Nurjamin et al. (2023) examined socio-cognitive elements in online news using a multimodal perspective. However, these studies primarily focused on transitivity, multimodality, and discourse representation rather than clause complex structures. More importantly, previous studies generally concentrated on identifying grammatical patterns without extensively explaining how specific clause complex choices contribute to the communicative purposes of news organizations.

Although clause complex analysis has been conducted in various discourse contexts, including academic texts, research article abstracts, exposition texts, narrative discourse, and media-related texts, most previous studies have primarily focused on identifying and classifying grammatical patterns rather than explaining the communicative motivations underlying those patterns (Salam et al., 2018; Jupply & Widyastuti, 2021; Yuliawan & Shomary, 2024; Harahap et al., 2024). Existing studies have successfully demonstrated the occurrence of interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations in different genres; however, they generally emphasize structural descriptions and frequency distributions of clause complexes (Salaras et al., 2025; Darong & Regus, 2024). As a result, the functional reasons why certain clause complex relations are preferred in particular discourse contexts remain insufficiently explored.

This limitation is also evident in studies of media discourse. Previous research has examined news texts through transitivity analysis, multimodal discourse analysis, and socio-cognitive approaches to reveal how meanings are represented in news reporting (Aisaro & Suhardi, 2023; Nurjamin et al., 2023). Nevertheless, limited attention has been given to the relationship between clause complex patterns and journalistic communication strategies. In particular, little research has investigated how different news organizations employ clause complex structures to organize information, construct context, and guide readers' interpretations when reporting the same event. Consequently, there remains a need for research that moves beyond the

identification of grammatical patterns to explain how clause complex choices function as strategic linguistic resources in news discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Brata, 2012).
To address this gap, the present study investigates clause complex structures in CNN and Reuters news reports concerning the trade agreement between Indonesia and the United States. Specifically, the study examines interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations as realized in both news reports and explores the communicative motivations underlying their use. By comparing two international news organizations reporting the same event, this study seeks to explain how grammatical choices contribute to different ways of organizing information and constructing news discourse.

Therefore, this study aims to (1) identify the interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations employed in CNN and Reuters news reports, (2) compare the clause complex patterns used by both news organizations, and (3) explain how those grammatical patterns reflect different journalistic communication strategies in reporting the same economic event.
Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory developed by Halliday that views language as a social semiotic resource for meaning-making rather than merely a system of grammatical rules (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Within this framework, language functions to represent experiences, establish social relationships, and organize messages into coherent discourse. Therefore, linguistic choices are understood as functional resources that speakers and writers employ to achieve specific communicative purposes (Pasaribu et al., 2020).

Because SFL emphasizes the relationship between language and meaning, it has been widely applied in discourse analysis. Through this perspective, grammatical structures are not interpreted solely as formal patterns but as strategic resources that shape how information is organized and understood in different contexts (Darong & Regus, 2024).

A clause complex refers to a sequence of two or more clauses that are logically connected within a single grammatical unit (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). According to Brata (2012), clause complexes enable language users to represent complex experiences and establish logical relationships among ideas, events, and circumstances. Through clause complexes, writers can elaborate information, add new meanings, explain causes and consequences, and report speech or thought.

In news discourse, clause complexes play a particularly important role because journalists must communicate large amounts of information while maintaining coherence and clarity. Consequently, the selection of clause complex patterns may reflect not only grammatical preferences but also broader communicative objectives.
Interdependency relations describe the degree of dependency between clauses within a clause complex. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) classify interdependency relations into parataxis and hypotaxis. Parataxis refers to a relationship between clauses of equal status in which each clause can function independently. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), paratactic

relations are commonly used to present information sequentially, coordinate multiple events, or add information without creating hierarchical relationships between clauses.

From a communicative perspective, parataxis often contributes to concise and direct information delivery because each clause receives relatively equal prominence (Brata, 2012). In news discourse, paratactic constructions may be used when journalists seek to present several facts efficiently and allow readers to process information quickly. Therefore, the use of parataxis may indicate a preference for straightforward and information-centered reporting.
Hypotaxis refers to a relationship between a dominant clause and a dependent clause. Unlike parataxis, hypotactic constructions establish hierarchical relationships that enable writers to explain causal, temporal, conditional, and circumstantial connections among events (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).
According to Brata (2012), hypotaxis allows writers to provide contextual information and elaborate relationships between ideas. In journalistic discourse, hypotactic constructions can help reporters explain causes, consequences, motivations, and background information related to an event. Therefore, a high frequency of hypotaxis may indicate a tendency toward explanatory reporting in which readers are guided to understand not only what happened but also why and how it happened.

Logical-semantic relations describe the semantic relationships established between clauses within a clause complex. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) classify these relations into expansion and projection. Expansion occurs when one clause expands the meaning of another clause. Expansion consists of elaboration, extension, and enhancement.

Elaboration occurs when one clause restates, clarifies, specifies, or comments on information presented in another clause (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Through elaboration, writers provide additional explanations that assist readers in understanding information more clearly.
In news discourse, elaboration may be employed when journalists provide further details about events, participants, or situations. Consequently, the use of elaboration can indicate an effort to improve clarity and comprehension.

Extension occurs when one clause adds new information to another clause through addition, variation, contrast, or alternative relationships (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). This relation enables writers to broaden the scope of information while maintaining coherence among ideas. In journalistic writing, extension may function to introduce additional facts, contrasting perspectives, or related developments surrounding an event. Therefore, extension contributes to the comprehensiveness of news reporting.

Enhancement occurs when one clause provides circumstantial information concerning time, place, cause, condition, purpose, or manner (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). This relation is particularly important because it establishes logical connections among events.
According to Salam et al. (2018), enhancement contributes significantly to textual informativeness by explaining how events are related. In news discourse, enhancement may

indicate a journalistic effort to contextualize events and help readers understand the circumstances surrounding a reported issue.

Projection occurs when one clause projects another clause as speech or thought (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Projection consists of locution and idea.
Locution refers to the projection of speech through reporting verbs such as said, stated, announced, and explained. In news discourse, locution is particularly important because journalists frequently rely on quotations and reported speech to support credibility and objectivity.

Consequently, a high occurrence of locution may indicate that a news report places strong emphasis on source attribution and evidential support.
Idea refers to the projection of thoughts, beliefs, expectations, assumptions, or opinions (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Unlike locution, idea focuses on mental processes rather than spoken statements.
Because hard news reporting generally prioritizes factual statements and official sources, idea relations tend to occur less frequently. Nevertheless, they remain important for representing expectations, interpretations, and viewpoints regarding particular events.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Qualitative research was selected because the study aimed not only to identify clause complex patterns but also to interpret their communicative functions in news discourse. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research enables researchers to explore and interpret meanings embedded in textual data. Through this approach, the present study analyzed how interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations were utilized in news reports and how these grammatical choices potentially reflected different journalistic communication strategies.

The data of this study consisted of two international online news articles reporting the same economic event, namely the trade agreement between Indonesia and the United States. The first article was published by CNN under the title “Striking trade deal with US was an ‘extraordinary struggle,’ Indonesia says.” The second article was published by Reuters and reported the same event from a different journalistic perspective.

The two articles were selected purposively because they discussed the same topic while representing different international news organizations. This selection enabled a comparative analysis of how clause complex structures were employed to organize information and construct news discourse within the same reporting context.

The data were collected through documentation techniques. The researcher first obtained the news articles from the official websites of CNN and Reuters. Subsequently, the articles were carefully read several times to gain a comprehensive understanding of their content.

The data collection process involved four stages:

1. Reading the news articles thoroughly.
2. Identifying all clause complexes appearing in the texts.
3. Segmenting the clause complexes into individual clauses.
4. Classifying the clause complexes according to interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations based on Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) framework.

The identified clause complexes were then organized into analytical tables to facilitate classification and comparison.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Data Condensation

At this stage, the researcher selected and categorized clause complexes found in the news articles. Each clause complex was identified and classified according to the types of interdependency relations (parataxis and hypotaxis) and logical-semantic relations (elaboration, extension, enhancement, locution, and idea).

Data Display

After classification, the data were presented in tables showing the frequency and distribution of clause complex relations in both CNN and Reuters news reports. Representative examples were also provided to illustrate the occurrence of each category.

