

Social Media Portrayals of War of Waters: A Critical Discourse

Analysis

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Abstract

Although war of waters has existed throughout history, it has gained increasing relevance in recent decades, particularly in regions where transboundary rivers are politically contested. One of the most critical and ongoing disputes is between Iraq and Turkey over the control on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The study seeks to achieve three primary objectives: investigating the types of transitivity processes most frequently used in the politicians' utterances; analysing how the positive self-representation and negative other-representation are uncovered in the politicians' utterances; and exploring the similarities and differences in these linguistic tools between the two opposing sides. To achieve these objectives, the researcher employs a qualitative descriptive design, using an eclectic model that integrates Fairclough's (1989) dialectal relational approach with van Dijk's (1998) ideological square.

One social media report is selected and analysed using transitivity at the micro level to uncover hidden ideological representations at the macro level. The findings reveal that material processes are the most frequently used in the politicians' utterances, highlighting their focus on concrete actions and tangible events. Through these linguistic tools, they emphasise positive self-representation and de-emphasise, or delegitimise, the opposing side. The findings also reveal that in some instances Iraqi and Turkish politicians employ similar linguistic tools to shape their narratives and to ideologically represent the self and the other in different ways. In other instances, they employ different linguistic tools with different ideological representations. A corpus-assisted CDA of war of waters in Arab newspapers could be conducted in future research to examine ideological representations across diverse media.

Keywords : War of waters, Critical discourse analysis, Social media, News reports

1. Introduction

Freshwater is essential for all economic and social activities, ranging from food and energy production to the maintenance of natural ecosystems that provide fundamental services for humanity. Water has historically been a critical factor in security and conflict, with its significance extending from ancient times to the present. It has been used as both a weapon and a tool of warfare. However, pressures on water resources are intensifying, driven in part by new factors such as rapid population growth, widespread environmental degradation, increasing water consumption, and climate change. These pressures create disputes between countries over water resources, potentially leading to what is known as 'war of waters' (Iceland, 2017). According to Adam (2020), war of waters refers to conflicts between nations or states over access to freshwater resources.

In parallel with the rise of such conflicts, social media has emerged as a distinct domain within the media landscape. It has become deeply ingrained as a powerful tool for

influencing individuals and transforming how they access information. According to Fiveable (2024), social media refers to the practice of using online platforms as tools for gathering, reporting, and disseminating news and information, allowing news to be shared instantly and widely with global audiences. Consequently, social media has become a key platform for political communication between Iraq and Turkey regarding the disputes over the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. This political communication is published as news reports. Accordingly, news reports derived from media channels reflect social practices and have become significant subjects of discourse analysis (Guo, 2011). These reports depict real events, incorporate a range of viewpoints from different sources, and aim to mitigate the personal opinions and ideological biases of journalists (Kang & Li, 2018). Fairclough's (1989) dialectical relational approach and van Dijk's (1998) ideological square are utilized to analyze the data. Unlike interpretive approaches, CDA aligns more closely with qualitative designs and is highly applicable to the context of 'war of waters'. CDA, as noted by Serafini and Gee (2017), is an interdisciplinary approach to the examination of discourse that views language as a social practice. It seeks to explore how social power dynamics are constructed and reproduced through language use. Therefore, CDA does not merely analyse textual structures or linguistic features and meanings; it also investigates the broader social and historical contexts in which social variations are expressed, established, and legitimised through discourse.

The current study aims to address the following questions:

1. What are the types of transitivity processes most frequently used in the politicians' utterances regarding war of waters between Iraq and Turkey in the selected social media report?

2. How are the positive self-representation and negative other-representation uncovered in the politicians' utterances at the micro level regarding war of waters between Iraq and Turkey in the selected social media report?

3. What are the differences and similarities in the use of transitivity processes by the politicians at the micro level to demonstrate the positive selfrepresentation and negative other-representation at the macro level regarding war of waters between Iraq and Turkey in the selected social media report?