Conclusion Drawing and Interpretation

The final stage involved interpreting the findings based on Systemic Functional Linguistics theory. The researcher examined not only the frequency of clause complex patterns but also their potential communicative functions in news discourse. Particular attention was given to

how different clause complex relations contributed to information organization, contextualization, explanation, and source attribution. Through this interpretation, the study sought to explain how grammatical choices may reflect different journalistic communication strategies employed by CNN and Reuters when reporting the same event.

To enhance analytical reliability, the classification of clause complexes was conducted using the theoretical framework proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). Each identified clause complex was analyzed systematically according to established categories of interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations. Furthermore, the classification results were reviewed repeatedly to ensure consistency and accuracy throughout the analysis process.

RESULTS

The analysis identified two interdependency relations in the CNN and Reuters news reports, namely parataxis and hypotaxis. Their distribution is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Interdependency Relations

Type	CNN	Reuters
Parataxis	18	5
Hypotaxis	34	10
Total	52	15

The findings indicate that hypotaxis was the dominant interdependency relation in both news reports. CNN contained 34 hypotactic relations and 18 paratactic relations, whereas Reuters contained 10 hypotactic relations and 5 paratactic relations.

Example of Hypotaxis in CNN:
"After first announcing the agreement on Truth Social, Trump told reporters that Indonesia would not charge any tariffs on American exports."

Clause	Relation
Trump told reporters	Dominant
After first announcing the agreement on Truth Social	Dependent

The dependent clause provides temporal circumstances for the dominant clause and is therefore classified as hypotaxis.

Example of Hypotaxis in Reuters:
"Nasbi said Prabowo had also negotiated directly with Trump over the phone, without giving further details."

Clause	Relation
Nasbi said Prabowo had also negotiated directly with Trump over the phone	Dominant
without giving further details	Dependent

The second clause depends on the first clause and provides additional circumstantial information, indicating a hypotactic relationship.

Example of Parataxis in CNN:
"Trump's volatile trade policy has paralyzed many businesses. Some fear that new orders they place for products manufactured overseas could be tariffed at dramatically higher rates."
The two clauses present related information with equal status and can stand independently. Therefore, the relation is classified as parataxis.
The analysis identified five logical-semantic relations, namely elaboration, extension, enhancement, projection: locution, and projection: idea. Their distribution is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Logical-Semantic Relations

Relation	Total
Elaboration	15
Extension	11
Enhancement	19
Projection: Locution	19
Projection: Idea	3

Enhancement and projection: locution were the most dominant categories, each occurring 19 times.
Example of Enhancement:
"The agreement calls for the US imposing a 19% tariff on Indonesia's exports, a reduction from the 32% Trump briefly imposed on the country in April."
The second clause provides circumstantial information that explains and contextualizes the first clause. Therefore, it is classified as enhancement.

Example of Projection: Locution:
Hasan Nasbi told Reuters, "This is an extraordinary struggle by our negotiating team led by the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs."

Example of Projection: Idea:
"Some fear that new orders they place for products manufactured overseas could be tariffed at dramatically higher rates."

The projected clause represents a mental process of fearing and is therefore classified as projection: idea.

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that hypotaxis was the dominant interdependency relation in both CNN and Reuters news reports. CNN contained 34 hypotactic relations and 18 paratactic relations, whereas Reuters contained 10 hypotactic relations and 5 paratactic relations. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), hypotaxis establishes a dependency relationship between clauses, allowing writers to provide explanations, background information, temporal sequences, conditions, and causal relationships. Similarly, Brata (2012) argues that hypotactic constructions enable writers to elaborate events and connect ideas in a more detailed and meaningful manner.

The dominance of hypotaxis in the present study indicates that both news organizations attempted to contextualize the trade agreement rather than merely report isolated facts. This can be observed in CNN's clause complex, “After first announcing the agreement on Truth Social, Trump told reporters that Indonesia would not charge any tariffs on American exports.” The dependent clause provides temporal information that helps readers understand the sequence of events surrounding the announcement. Such a finding supports Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2014) argument that hypotaxis functions as a linguistic resource for organizing complex information and establishing logical relationships among events.

However, a notable difference can be observed in the frequency of hypotaxis between CNN and Reuters. CNN employed more than three times as many hypotactic relations as Reuters. This finding suggests that CNN relied more heavily on explanatory and contextualized reporting. Throughout the article, CNN frequently incorporated background information regarding previous tariff policies, trade negotiations, business implications, and future economic consequences. For example, CNN not only reported the agreement itself but also explained Trump's previous tariff decisions, the impact of trade policies on businesses, and potential consequences for American consumers. Such findings indicate that hypotactic constructions were employed to create a broader contextual framework for readers. This observation extends Brata’s (2012) explanation of hypotaxis by demonstrating its role in constructing explanatory journalism within international economic news discourse.

In contrast, Reuters employed substantially fewer hypotactic relations and focused primarily on reporting official statements and negotiation outcomes. Most of the Reuters article consisted

of direct information concerning the agreement, statements from government representatives, and the immediate results of the negotiations. Therefore, Reuters appeared to prioritize concise and information-centered reporting. This finding suggests that clause complex patterns may reflect different journalistic communication strategies despite reporting the same event. While CNN tended to guide readers through extensive contextualization, Reuters appeared to emphasize efficient delivery of factual information.

The findings also revealed the occurrence of parataxis in both news reports, although less frequently than hypotaxis. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) explain that parataxis involves relationships between clauses of equal status in which each clause can function independently. According to Brata (2012), paratactic constructions are commonly used to present information directly and efficiently without establishing hierarchical relationships among clauses.
An example can be observed in CNN's statement, "Trump's volatile trade policy has paralyzed many businesses. Some fear that new orders they place for products manufactured overseas could be tariffed at dramatically higher rates." Both clauses can stand independently while contributing related information about the consequences of trade policy. The use of parataxis in this context allows information to be presented in a straightforward manner, enabling readers to process separate facts quickly. Consequently, parataxis appears to support the efficient presentation of information within news discourse.

Regarding logical-semantic relations, enhancement and projection: locution emerged as the most dominant categories, each occurring 19 times. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), enhancement establishes circumstantial relationships involving cause, time, condition, purpose, or consequence. Meanwhile, projection: locution functions to represent reported speech through verbal processes. The prominence of these categories reflects the communicative demands of news discourse, which requires both contextual explanation and source attribution.

The dominance of enhancement indicates that journalists frequently attempted to explain relationships among events rather than simply present isolated facts. This can be observed in the example, "The agreement calls for the US imposing a 19% tariff on Indonesia's exports, a reduction from the 32% Trump briefly imposed on the country in April." The second clause provides contextual information that allows readers to understand the significance of the new tariff rate by relating it to previous policy conditions. According to Salam et al. (2018),

enhancement contributes significantly to textual informativeness because it clarifies how events, actions, and circumstances are logically connected. Therefore, the high frequency of enhancement suggests that both news organizations sought to provide readers with a deeper understanding of the trade agreement and its broader implications.

Projection: locution was equally dominant throughout the data. This finding is unsurprising because news reporting heavily relies on quotations and reported statements to establish credibility and objectivity. An example can be observed in the statement, "This is an extraordinary struggle by our negotiating team led by the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs." Here, the projected clause represents Hasan Nasbi's statement and serves as evidence supporting the reported information. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) explain that locution enables writers to attribute information to specific sources, thereby enhancing textual credibility. Consequently, the high occurrence of projection: locution reflects the journalistic practice of relying on authoritative voices and official sources to support news reports.
In contrast, projection: idea appeared only three times. One example is the clause, "Some fear that new orders they place for products manufactured overseas could be tariffed at dramatically higher rates." Unlike locution, idea projections represent thoughts, beliefs, expectations, or perceptions rather than spoken statements (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The relatively low frequency of idea relations may be explained by the nature of hard news reporting, which prioritizes factual statements and verifiable information over subjective interpretations. This finding is consistent with Darong and Regus (2024), who argue that factual discourse generally relies more heavily on verbal projections than mental projections.

The findings of this study both support and extend previous research. Earlier studies have identified clause complex patterns in academic writing, exposition texts, narrative discourse, and educational contexts (Salam et al., 2018; Jupply & Widyastuti, 2021; Yuliawan & Shomary, 2024; Harahap et al., 2024). However, most of those studies primarily focused on the identification and classification of grammatical structures. The present study extends previous findings by demonstrating that clause complex patterns may also function as indicators of journalistic communication strategies. The comparison between CNN and Reuters suggests that grammatical choices are not merely structural features but also communicative

resources through which news organizations organize information, construct context, and guide audience interpretation.

Overall, the findings indicate that clause complex relations serve both grammatical and communicative functions in news discourse. CNN tended to employ clause complex structures to provide extensive contextualization and explanatory information, whereas Reuters utilized clause complexes more selectively to prioritize concise reporting and efficient information delivery. Consequently, the study demonstrates that clause complex choices may reflect broader journalistic strategies in representing and communicating economic events.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the use of clause complex structures in CNN and Reuters news reports concerning the trade agreement between Indonesia and the United States within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The analysis focused on two major dimensions of clause complex relations, namely interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations, in order to identify grammatical patterns and examine their communicative functions in news discourse. The findings revealed that hypotaxis was the dominant interdependency relation in both news reports, with CNN containing 34 hypotactic relations and Reuters containing 10. In addition, enhancement and projection: locution emerged as the most frequently occurring logical-semantic relations, each appearing 19 times. These findings indicate that both news organizations relied heavily on clause complex structures to establish logical connections among events, provide contextual information, and attribute information to authoritative sources.

The comparison between CNN and Reuters further demonstrated notable differences in the use of clause complex patterns. CNN employed a considerably higher number of hypotactic relations and contextual explanations, suggesting a tendency toward explanatory journalism that provides readers with broader background information, causes, consequences, and contextual details surrounding the reported event. In contrast, Reuters utilized fewer clause complex relations and focused more directly on official statements and negotiation outcomes, reflecting a more concise and information-centered reporting style.

The study also demonstrates that clause complex relations serve functions beyond grammatical organization. The dominance of hypotaxis and enhancement indicates the importance of contextualization in economic news reporting, while the frequent use of projection: locution highlights the role of source attribution in maintaining journalistic credibility and objectivity. Therefore, clause complex choices can be understood not only as linguistic structures but also as communicative resources through which journalists organize information, construct meaning, and guide readers' interpretation of events.

Furthermore, this study extends previous clause complex research that primarily focused on identifying and classifying grammatical structures. By examining the relationship between clause complex patterns and journalistic communication strategies, the study provides additional insights into how grammatical choices contribute to the construction of news discourse. Consequently, the findings contribute to a broader understanding of the functional role of language in contemporary media communication and demonstrate the relevance of Systemic Functional Linguistics for investigating journalistic practices.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis was limited to two news reports published by CNN and Reuters concerning a single economic event, namely the trade agreement between Indonesia and the United States. Although the selected texts provided valuable insights into clause complex patterns in international news discourse, the findings may not fully represent the broader linguistic practices employed by these news organizations across different topics and reporting contexts.

Second, the study focused exclusively on clause complex analysis, particularly interdependency relations and logical-semantic relations within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Other linguistic resources that may contribute to the construction of journalistic discourse, such as transitivity, appraisal, thematic structure, and multimodal elements, were beyond the scope of the present research.
Third, the interpretation of journalistic communication strategies was derived from textual evidence contained in the news reports. The study did not involve interviews with journalists, editors, or media practitioners. Therefore, the explanations regarding communicative motivations should be understood as discourse-based interpretations rather than direct representations of editorial intentions.

Despite these limitations, the study provides meaningful insights into how clause complex relations function as grammatical and communicative resources in contemporary news discourse. Future studies are encouraged to examine clause complex patterns using a larger corpus consisting of news reports from multiple media organizations, countries, and news topics. Such investigations may provide a broader understanding of how grammatical choices vary across different journalistic contexts and reporting traditions.

Future researchers may also compare clause complex structures across various news genres, such as political, economic, environmental, technological, and social news, in order to explore whether communicative purposes influence the selection of particular grammatical patterns.
In addition, further studies could integrate clause complex analysis with other Systemic Functional Linguistics frameworks, including transitivity, appraisal, thematic structure, and multimodal discourse analysis. Combining multiple analytical perspectives may generate a more comprehensive understanding of how language constructs meanings, represents events, and influences audience interpretation in media discourse.

Finally, future research may investigate the relationship between grammatical choices and journalistic communication strategies through interviews, surveys, or other qualitative methods involving journalists and editors. Such approaches may help validate and enrich the interpretations proposed in the present study regarding the communicative functions of clause complex structures in news reporting.

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An SFL Analysis of English Grammatical Features in BBC and Reuters News Reports on the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement

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Abstract

News reports play an important role in communicating political and economic events to global audiences. Beyond conveying information, news texts construct meanings through various linguistic resources that shape readers' understanding of events. This study investigates English grammatical features in two international news reports discussing the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement published by BBC and Reuters on 20 February 2026. The study employs the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly the ideational metafunction and transitivity system, to examine how grammatical features contribute to meaning construction in economic news discourse. The data consist of two news reports covering the same economic event, allowing a comparative analysis of linguistic choices across different media institutions. Using a qualitative content analysis approach, the study focuses on four grammatical features: parts of speech that express connecting relationships, expletive *it* and *there*, derivational forms of verbs, and descriptive adjectives. The findings indicate that connecting relationships are the most frequently occurring feature in both reports, followed by derivational verbs and descriptive adjectives, while expletive constructions occur only minimally. Furthermore, the identified grammatical features are predominantly associated with material and relational processes within the transitivity system. These findings demonstrate that grammatical choices contribute significantly to the representation of economic actions, evaluations, and institutional relationships in news discourse. The study is expected to contribute to the application of SFL in media discourse analysis and provide authentic examples for grammar and discourse analysis courses in English language education.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, grammatical features, transitivity, news discourse, BBC, Reuters, economic new

INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a medium of communication but also as a resource for constructing meaning in social contexts. Through language, individuals represent experiences, express attitudes, establish relationships, and organize information. This perspective is central to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which views language as a social semiotic system rather than merely a collection of grammatical rules. According to Halliday & Matthiessen, (2014), every linguistic choice reflects a particular communicative purpose and contributes to the construction of meaning. Consequently, language analysis should focus not only on grammatical correctness but also on how linguistic forms function in authentic communicative contexts.

One of the most productive areas for applying SFL is news discourse. News reports are often perceived as objective representations of reality; however, they are carefully constructed texts

shaped by linguistic choices made by journalists and editors. Through lexical selection, grammatical structures, and textual organization, news organizations present information in ways that influence readers' understanding of events. Chalimah et al., (2021) argue that language in media discourse functions not only to deliver information but also to strengthen or weaken particular perspectives through linguistic choices. Therefore, analyzing language in news reports can reveal how meanings are constructed and communicated to audiences.

Economic news discourse provides a particularly valuable context for linguistic analysis because it involves the representation of complex relationships among governments, institutions, policies, and international markets. Journalists must explain economic agreements, trade negotiations, and financial regulations in ways that are accessible to readers while maintaining accuracy and coherence. To achieve this goal, writers employ various grammatical resources, including conjunctions, derivational word forms, descriptive adjectives, and specific clause structures. These grammatical features contribute to the organization and interpretation of information, making economic news reports a rich source of data for linguistic investigation.

A recent example of an internationally significant economic event is the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement finalized in February 2026. The agreement attracted widespread media attention because it involved tariff reductions, market access arrangements, investment commitments, and strategic economic cooperation between Indonesia and the United States. Given its importance, the event was reported by major international news organizations, including BBC and Reuters. Although both organizations covered the same event, differences in their linguistic choices may reflect distinct approaches to information presentation. Investigating these linguistic features can therefore provide insights into how economic events are represented through language.

Numerous studies have applied Systemic Functional Linguistics to investigate various forms of discourse. (Alharbi, 2021) examined controversial discourse and demonstrated that transitivity choices contribute to the transformation of negative representations into more acceptable forms. The study highlighted the importance of grammatical structures in shaping ideological meanings and social interpretations. Similarly, Ali et al., (2021) analyzed Nelson Mandela's speeches and found that material processes dominated the discourse, reflecting the speaker's emphasis on action and social transformation. Their findings indicate that grammatical choices play a crucial role in representing experiences and social realities.