2. Literature Review

2.1 War of Waters

The 1980s marked a significant shift in the understanding of conflicts in the Middle East. Rather than attributing future wars solely to cultural, religious, or political disparities, analysts began to interpret these conflicts as arising from competition for essential resources. Although resource-based explanations for regional conflicts were not entirely novel, the emphasis shifted from oil to water, which emerged as the primary resource of concern (Stucki, 2005).

War of waters is a concept defined by Turton (2000) to describe conflicts specifically over water resources, particularly in shared river basins or aquifers. However, these conflicts are rare, leading to the assertion that war of waters is more myth than reality. According to Pradhan (2017), war of waters is characterised as an international conflict between states that is instigated and maintained exclusively due to disputes over water resources. These disputes involve direct engagement between two or more countries, focusing on issues of water access and management.

One of the significant water disputes is between Iraq and Turkey over the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. These two essential rivers, which originate in Turkey, are crucial for the livelihoods of millions of people in both countries. This geographical reality positions Turkey

as the riparian hegemony, enjoying a dominant upstream status, while Iraq is situated as downstream and heavily reliant on the water that flows from Turkey (Al-Ansari, 2016). In the recent decades, Turkey has undertaken significant dam initiatives, particularly the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP). This project seeks to exploit the hydroelectric potential of the region's rivers and enhance irrigation within Turkey. However, it has resulted in serious repercussions for Iraq, as water flow to the country has decreased by approximately 80% since 1975. This decline has been further intensified by the construction of the Ilisu Dam, which is anticipated to further reduce water flows to Iraq. The resulting decrease in water supply poses significant challenges for Iraq's agricultural sector, leading to increased desertification and salinisation of once-fertile lands. This situation makes it difficult for farmers to sustain their crops and livelihoods. Consequently, these environmental changes not only threaten food security in Iraq but also exacerbate economic difficulties and heighten tensions between Iraq and Turkey (Chibani, 2023).

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview

CDA is a comprehensive approach transcending specific discourses, topics, or media. Although it employs a variety of methodologies, analysts may favour particular approaches aligned with their research interests or objectives. Typically, critical discourse analysts investigate how power dynamics are perpetuated through discourse and explore avenues for challenging these power relations. As noted by van Dijk (2009, cited in Khalil & Ali, 2023), their focus is on "the discursive (re)production of power abuse and the resistance against such domination." They emphasise how language is employed to support, reinforce, and promote the interests, perspectives, and values of those in power. According to Richardson (2007), CDA functions as both a theory and a methodology for analysing language use by individuals and organisations. Similarly, Widdowson (2007, p. 33) characterises CDA as "an approach that involves the use of language to exercise socio-political power, convey ideology, and

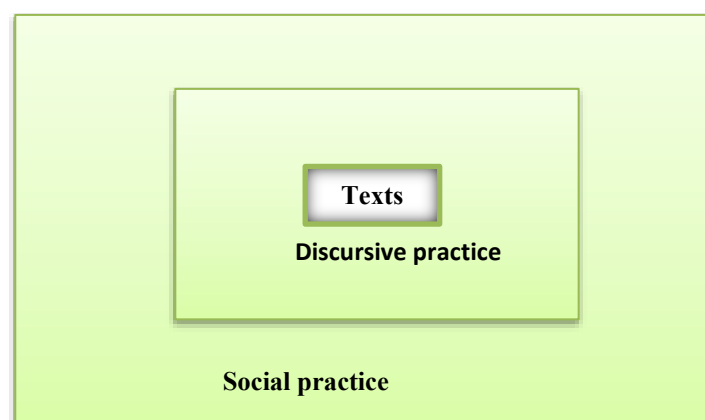
promote social beliefs". Fairclough (1992) highlights that CDA serves practical objectives, including examining the social functions of language, analysing linguistic processes within their social contexts, and uncovering ideological and political influences. Therefore, CDA seeks to illuminate the implicit and concealed power relations, subordination, inequality, and other ideological constructs embedded in texts. This analytical framework encourages readers to view reality through the discourse's specific, shaped, or biased lens (cited in Nasser & Khalil, 2021).