Research on media discourse has also produced significant findings. (Potter (2016) investigated ideological representations in English and Arabic news reports and concluded that linguistic structures contribute to ideological positioning through thematic organization and textual patterns. Likewise, Prawiro (2017) analyzed interpersonal, ideational, and textual meanings in a news text and found that grammatical choices simultaneously realize multiple metafunctions of language. These studies demonstrate that news reports are not neutral texts but linguistic constructions shaped by specific communicative purposes.

Several researchers have focused specifically on transitivity in news discourse. El Fallaki (2022) examined newspaper headlines depicting the Russian attack on Ukraine and reported that transitivity patterns influenced representations of agency and responsibility. Similarly, Zakizadeh (2024) analyzed English newspaper headlines concerning the Ukraine–Russia war and found that grammatical choices contributed to ideological framing and event representation. More recently, Noori (2026) investigated CNN news titles related to the Israel–Palestine ceasefire and concluded that transitivity patterns affected how political actors and events were portrayed. These studies illustrate the usefulness of SFL in examining media representations of international events.

Other studies have applied SFL to educational and institutional texts. Jati and Somphithak (2021) explored narrative texts in elementary school textbooks and demonstrated how functional grammar can reveal patterns of meaning construction. Rodliyah and Liani (2022) investigated students' use of cohesive devices in exposition texts and found that linguistic resources contribute significantly to textual coherence. Shuya (2021) examined thematic progression in English news discourse and reported that textual organization plays an important role in facilitating communication. In addition, (Thi Nhat Linh, 2021) analyzed Vietnamese economic contracts and found that material processes were dominant because economic texts frequently describe actions, obligations, and agreements.

Recent research has continued to expand the application of SFL. (Łazuka-Banach, 2024) investigated transitivity choices in Polish newspaper headlines and demonstrated how grammatical patterns influence representations of social change and stability. Luan and Zhang (2024) analyzed Russian educational texts from an ecological discourse perspective and showed that transitivity analysis can reveal underlying ideological positions. Chalimah et al., (2021) explored language use in media discourse and found that grammatical and lexical choices significantly contribute to the strengthening and weakening of affect in ideological representation. Their findings reinforce the view that linguistic choices in media texts are closely related to meaning construction and audience interpretation.

Although previous studies have made substantial contributions to SFL research, several gaps remain. First, many studies have concentrated on transitivity processes, thematic progression, ideology, or cohesion, while relatively few have examined specific grammatical features within authentic economic news discourse. Second, existing research tends to focus on political speeches, educational texts, newspaper headlines, and conflict-related reporting. Comparatively little attention has been given to grammatical features such as connecting relationships, expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives in economic news reports. Third, studies comparing different international news organizations reporting the same economic event remain limited. Consequently, there is still insufficient understanding of how grammatical features are employed across different media institutions when representing identical economic issues.

To address these gaps, the present study examines grammatical features in BBC and Reuters reports on the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement through the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics. Specifically, the study focuses on parts of speech that express connecting relationships, expletive *it* and *there*, derivational forms of verbs, and descriptive adjectives. By analyzing these features and their realization within the transitivity system, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how language functions in economic news discourse.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and pedagogically. Theoretically, the study extends previous SFL research by examining grammatical features that have received limited attention in economic news discourse. Pedagogically, the findings may support English language education, particularly in grammar, discourse analysis, and media literacy courses. Through authentic examples drawn from international news reports, students can better understand how grammatical structures function as resources for meaning-making rather than merely as formal linguistic rules.

Based on the background presented above, this study investigates the English grammatical features found in BBC and Reuters news reports on the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement and examines how these features are represented through the transitivity system of Systemic Functional Linguistics. Through this analysis, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the role of grammatical choices in constructing meaning within international economic news discourse.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate English grammatical features in international economic news discourse. Qualitative research was considered appropriate because the study focused on describing, interpreting, and explaining linguistic phenomena rather than measuring statistical relationships. The analysis was conducted within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly the ideational metafunction and transitivity system proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). Through this framework, the study examined how specific grammatical features contribute to the construction of meaning in news reports.

The data of this study consisted of two international news articles discussing the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement published on 20 February 2026. The first article, entitled "US and Indonesia Finalise Deal to Cut Tariffs to 19%," was published by BBC News and written by Osmond Chia. The second article, entitled "Key Points of the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement," was published by Reuters on the same date. These articles were selected because they discuss the same economic event, allowing direct comparison of linguistic choices across different news organizations. Furthermore, BBC and Reuters are internationally recognized media institutions with extensive global readerships and established journalistic standards, making their reports suitable sources for discourse analysis.

The focus of the analysis was limited to four grammatical features: parts of speech that express connecting relationships, expletive it and there, derivational forms of verbs, and descriptive adjectives. These features were selected because they frequently occur in formal written discourse and contribute significantly to the organization, representation, and evaluation of information. In addition, the study examined how these grammatical features were realized through transitivity processes, particularly material, relational, verbal, and existential processes.

Data collection was conducted through document analysis. The researcher first obtained the two news articles from the official BBC and Reuters websites. The articles were then carefully read several times to identify grammatical features relevant to the research objectives. Sentences containing conjunctions, expletive constructions, derivational verbs, and descriptive adjectives were highlighted and classified according to their grammatical categories. Subsequently, the identified linguistic features were analyzed using the transitivity framework to determine how they contributed to the representation of actions, relationships, evaluations, and institutional processes within the news reports.

To ensure systematic analysis, the study followed four analytical procedures. First, the researcher identified and categorized occurrences of the four grammatical features within both

articles. Second, each feature was classified according to its grammatical function and contextual meaning. Third, the identified features were interpreted through the transitivity system to determine their relationship with material, relational, verbal, or existential processes. Finally, similarities and differences between the BBC and Reuters reports were compared and interpreted to reveal patterns of grammatical representation in economic news discourse.

The findings were presented descriptively through tables and explanatory discussions. Frequency counts were used only to support qualitative interpretation rather than as the primary focus of the study. The analysis emphasized how grammatical features functioned within the texts and how they contributed to the construction of meaning regarding the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement.

RESULTS

The analysis identified four grammatical features in both news reports: parts of speech expressing connecting relationships, expletive *it* and *there*, derivational forms of verbs, and descriptive adjectives. Table 1 presents the overall distribution of these features in the BBC and Reuters articles.

Grammatical Feature	**BBC**	**Reuters**	**Total**
Connecting Relationships	18	22	40
Expletive *It* and *There*	2	1	3
Derivational Verbs	11	15	26
Descriptive Adjectives	9	8	17
Total	**40**	**46**	**86**

Table 1. *Distribution of Grammatical Features in BBC and Reuters Reports*

The findings indicate that connecting relationships were the most frequently occurring grammatical feature in both reports. This result suggests that economic news discourse relies heavily on conjunctions and linking expressions to connect policies, agreements, commitments, and economic actions. Derivational verbs appeared as the second most common feature, reflecting the action-oriented nature of economic reporting. Descriptive adjectives were also frequently employed to characterize agreements, investments, and economic relationships. In contrast, expletive constructions occurred only minimally, indicating a preference for direct and information-dense sentence structures.

Parts of Speech Expressing Connecting Relationships

The analysis revealed that conjunctions and linking expressions occurred frequently in both articles. Examples include *and*, *while*, *including*, *as part of*, *furthermore*, and *also*.

Source	Example
BBC	"Indonesia will cut trade barriers on more than 99% of US imports **and** facilitate more than $30bn of purchases of American goods."
BBC	"The agreement will break down trade barriers **while** advancing the interests of the American people."
Reuters	"Indonesia will remove restrictions on exports **and** intensify cooperation with US firms."
Reuters	"Indonesia will arrange imports from the United States **including** energy commodities and agricultural goods."

Table 2. *Examples of Connecting Relationships*

These conjunctions establish additive and temporal relationships between actions and events. Through the perspective of SFL, they contribute to logical meaning by connecting multiple material processes within a single clause. Their frequent occurrence indicates that economic news reporting often compresses large amounts of information into concise grammatical structures.

Expletive *It* and *There*

Expletive constructions appeared only rarely in the data.

Source	Example
BBC	"**It** comes in exchange for Indonesia opening up its markets to American products."
Reuters	"A review of the regulation is to take place within 12 months of the agreement." (existential meaning)

Table 3. *Examples of Expletive Constructions*

The limited occurrence of expletive constructions suggests that both news organizations favor direct representations of actors and actions. This pattern is consistent with the informational nature of economic reporting, where clarity and precision are prioritized.

Derivational Forms of Verbs

Derivational verbs occurred frequently throughout both reports.

Source	Example
BBC	facilitate
BBC	finalise
Reuters	eliminate
Reuters	intensify
Reuters	facilitate

Table 4. *Examples of Derivational Verbs*

Most of these verbs describe institutional actions, policy implementation, or economic processes. Their use reflects the formal and professional style characteristic of economic news discourse.

Descriptive Adjectives

Descriptive adjectives were used to characterize economic agreements, relationships, and policy outcomes.

Source	Example
BBC	beneficial
BBC	mutual
BBC	optimistic
Reuters	critical
Reuters	indicative

Table 5. *Examples of Descriptive Adjectives*

These adjectives contribute evaluative meanings and help readers interpret the significance of the trade agreement. In particular, adjectives such as *beneficial* and *mutual* portray the agreement positively, emphasizing cooperation and shared economic advantages.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the four grammatical features examined in this study contribute significantly to meaning construction in economic news discourse. Among the identified features, parts of speech expressing connecting relationships appeared most frequently in both the BBC and Reuters reports. This finding suggests that economic news discourse relies heavily

on conjunctions and linking expressions to connect multiple actions, agreements, and policy measures within a coherent text. Economic events are often complex and involve numerous actors, decisions, and consequences; therefore, journalists employ conjunctions such as *and*, *while*, *including*, and *also* to establish logical relationships among ideas. This finding supports Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) view that conjunctions realize logical meaning through additive, temporal, causal, and adversative relationships. Similarly, Biber et al., (2021) argue that conjunctions function as cohesive devices that help readers process and interpret information effectively. The dominance of connecting relationships in the data indicates that coherence and information linkage are essential characteristics of economic news reporting.

The analysis also revealed that derivational forms of verbs occurred frequently throughout both articles. Verbs such as *facilitate*, *finalise*, *eliminate*, and *intensify* were commonly used to represent governmental actions, trade policies, and institutional decisions. According to Yule, (2012) derivation is one of the most productive processes of word formation because it allows language users to create new lexical items capable of expressing complex meanings efficiently. Bauer (2019) further explains that derivational verbs are particularly common in formal and professional discourse because they provide concise representations of actions and processes. The prevalence of derivational verbs in the present study reflects the formal nature of economic journalism, which frequently reports negotiations, regulations, agreements, and economic initiatives. Through these lexical choices, journalists are able to present institutional actions in a precise and concise manner.

Descriptive adjectives also appeared frequently in both news reports. Adjectives such as *beneficial*, *mutual*, *strong*, and *optimistic* were used to characterize economic relationships, agreements, and expected outcomes. Huddleston & Pullum (2005) explain that descriptive adjectives function to assign qualities and attributes to entities, while Biber et al. (2021) emphasize their evaluative role in discourse. In the analyzed reports, descriptive adjectives did not merely provide factual descriptions but also contributed to the evaluation of the trade agreement. For instance, expressions such as *mutual economic prosperity* and *beneficial agreement* construct a positive image of cooperation between Indonesia and the United States. This finding is consistent with Chalimah et al. (2021), who argue that linguistic choices in media discourse contribute to the strengthening or weakening of particular perspectives. Although the present study does not specifically investigate ideology, the use of evaluative adjectives demonstrates how language choices may influence readers' interpretations of economic events.

When interpreted through the transitivity system of Systemic Functional Linguistics, the identified grammatical features were predominantly associated with material and relational processes. Material processes were particularly evident in clauses describing trade negotiations, tariff reductions, investments, and policy implementations. Examples such as *Indonesia will cut trade barriers*, *Indonesia will facilitate purchases*, and *Indonesia will eliminate tariff barriers* portray governments and institutions as active participants performing concrete actions. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), material processes represent actions and events occurring in the physical or social world. The dominance of material processes in the present study is therefore unsurprising because economic news discourse primarily focuses on actions, decisions, and institutional activities. This finding aligns with previous studies conducted by Ali et al. (2021), Thi Nhat Linh (2021), and El Fallaki (2022), all of whom reported the predominance of material processes in texts concerned with political, economic, or institutional activities.

Relational processes were also frequently observed, particularly in clauses containing descriptive adjectives. Through relational processes, attributes were assigned to agreements, institutions, and economic conditions. For example, clauses describing the agreement as *beneficial* or referring to *strong supply chains* represent evaluations through attributive relationships. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) explain that relational processes establish connections between entities and their attributes, thereby contributing to description and evaluation. The presence of descriptive adjectives within relational processes demonstrates how grammatical choices can shape readers' perceptions of economic cooperation and policy outcomes.

Although verbal and existential processes occurred less frequently, they nevertheless contributed to meaning construction within the reports. Verbal processes appeared mainly in quotations attributed to political figures and government representatives, such as statements made by Airlangga Hartarto and Prabowo Subianto. These processes enhance credibility by linking information to identifiable sources. Existential processes, meanwhile, were associated with the limited occurrence of expletive constructions and primarily served to introduce information rather than describe actions. Their relatively low frequency further reflects the preference of economic news discourse for direct and action-oriented reporting.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that grammatical features function as meaningful linguistic resources rather than merely formal grammatical elements. Connecting relationships facilitate

textual coherence, derivational verbs represent institutional actions, descriptive adjectives contribute evaluative meanings, and expletive constructions support information organization. Through their interaction with material, relational, verbal, and existential processes, these grammatical features help construct representations of economic events, institutional relationships, and policy outcomes. The study therefore supports previous research highlighting the usefulness of Systemic Functional Linguistics in media discourse analysis while extending existing literature through its focus on grammatical features in international economic news reporting.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated grammatical features in BBC and Reuters reports on the Indonesia–US Trade Agreement through the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics. The findings revealed that connecting relationships were the most frequent feature, followed by derivational verbs and descriptive adjectives, while expletive constructions appeared only rarely. These features were primarily associated with material and relational processes, indicating that economic news discourse focuses on actions, relationships, and evaluations. Overall, the study shows that grammatical choices play an important role in constructing meaning in news texts and demonstrates the value of SFL for analyzing authentic media discourse.

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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 (Mirzaghabeyk 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. (Mirzaghabeyk 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); (Mirzaghabeyk 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.

5.	The article is publicly accessible and complete.

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 (*it* and *there*)	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 -ise. 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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A Comparative Analysis of Grammatical Features in News Discourse: A Study of Two News Articles

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Abstract

News discourse employs various grammatical features to organize information, establish textual cohesion, and convey meaning effectively. This study aims to identify and compare the grammatical features used in two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations published by The Jakarta Post and Reuters. The analysis focuses on four grammatical features, namely derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive *it* and *there*, and descriptive adjectives. This study employed a qualitative descriptive method using document analysis. The data consisted of grammatical features identified in the selected news articles, which were analyzed based on theories proposed by Yule and Bauer for derivational forms, Halliday and Hasan for connecting relationships, Quirk et al. for expletive constructions, and Greenbaum and Nelson for descriptive adjectives. The findings revealed that derivational forms were the most frequently used grammatical feature in both articles, followed by descriptive adjectives and connecting relationships, while expletive constructions occurred only rarely. The Reuters article contained a slightly higher frequency of grammatical features than The Jakarta Post article, indicating a greater use of lexical and structural complexity. The results suggest that grammatical features contribute significantly to the clarity, cohesion, and effectiveness of news discourse. This study provides insights into how different news media employ grammatical resources to present economic and political information and contributes to the broader understanding of language use in contemporary journalistic writing.
Keywords: grammatical features, news discourse, derivational forms, cohesion, comparative analysis.