2.3 Fairclough's (1989) Dialectical Relational Approach

Fairclough (1989) introduces a framework known as a dialectical relational analytical approach, which emphasizes the understanding of language as both discourse and social practice, as well as the interconnections among language, ideology, and identity. This framework comprises three dimensions of discourse, these dimensions can be conceptualized as follows: (i) text analysis, whether spoken or written; (ii) discursive practice, which involves the production and interpretation of texts; and (iii) Social practice. The following figure describes Fairclough's (1989) model.

Figure 1

Fairclough's (1989, p. 25) Model (Adopted)



The present study is limited to the application of the first stage, i.e., textual analysis due to its significance and importance to the analysis part of the study.

Text Analysis (description): In the description stage, the researcher must focus on the formal characteristics of the text. This stage involves a thorough and systematic analysis of linguistic features, including vocabulary choices (diction), grammatical elements (such as modality and transitivity), and the overall structure of the text. To enhance understanding of this stage, Fairclough (1989) provides key questions and sub-questions that concentrate on vocabulary, grammar, and textual structure. The vocabulary section examines the selection of different words; the grammar section pertains to grammatical characteristics, which are related to Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) systemic functional grammar; and the textual structures section addresses the overall structure of the discourse (Fairclough, 1989). The researchers of the study will explain the grammatical level in detail since it is the level used to achieve the first aim of the study.

2.3.1 Grammar

According to Halliday's (2014), the grammatical level consists of two dimensions: transitivity and modality. This study will focus exclusively on transitivity, utilizing Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) SFG as its framework. Transitivity analysis is a crucial concept in discourse, as emphasized by Halliday's (2014) SFL. Within this framework, grammar is defined as "a way of understanding the functions that language performs and the choices people make when they speak/write to exchange meaning with readers/listeners" (Young & Fitzgerald, 2006, p. 16). Thompson (2009) describes SFG as a method for analyzing lexical and grammatical choices within the system of wording, providing insights into language use in specific contexts. This framework establishes clear connections between social contexts (including the context of culture and situation), meaning, lexico-grammar, and the resulting text.

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 221), the transitivity structure of a clause consists of three experiential components: participant (who and whom), process

(what), and circumstance (under what conditions). Participants play a crucial role in any process, with each type of experiential clause typically involving one to three participants. In contrast, circumstances are generally optional elements of the clause. While participant and process are fundamental, circumstance is considered peripheral. The roles of participants can vary depending on the type of process in which they are involved. To illustrate this, Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) provide a table that outlines the different processes along with the corresponding participant roles associated with each. The process types, as described by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 300), consist of six categories, which are further divided into two types: principal and subsidiary. The principal processes include 'material,' 'mental,' and 'relational,' while the subsidiary processes encompass 'behavioural,' 'verbal,' and 'existential.' This is further illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. *Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 311) Classification of Transitivity*

Process Types	Category Meaning	Participants, Directly Involved	Participants, Obliquely Involved
Material:	Doing	Actor, Goal	Recipient, Client
Action	Doing		Scope, Initiator
Event	Happening		Attribute
Behavioral	Behaving	Behave	Behavioral
Mental:	Sensing	Senser, Phenomenon	Inducer
Perception	Seeing		
Cognition	Thinking		
Desideration	Wanting		
Emotion	Feeling		
Verbal	Saying	Sayer, Target	Receiver, Verbiage
Relational:	Being		
Attribution	Attributing	Carrier, Attribute	Attributor, Beneficiary
Identification	Identifying	Identified, Identifier	Assigner
		Token, Value	
Existential	Existing	Existent	

2.4 van Dijk's (1998) Ideological Square

Discourse is inherently complex, and the expression of 'ideological structures' can manifest in various ways. Therefore, employing diverse methodologies to identify ideology and bias in texts is highly beneficial. Within the second component of van Dijk's (1998) socio-cognitive approach, namely the cognitive component, more specifically, the situation/event models that provide semantic representations of discourse, he introduces the concept of the 'Ideological Square' to analyse discourse through two key components: 'Us', which represents the in-group of the speakers, and 'Them', which denotes the out-group. This conceptual framework posits that 'Us' is associated with positive or favourable attributes, while 'Them' is linked to negative or undesirable characteristics (van Dijk, 1998).

The Ideological Square serves as a manifestation of the group relations category within the ideology self-schema. It examines the representation of 'in-groups' and 'out-groups' in both text and talk, utilising ideological pronouns such as 'we versus they' or 'us versus them' to illustrate the polarised ideological framework that underlies the discourse (van Dijk, 1998).

In order to convey a more nuanced analysis, van Dijk (1998) presents four moves that reinforce ideological representations within discourse. These four moves are as follows:

- To emphasise the positive and good (things/information/qualities) about US (in-groups);
- To emphasise the negative and bad (things/information/qualities) about THEM (out-groups);
- To de-emphasise the negative and bad (things/information/qualities) about US (in-groups); and
- To de-emphasise the positive and good (things/information/qualities/) about THEM (out-groups).

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study utilises a qualitative research design. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (1994, as cited in Abbas et al., 2024), qualitative research is an inquiry method aimed at comprehending phenomena within their natural contexts. It seeks to interpret the meanings that individuals assign to objects and experiences, highlighting the importance of context and the subjective viewpoints of participants. Qualitative research is described as "situationally constrained" due to the significant impact of social context on the interpretation of social actions (Neuman, 2014, as cited in Najem & Abbas, 2024).

3.2 Data Selected and Descriptive

To ensure the achievement of the research objectives, the selected data must align with the proposed objectives (Abbas, 2020). Mohammed and Abbas (2016) assert that a primary challenge researchers face when conducting a study is the selection of appropriate data. In this study, the researchers purposefully select one relevant news report posted on Twitter, originally published by the Iraqi News website. The link to this report is included in the reference list. This report is chosen because it meets the following criteria: it is well-suited to the study's primary objective: to identify the types of transitivity processes in politicians' statements that contribute to constructing ideological representations of in-groups and out-groups. It specifically addresses the issue of waters war between Iraq and Turkey, featuring the statements of politicians from both countries regarding water management access.

3.3 Modal of Analysis

The researchers employ an eclectic model that integrates van Dijk's (1998) ideological square with Fairclough's (1989) dialectical relational approach. These models are particularly relevant for illustrating how politicians utilise linguistic processes to construct ideological

representations of in-groups and out-groups within the context of the war. At the macro level, van Dijk's (1998) model is selected to analyse the construction of ideological representations, while at the micro level, the first component of Fairclough's (1989) model, namely text analysis, more specifically, the grammatical level, is utilised to uncover the linguistic processes embedded in the politicians' utterances regarding war of waters. This integration allows for a comprehensive analysis using van Dijk's model to uncover ideological meanings and Fairclough's textual analysis to reveal the linguistic processes that realise those ideologies.

3.4 Research Procedures

The researchers follow the procedures, as stated below, to achieve the aim of the study:

- Introducing a theoretical account of what is meant by the main aspects of the study, such as waters war, CDA, and social media.
- Presenting the eclectic model that integrates van Dijk's (1998) ideological square with Fairclough's (1989) dialectical relational approach.
- Collecting the data, which is one news report published on Twitter, a social media platform.
- Analyzing the data on two levels, macro and micro.
- Discussing the findings of the study, and
- Concluding and providing some recommendations.

4. Data Analysis

This section focuses on analyzing the utterances of politicians in two purposefully selected extracts from one news report.

Iraqi PM: Turkey using disputed dam for political purposes

***Brief Summary of the Report:** This report is published on Twitter on 5 June 2018. Tensions escalate between Iraq and Turkey regarding the Ilisu Dam project. The Iraqi prime minister*

Haider Al-Abadi accuses the Turkish government of exploiting the dam for political and electoral gain, asserting that Iraq requests a delay in filling the dam's reservoir, a request Turkey allegedly ignores. In response, Turkish ambassador Fatih Yildiz states that Turkey informs Iraq about the dam's completion during Al-Abadi's visit in 2017, and that although they listen to Iraq's concerns, postponing the filling causes them significant financial costs. Nevertheless, Iraqi officials note a significant decrease in the levels of the Tigris river and accuse Turkey of violating prior agreements.