INTRODUCTION

News discourse plays an important role in disseminating information and shaping public understanding of social, political, and economic issues. As one of the most widely consumed forms of media communication, news articles are expected to present information clearly, accurately, and objectively. In digital society, news discourse not only functions as a medium for delivering information but also as a means of constructing public narratives and influencing readers' perceptions of current events. According to van Dijk (1988), news discourse is not merely a collection of factual reports but a structured form of communication that reflects linguistic choices and social contexts. Therefore, the analysis of grammatical features in news discourse is important for understanding how language is used to organize information and convey meaning effectively in journalistic communication.

Economic and trade news is particularly interesting to analyze because it often presents complex information related to international relations, government policies, investments, and global market conditions. Journalists are required to communicate technical and detailed information in a way that remains understandable for readers from different educational and social backgrounds. In this context, grammatical features become essential tools for organizing information systematically, maintaining textual clarity, and simplifying complicated issues. Through grammatical choices, news writers are able to construct reports that appear objective, formal, and informative while still maintaining reader comprehension.

Different news organizations may employ different linguistic styles depending on their communicative purposes, editorial perspectives, and target audiences. Reuters, as an international news agency, generally produces globally oriented reports characterized by concise yet information-dense language. In contrast, The Jakarta Post, as an Indonesian English-language newspaper, often presents news in a style that is more contextualized for Indonesian readers. Comparing these two news sources is important because it provides insights into how grammatical resources are utilized differently in international and national media discourse. Such differences may reflect variations in journalistic conventions, audience orientation, and approaches to presenting economic and political information.

Grammatical features contribute significantly to the structure and meaning of news texts. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) argue that grammar is a resource for meaning-making that enables language users to organize experiences and communicate information effectively. Among the various grammatical features found in English news articles, derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive it and there, and descriptive adjectives are frequently employed. Derivational forms explain how new words are created through prefixes and suffixes and contribute to vocabulary expansion in formal discourse (Yule, 2010; Bauer, 1983). Connecting relationships function as cohesive devices that establish logical relations between clauses and sentences (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Meanwhile, expletive constructions and descriptive adjectives contribute to sentence balance, clarity, and detailed description in news reporting (Quirk et al., 1985; Greenbaum & Nelson, 2009).

Several previous studies have examined grammatical and morphological features in news discourse. Kaswita and Sarmi (2023) analyzed derivational affixes in CNN news articles and found that

derivational processes are frequently used to create lexical variety and support formal journalistic language. Similarly, Pratama and Utami (2025) investigated derivational suffixes in BBC News and reported that derivational forms contribute significantly to the construction of formal news discourse. In addition, Rofiq and Sahreebanu (2024) examined grammatical cohesion in news discourse related to the Russia–Ukraine War and revealed that cohesive devices play an important role in maintaining textual coherence. Furthermore, Sabardila et al. (2025) found that linguistic structures influence the framing and interpretation of information in digital news media.

Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into grammatical features in news discourse, most of them focused only on a single linguistic aspect, such as derivational affixes, cohesion, or discourse structures. Comparative studies examining several grammatical features simultaneously across different news organizations remain limited, particularly in economic news discussing international trade relations. Therefore, a comparative investigation is necessary to provide a broader understanding of how grammatical features are utilized in different media contexts.

To address this gap, the present study examines grammatical features in two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations published by The Jakarta Post and Reuters. The analysis focuses on four grammatical features, namely derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive it and there, and descriptive adjectives. By comparing the occurrence and use of these features in both news articles, this study aims to identify the grammatical patterns employed by each news source and to contribute to the understanding of grammatical features in contemporary news discourse.

In the contemporary digital era, online news media has become one of the primary sources of information for global society. Readers increasingly rely on digital news platforms to obtain rapid updates concerning political, economic, and social developments occurring around the world. As a result, the language used in digital journalism has become increasingly significant because it influences how information is interpreted and understood by audiences. News discourse therefore functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a representation of institutional perspectives, journalistic practices, and social realities.

The growing influence of digital media has also intensified competition among news organizations to present information effectively and attract readers' attention. Journalists are expected to produce

reports that are concise, informative, and accessible while still maintaining objectivity and credibility. In this context, grammatical structures become important linguistic resources that help writers organize ideas, establish coherence, and simplify complex issues. Through grammatical choices, news writers can guide readers in understanding relationships between events, policies, and social actors presented in news reports.

Furthermore, English-language news articles play a crucial role in international communication because English functions as a global lingua franca in diplomacy, economics, and media. International news agencies such as Reuters distribute information to worldwide audiences, while regional media such as The Jakarta Post adapt international issues for local readers. Although both news organizations may discuss similar events, differences in linguistic style and grammatical patterns may emerge due to variations in editorial conventions, communicative purposes, and audience expectations.

The analysis of grammatical features in news discourse is therefore important because grammar contributes directly to textual organization and meaning-making. Grammatical elements such as derivational forms, conjunctions, expletive constructions, and descriptive adjectives assist journalists in presenting information systematically and effectively. Through these linguistic resources, news articles are able to maintain cohesion, clarity, and readability despite discussing highly technical or complex economic issues.

In addition, economic and trade news discourse often contains specialized terminology and institutional language related to tariffs, investments, regulations, and international cooperation. Such topics require precise and formal language to avoid ambiguity and misinformation. Consequently, grammatical analysis becomes relevant for understanding how journalists structure information and construct professional news narratives in digital media environments.

Previous studies concerning news discourse have mostly focused on critical discourse analysis, media framing, or specific grammatical phenomena. Limited research has comparatively examined multiple grammatical features across different news organizations discussing the same economic issue. Therefore, this study attempts to provide a broader perspective by analyzing several grammatical features simultaneously within two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations.

This comparative approach contributes to understanding how grammatical resources are utilized differently in international and national digital news media.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a comparative content analysis design. The purpose of the study was to identify and compare grammatical features in two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations. The analysis focused on four grammatical features, namely derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive it and there, and descriptive adjectives. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study emphasized the description, classification, and interpretation of linguistic phenomena found in the selected news texts.

The data of this study consisted of two English-language news articles published by different news organizations. The first article was “Indonesia, US Firms Sign Over $7 Billion in Trade, Investment Deals” published by The Jakarta Post on February 19, 2026. The second article was “Indonesia Secures 19% Tariff Deal with US, Palm Oil and Other Commodities Exempt” published by Reuters through Investing.com on February 20, 2026. Both articles were selected because they discussed the same topic, namely economic relations between Indonesia and the United States, particularly trade agreements, investments, and tariff policies. The use of two different news sources discussing the same issue enabled a comparative examination of grammatical features in news discourse.

In qualitative research, the researcher functioned as the primary instrument for collecting, classifying, and analyzing the data. In addition, a data classification table was used to record and categorize the grammatical features identified in the news texts. The categories of analysis were developed based on established linguistic theories. Derivational forms were analyzed using the theories of Yule (2010) and Bauer (1983), connecting relationships were examined based on Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) theory of cohesion, expletive it and there were identified according to Quirk et al. (1985), and descriptive adjectives were analyzed using Greenbaum and Nelson’s (2009) grammatical framework. The data were collected through several stages. First, the researcher selected two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations published by different news organizations.

Second, the articles were read carefully to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their content. Third, grammatical features relevant to the research objectives were identified and highlighted. Fourth, the identified data were classified into the categories of derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive it and there, and descriptive adjectives. Finally, the data were organized into tables to facilitate comparison and analysis.

The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Each grammatical feature found in the two news articles was classified according to its respective theoretical category and then quantified to determine its frequency of occurrence. The findings from both articles were subsequently compared to identify similarities and differences in the use of grammatical features. The interpretation of the data was based on relevant linguistic theories and previous studies concerning morphology, grammar, and news discourse. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher repeatedly reviewed the data classification and cross-checked the identified grammatical features with the theoretical frameworks employed in the study.

RESULTS

This study investigated grammatical features in two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations published by The Jakarta Post and Reuters. The analysis focused on four grammatical features, namely derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive it and there, and descriptive adjectives.

Table 1 presents the frequency of derivational forms identified in the two news articles.