Extract 1

Al-Abadi: “the whole issue is political and electoral, and Turkey is trying to use it to win the votes of its farmers”, in a possible reference to the early parliamentary and presidential elections Turkey has slated for 24th of this month.

Al-Abadi also stated:

“The Iraqi government is in contacts with the Turkish and Iranian sides on the issue of water discharges”.

Analysis of Extract 1

The entire extract reflects Al-Abadi's emphasis on portraying the out-group (Turkey) as the primary manipulator of the water crisis, while presenting the in-group (Iraq) as a concerned and diplomatic participant, by employing various linguistic processes. The first one is *the relational attribution process 'is'*, in which '*the whole issue*' serves as the carrier, and the '*political and electoral*' serve as the attribute. Al-Abadi here presents the situation in a way that frames his judgement as a factual classification rather than a direct accusation, thereby enhancing the credibility of his argument. He seeks to remove the issue of its neutrality, implying that the water crisis is not about environmental or humanitarian concerns but rather a result of Turkey's political manipulation. This is evident in his characterisation of the water crisis, which he attributes to political and electoral factors. Al-Abadi employs

another linguistics process, specifically *the material process* 'trying', which positions 'Turkey' as the actor and 'it (the issue)' as the goal of the action. He depicts Turkey as actively and strategically attempting to interfere in the water issue. He demonstrates that Turkey is not merely reacting to circumstances but is instead making a planned move to exploit the situation for its advantage. This portrayal presents Turkey as politically calculating, seeking to gain an advantage rather than engaging in good-faith cooperation. Through this, Al-Abadi subtly underscores the contrast between the ethical stance of the in-group and the opportunism of the out-group, attributing responsibility to Turkey and suggesting that its involvement is motivated by political ambition rather than a genuine concern for shared interests. Al-Abadi's use of *the material process* 'use' signifies 'Turkey' as an implicit actor and 'it (the issue)' as the goal of the action. He portrays Turkey as manipulative and opportunistic, controlling the water crisis and using it to its political advantage rather than framing it as a matter of shared concern or regional cooperation with downstream countries, such as Iraq. Another *material process* employed by Al-Abadi is 'win', which positions 'Turkey' as an implicit actor and 'the votes of its farmers' as the goal of the action. In this way, Al-Abadi directly links the water crisis to domestic electoral politics, portraying Turkey's actions as self-serving and using the water issue as a tool for political campaigning. He suggests that Turkey is appealing to a specific interest group within its own country, implying that foreign relations and humanitarian impacts are secondary to internal political gain. This argument serves a dual purpose: it makes Turkey appear opportunistic and self-interested while simultaneously elevating Iraq by implication as a country dealing with the consequences of such narrow political manoeuvres. Through this framing, Al-Abadi positions the Iraqi government as focusing on real solutions and diplomacy, in contrast to the out-group, which is depicted as motivated solely by an electoral success. *The material process* 'slated' again places 'Turkey' as the actor and 'elections' as

the goal. Al-Abadi here contextualises Turkey's actions within a political timeline, implying that their manipulation of water resources is aligned with a specific political agenda. By linking the water issue to a concrete date, the 24th of the month, Al-Abadi provides a sense of urgency and strategic planning behind Turkey's manoeuvres. This action is not random or incidental; rather, it is part of a calculated effort that reinforces the idea that Turkey's water management is not merely technical or environmental but orchestrated to influence electoral outcomes. In *the relational attribution process*, 'is' in which 'The Iraqi government' functions as the carrier, while 'in contacts with the Turkish and Iranian sides on the issue of water discharges' serves as the attribute. Through this construction, Al-Abadi portrays the Iraqi government in a positive image as a cooperative actor who engages in a diplomatic, rational dialogue with neighbouring countries like Iran and Turkey and seeks to construct a solution instead of conflicts. Through these linguistic choices, particularly the use of material and relational processes, Al-Abadi frames Iraq as a cooperative and diplomatic country while portraying Turkey as a manipulative and self-serving country.

Extract 2

Fatih Yildiz said in a press conference, "we had informed Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi during his visit to Turkey in 2017 that we had completed the construction of the (Ilisu) dam and were preparing to fill it," adding that "we listened to fears voiced relating to the filling of the dam from the Iraqi side, and did postpone it, which cost us a lot".

Analysis of Extract 2

The entire extract highlights Yildiz's focus on creating a positive representation of the Turkish side (in-group) as cooperative, rational, and responsible by employing various linguistic processes. For instance, he utilises *the verbal process* 'said', which positions 'himself' as the sayer and 'we had informed Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi during his visit to Turkey in 2017 that we had completed the construction of the (Ilisu) dam and were

preparing to fill it' as the verbiage. In this way, he is depicted as a communicative figure who is open and transparent in addressing the Iraqi audience during a press conference. This technique enhances his credibility and portrays the Turkish side as willing to engage diplomatically and publicly, thereby reinforcing an image of accountability. He also uses **the verbal process** '*informed*', which positions '*we (the Turkish side)*' as the sayer and '*Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi*' as the receiver, and the phrase '*that we had completed the construction of the Ilisu dam and were preparing to fill it*' as the verbiage. Yildiz here portrays the Turkish side as transparent and procedurally compliant, underscoring their commitment to diplomatic norms and proactive communication. This construction not only presents the Turkish side as responsible and proactive but also subtly shifts accountability onto the Iraqi leadership by implying that they were adequately informed but failed to respond. In doing so, Yildiz reinforces the favourable self-representation of the in-group while simultaneously delegitimising the out-group by suggesting administrative inattention or inefficiency. **The material process** '*completed*' is strategically employed to highlight Turkish achievements and assert infrastructural dominance. '*The Turkish side*' is the actor, and '*the Ilisu dam's construction*' is the goal. By declaring that the dam's construction had already been completed, Yildiz strategically positions Turkey as a powerful actor capable of executing complex national projects without any delay. He constructs an image of irreversible progress, suggesting that Turkey operates independently of external pressures or objections. The use of the past perfect tense in the phrase '*had completed*' conveys finality and precedence, implying that Turkish actions occurred prior to and beyond the influence of the Iraqi side. This subtly reinforces a power asymmetry in which the in-group (Turkey) controls the timeline and outcome, while the out-group (Iraq) is relegated to a reactive and passive position. **The material process** '*preparing*' presents; '*we (the Turkish side)*' as the actor, and '*it (the dam)*' as the goal. Yildiz portrays the Turkish side as a calculated and

progressive authority, actively managing and controlling the process of filling the dam. This depiction emphasises strategic planning and technical competence, presenting Turkey as an independent power that operates unilaterally and efficiently. In *the material process* 'fill', 'we', representing the Turkish side, are the actors, while 'the dam' serves as the goal. Yildiz portrays the Turkish side as possessing authority and control over the region's water resources. This depiction asserts Turkish dominance over the flow of water, positioning them as the primary decision-makers in the operation of the dam. Another linguistic process is employed, specifically *the mental process* 'listened' which positions 'we', as the senser, and 'fears voiced from the Iraqi side' as the phenomenon. Yildiz portrays Turkey as a dominant entity with the authority to decide whether to proceed with the dam's filling or delay it. He also characterises Turkey as a cooperative entity that acknowledges Iraq's fears and concerns, thereby minimising any aggressive or unilateral actions taken by Turkey toward Iraq. Yildiz employs *the verbal process*, 'voiced', which positions 'Iraq' as the implicit sayer. His use of the verb 'voiced' reflects an asymmetrical power dynamic, depicting Turkey as the maker of the active decision while portraying Iraq as a passive entity that lacks power and dominance, whose concerns are heard and assessed by Turkey. Yildiz employs *the material process* 'postpone', positioning 'we (the Turkish side)' as the actor and 'it (the dam)' as the goal. Crucially, this verb is used hypothetically; it does not describe an action that has occurred but emphasises the cost Turkey would bear if it chose to delay. By invoking the idea of postponement without actually performing it, Yildiz portrays the Turkish side as considerate and aware of Iraq's concerns while simultaneously justifying its decision to proceed with filling the dam. This rhetorical strategy enables Turkey to appear empathetic and rational, presenting itself as a side that has carefully evaluated Iraq's fears but eventually prioritised its national interest due to the significant economic burden that accrues if it chooses to postpone the filling of the dam. *The material process* 'cost' positions 'Turkey' as an implicit actor and