Table 1. Frequency of Derivational Forms in the Two News Articles

News Text	Frequency
The Jakarta Post	9
Reuters	29
Total	38

The findings showed that derivational forms appeared 38 times in the two news articles. Reuters contained a higher number of derivational forms (29 occurrences) than The Jakarta Post (9 occurrences). Examples identified in the texts included investment, agreement, cooperation, reduction, negotiations, implementation, and restrictions.

Table 2 presents the connecting relationships identified in the two news articles.

Table 2. Connecting Relationships Identified in the Two News Articles

No	Connecting Relationship	News Text

1	and	The Jakarta Post
2	according to	The Jakarta Post
3	including	The Jakarta Post
4	but	The Jakarta Post
5	that	The Jakarta Post
6	with	The Jakarta Post
7	and	Reuters
8	however	Reuters
9	also	Reuters
10	As well as	Reuters
11	if	Reuters
12	In return	Reuters
13	According to	Reuters
14	when	Reuters
15	under	Reuters
16	after	Reuters
17	Therefore (implicit relation)	Reuters

The findings indicated that both articles employed various connecting relationships to establish links between ideas and clauses. Reuters contained a wider variety of connecting expressions compared to The Jakarta Post.

Table 3 presents the occurrence of expletive it and there in the two news articles.

Table 3. Expletive It and There in the Two News Articles.

No	Expression	News Text
1	It added that Indonesia will buy 1 million tons of wheat	The Jakarta Post
2	It will mean more trade	The Jakarta Post
3	It will mean more investment	The Jakarta Post
4	It will also accept U.S. product standards	Reuters

The results showed that expletive constructions appeared only rarely in the analyzed news articles. Four expressions containing it were identified in the data.

Table 4 presents the descriptive adjectives identified in the two news articles.

Table 4. Descriptive Adjectives Identified in the Two News Articles.

No	Descriptive Adjective	News Text
1	final	The Jakarta Post
2	critical	The Jakarta Post
3	annual	The Jakarta Post
4	agricultural	The Jakarta Post
5	optimistic	The Jakarta Post
6	slight	The Jakarta Post
7	comprehensive	The Jakarta Post
8	biggest	Reuters
9	senior	Reuters
10	important	Reuters
11	overall	Reuters
12	tariff-free	Reuters
13	higher	Reuters
14	rough	Reuters
15	further	Reuters
16	Non economic	Reuters
17	critical	Reuters
18	foreign-owned	Reuters
19	related	Reuters
20	rare-earth	Reuters

The findings revealed that Reuters contained more descriptive adjectives than The Jakarta Post. A total of twenty descriptive adjectives were identified in the two news articles.

Table 5 summarizes the comparative frequency of grammatical features found in the analyzed news articles.

Table 5. Comparative Frequency of Grammatical Features.

Grammatical Feature	The Jakarta Post	Reuters	Total
Derivational Forms	9	29	38
Connecting Relationships	6	11	17
Expletive It and There	2	2	4
Descriptive Adjectives	7	13	20
Total	24	55	79

The results demonstrated that Reuters contained a higher overall frequency of grammatical features than The Jakarta Post. Derivational forms constituted the most dominant grammatical feature identified in both articles, followed by descriptive adjectives and connecting relationships. Expletive constructions appeared least frequently in the analyzed texts.

Further analysis of derivational forms revealed that the majority of derivational processes identified in the news articles were suffix formations. The suffixes -tion, -ment, -ion, and -al appeared most frequently in both articles. In Reuters, derivational forms such as investment, implementation, negotiations, reduction, and cooperation were repeatedly used to condense information into formal nominal expressions. Similarly, The Jakarta Post employed derivational forms including agreement, investment, and agricultural to maintain formal journalistic style.

The derivational forms identified in the articles functioned primarily as nouns and adjectives. Nominal derivations were dominant because economic and political news discourse frequently discusses policies, agreements, regulations, and institutional activities. The use of nominalized forms enabled journalists to present information more concisely and objectively. In addition, adjective derivations such as agricultural and comprehensive contributed to providing descriptive information concerning trade relations and policy contexts.

The analysis also demonstrated that connecting relationships played a crucial role in organizing information within the news texts. Coordinating conjunctions such as and and but were frequently used to connect clauses and maintain the flow of information. In Reuters, more complex connectors

such as however, as well as, and in return were identified. These expressions established logical relationships including addition, contrast, condition, and consequence between ideas presented in the articles.

Moreover, the findings indicated that Reuters tended to construct longer and more information-dense sentences compared to The Jakarta Post. The use of varied connecting relationships enabled Reuters to combine multiple pieces of information within single sentence structures. In contrast, The Jakarta Post employed relatively simpler sentence constructions and fewer linking expressions, resulting in more straightforward information delivery.

The occurrence of descriptive adjectives also contributed significantly to the representation of economic and political issues in the analyzed news articles. Adjectives such as critical, important, overall, and tariff-free provided additional contextual information regarding trade negotiations and economic conditions. Reuters employed a larger number of descriptive adjectives to elaborate on policy implications, market conditions, and diplomatic relations.

In addition, several adjectives identified in Reuters reflected technical and economic terminology commonly found in international business reporting. Terms such as foreign-owned, rare-earth, and tariff-free indicated the article's orientation toward detailed economic explanation. Meanwhile, The Jakarta Post tended to employ more general descriptive adjectives that were easier for broader audiences to understand.

The findings further revealed differences in the stylistic characteristics of the two news organizations. Reuters demonstrated a greater tendency toward lexical density and grammatical complexity through the extensive use of derivational forms, descriptive adjectives, and varied cohesive devices. This stylistic tendency may reflect Reuters' role as an international news agency serving global readers who require detailed and comprehensive economic information. On the other hand, The Jakarta Post presented information using relatively simpler grammatical patterns, which may indicate an effort to maintain accessibility and readability for Indonesian audiences.

The grammatical patterns identified in this study also reflected the communicative purposes of economic news discourse. Economic and trade reports frequently contain technical information concerning tariffs, investments, commodities, and international agreements. Therefore, journalists

rely on grammatical features to simplify, organize, and clarify complex information. Through grammatical cohesion and lexical variation, the analyzed news articles were able to maintain coherence while delivering substantial amounts of information efficiently.

The comparative analysis additionally demonstrated that grammatical features contribute not only to linguistic structure but also to the construction of media narratives. Different grammatical choices may influence how readers perceive economic relations, government policies, and international cooperation. Consequently, grammatical analysis is important for understanding how language functions within contemporary digital journalism and media communication.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that grammatical features played an important role in constructing news discourse related to Indonesia–United States trade relations. Among the four grammatical features analyzed, derivational forms appeared most frequently in both news articles. Reuters contained a considerably higher number of derivational forms than The Jakarta Post, indicating a greater tendency toward the use of nominalized and information-dense expressions. Words such as investment, agreement, implementation, and negotiations demonstrated how derivational morphology contributed to the construction of formal journalistic language.

This finding supports Yule's (2010) argument that derivation is one of the most productive word-formation processes in English because it enables the creation of new lexical items through prefixes and suffixes. Similarly, Bauer (1983) states that derivational morphology contributes to vocabulary expansion and lexical development in formal discourse. The extensive use of derivational forms in Reuters also reflects Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) view that nominalization is commonly employed in formal written texts to condense information and present events objectively. Therefore, the high frequency of derivational forms found in Reuters suggests that international news agencies tend to employ more complex lexical structures to deliver economic and political information efficiently.

The findings also showed that connecting relationships were widely used in both news articles. Reuters employed a greater variety of connecting expressions, including however, as well as, in

return, and after, whereas The Jakarta Post mainly used simpler connectors such as and, but, and with. The use of these cohesive devices helped organize information systematically and establish logical relationships between ideas and clauses.

This result aligns with Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory of cohesion, which explains that conjunctions and linking expressions function to maintain textual unity and coherence. The greater variation of connecting relationships in Reuters indicates a more complex organization of information and a stronger emphasis on explaining economic and political relations in detail. Through these grammatical devices, readers are guided through discussions concerning tariffs, trade agreements, investments, and diplomatic negotiations more effectively.

In addition to derivational forms and connecting relationships, descriptive adjectives were frequently identified in both news articles. Reuters contained more descriptive adjectives than The Jakarta Post, including important, rough, foreign-owned, and rare-earth. These adjectives were used to provide additional details concerning economic conditions, trade commodities, market situations, and political actors.

According to Greenbaum and Nelson (2009), descriptive adjectives function to provide information about the qualities or characteristics of nouns. Their use in news discourse contributes to textual clarity and supports readers' understanding of complicated issues. The higher frequency of descriptive adjectives in Reuters suggests that the article attempted to provide more detailed contextual explanations compared to The Jakarta Post. Consequently, descriptive adjectives contributed to the informative and explanatory nature of economic news reporting.

Meanwhile, expletive it and there appeared only rarely in the analyzed texts. Most instances of it identified in the articles functioned referentially rather than as genuine expletive constructions. This finding indicates that economic news discourse tends to prioritize direct and information-centered sentence structures rather than introductory or existential constructions.

The limited use of expletive constructions supports Quirk et al.'s (1985) explanation that expletive subjects mainly serve syntactic functions without carrying substantial lexical meaning. Since economic news articles focus heavily on factual and concise information delivery, the use of direct

sentence structures becomes more dominant than expletive patterns. This stylistic tendency reflects the formal and objective characteristics commonly found in journalistic discourse.

Overall, the findings support van Dijk's (1988) perspective that news discourse is carefully structured through linguistic choices that influence how information is presented to readers. The comparative analysis demonstrated that although Reuters and The Jakarta Post discussed the same topic, both news organizations employed grammatical resources differently according to their communicative styles and audience orientations. Reuters tended to employ more lexical and structural complexity, whereas The Jakarta Post used relatively simpler grammatical patterns.

The findings of this study are also consistent with several previous studies. Kaswita and Sarmi (2023) reported that derivational affixes are frequently used in news articles to create lexical variation and support formal journalistic writing. Likewise, Pratama and Utami (2025) found that derivational suffixes contribute significantly to the construction of formal news discourse. In terms of cohesion, the present study also supports Rofiq and Sahreebanu (2024), who found that grammatical cohesive devices play an important role in maintaining textual coherence in news reporting.

Despite these findings, this study has several limitations. First, the data were limited to only two news articles, which may not fully represent broader patterns of grammatical feature usage in news discourse. Second, the analysis focused only on four grammatical features and did not examine other linguistic aspects such as transitivity, modality, thematic structure, or lexical density. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the selected data and analytical framework.

Future research is recommended to analyze a larger corpus of news articles from different media organizations and topics to obtain more comprehensive results concerning grammatical patterns in digital news discourse. Researchers may also investigate additional discourse features and combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide deeper insights into how grammatical choices influence meaning-making, cohesion, and information delivery in contemporary journalism.

The differences identified between Reuters and The Jakarta Post may also reflect distinctions in institutional communication styles and audience orientation. As an international news agency, Reuters serves readers from various countries and professional backgrounds, including investors,

policymakers, economists, and international business communities. Consequently, Reuters tends to employ more formal and information-dense grammatical structures to accommodate global economic reporting standards. The frequent use of derivational forms and descriptive adjectives in Reuters demonstrates an emphasis on precision, conciseness, and detailed explanation.

In contrast, The Jakarta Post primarily targets Indonesian readers, including English learners, academics, and local professionals. Therefore, its language style appears relatively more accessible and less structurally complex. Simpler grammatical constructions and fewer cohesive variations may help readers understand economic and political issues more easily. This finding suggests that grammatical choices in news discourse are influenced not only by linguistic preferences but also by communicative goals and target readership.

The findings of this study further indicate that grammatical features contribute significantly to the effectiveness of information delivery in digital journalism. In online news media, readers often consume information quickly through digital platforms such as websites, mobile applications, and social media. As a result, journalists must organize information efficiently while maintaining clarity and coherence. Grammatical features such as conjunctions, derivational forms, and descriptive adjectives assist writers in condensing information and presenting complex economic issues in a comprehensible manner.

Moreover, the dominance of derivational forms identified in this study reflects the characteristics of formal written discourse commonly found in journalistic and academic communication. Nominalization enables journalists to compress lengthy explanations into concise lexical units. For example, words such as negotiation, implementation, and investment allow complex processes and institutional activities to be represented efficiently within sentences. This linguistic strategy contributes to lexical density, which is frequently associated with formal and professional writing styles.

The findings also support previous perspectives regarding the relationship between language and media representation. According to van Dijk (1988), linguistic structures in news discourse influence how readers interpret events and social realities. In the analyzed articles, grammatical features contributed to the representation of Indonesia–United States trade relations as formal, strategic, and

economically significant. Through specific lexical and grammatical choices, the news articles constructed narratives concerning international cooperation, economic policy, and diplomatic relations.

Another important finding concerns the role of cohesion in maintaining textual unity. Reuters employed more varied connecting relationships, indicating a greater emphasis on logical explanation and information integration. This suggests that international economic news often requires more elaborate sentence structures to explain relationships between policies, investments, tariffs, and trade agreements. The use of cohesive devices therefore becomes essential for guiding readers through complex discussions and maintaining coherence across paragraphs.

In addition, the relatively limited occurrence of expletive constructions suggests that economic news discourse prioritizes directness and factuality. Journalistic writing generally values concise sentence structures that communicate information efficiently. Therefore, existential or introductory constructions such as expletive it and there are less frequently employed compared to other grammatical features. This stylistic tendency aligns with the communicative purpose of economic reporting, which focuses on presenting concrete information clearly and objectively.

This study also contributes to the broader field of discourse analysis and media linguistics. By examining multiple grammatical features simultaneously, the research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how linguistic resources function within contemporary news discourse. Previous studies frequently focused on a single aspect of grammar, whereas this study integrated morphological, syntactic, and cohesive elements into one comparative analysis. Consequently, the findings offer broader insights into the relationship between grammar, communication, and digital media narratives.

Furthermore, the findings may provide pedagogical implications for English language learning, particularly in the areas of grammar and discourse analysis. News articles can serve as authentic learning materials for students to understand how grammatical structures operate in real communicative contexts. Through the analysis of derivational forms, conjunctions, and descriptive adjectives, learners may develop greater awareness of how grammar contributes to meaning-making and textual organization in professional writing.

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study analyzed only two news articles discussing a single topic related to Indonesia–United States trade relations. Therefore, the findings may not represent the full range of grammatical variation found in digital news discourse. Additionally, the analysis focused exclusively on four grammatical features and did not examine other important linguistic aspects such as modality, transitivity, thematic progression, or lexical density.

Future studies are encouraged to investigate larger corpora involving multiple international and national news organizations to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding grammatical variation in media discourse. Researchers may also apply corpus linguistics approaches or critical discourse analysis to explore how grammatical features interact with ideology, media framing, and audience interpretation in digital journalism. Such studies would contribute further to understanding the role of language in shaping narratives and communication within contemporary digital society.

CONCLUSION

This study examined grammatical features in two news articles discussing Indonesia–United States trade relations published by The Jakarta Post and Reuters. The analysis focused on four grammatical features, namely derivational forms, connecting relationships, expletive it and there, and descriptive adjectives. The findings revealed that both news articles employed these grammatical features to construct coherent, informative, and formal news discourse.

The results showed that derivational forms were the most dominant grammatical feature identified in both articles, followed by descriptive adjectives and connecting relationships. Reuters contained a higher frequency of grammatical features overall compared to The Jakarta Post, particularly in the use of derivational forms and descriptive adjectives. These findings indicate that Reuters tended to employ more complex lexical and structural patterns in presenting economic and political information. Meanwhile, expletive constructions appeared only rarely in the analyzed texts, suggesting that economic news discourse generally prioritizes direct and information-centered sentence structures.

The findings confirm that grammatical features contribute significantly to the clarity, cohesion, and effectiveness of news discourse. Different news organizations may utilize grammatical resources differently depending on their communicative purposes, writing styles, and audience orientations. Therefore, grammatical analysis can provide valuable insights into how language is used to construct meaning and organize information in contemporary digital journalism.

This study has several limitations. The analysis was limited to only two news articles and focused on four grammatical features. As a result, the findings may not fully represent broader patterns of grammatical usage in news discourse. Future research is recommended to analyze larger corpora from various media organizations and investigate additional linguistic features to obtain more comprehensive insights into grammatical patterns in digital news discourse.

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