'us (*the Turkish side*)' as the recipient. Yildiz portrays Turkey as a rational and economically conscious actor. By emphasising the significant cost of any potential delay, Yildiz subtly justifies Turkey's decision to proceed with filling the dam, framing it not as a disregard for Iraqi concerns but as a necessary action taken to protect national resources and the safety of its citizens. This construction implies that Turkey, as the controller of the water source, holds the sovereign right to determine whether or not to delay filling the dam, and this reinforces its power position. Through these linguistic choices, particularly the use of verbal, material, and mental, Yildiz constructs a discourse that portrays Turkish side (in-group) as cooperative, rational, and responsible, implicitly marginalising the voices of the Iraqi side (in-group).

Comparing the Politicians' Use of Linguistic Strategies

After doing a nuanced analysis, the researcher then compares the strategies employed by each party. This comparison is presented on two levels: first, the differences in how each side uses different linguistic tools with different ideological representations; and second, the similar use of these tools, but still with different ideological representations.

Material processes are prominent in both sides' discourses, yet they reveal contrasting ideological representations. Al-Abadi employs various material processes, such as he utilises the verb '*trying*' to emphasises Turkey's strategic and calculated interference in the water issue, portraying it as politically opportunistic. He minimises Turkey's cooperation, instead depicting it as acting out of self-interest, in contrast to Iraq's ethical and cooperative stance. When Al-Abadi employs the material process '*use*', he emphasises the negative portrayal of Turkey as opportunistic, suggesting that it deliberately manipulates water resources for its political advantage. In the material process '*win*', Al-Abadi emphasises Turkey's self-serving motives and its exploitation of the water crisis as a political tool to gain votes. He portrays Turkey as opportunistic and primarily concerned with internal electoral gains while depicting Iraq as an affected party that is more focused on finding solutions. Al-

Abadi's use of the material process '*slated*' underscores the calculated and time sensitive nature of Turkey's political agenda, directly linking its water policy to electoral considerations. This depiction reinforces the view that Turkey's actions are intentional and strategically aligned with political goals. Simultaneously, he downplays any technical or environmental justifications, portraying Turkey's behaviour as politically motivated rather than practical or cooperative. In contrast, Yildiz uses various material processes to represent the 'self' and the 'other'. He employs the verb '*completed*' to emphasise Turkey's infrastructural power and success, portraying it positively as a dominant actor capable of executing any national project without delay while minimising Iraq's authority by framing it as passive and disengaged parity. Through the material process '*preparing*', Yildiz emphasises Turkey's calculated and strategic planning, highlighting the country's active management of the dam process. While in the material process '*fill*', Yildiz highlights Turkey's complete control and authority over regional water resources and making decisions. Yildiz employs the material process '*postpone*' to emphasise Turkey's empathy and rational decision-making. He underscores that Turkey took Iraq's concerns into account while ultimately making a calculated decision based on its national interests. Finally, in the material process '*cost*', Yildiz emphasises Turkey's responsibility and economic awareness. He acknowledges the Iraqi concerns and focuses on justifying the significant financial burden that would arise from delaying the dam's filling, presenting the decision as essential for protecting the safety of Turkish citizens and preserving national resources. **Verbal processes** are only utilised by the Turkish politician Yildiz, he employs three verbal processes '*said, informed, and voiced*'. Through the verb '*said*', he portrays the Turkish side as willing to engage diplomatically and publicly, thereby reinforcing an image of accountability. Through the verb '*informed*', he emphasises the Turkish side's transparency, responsibility, and diplomatic conduct, portraying them as proactive and procedurally compliant.

Simultaneously, he minimises the Turkish responsibility by suggesting that Iraq was already notified about the dam's filling but failed to respond or take any action to benefit them. Using the verb 'voiced', he emphasises Turkey's dominance by depicting Iraq as a passive recipient. In this way, he minimises Iraq's authority, portraying it as a weak actor whose concerns are acknowledged and evaluated by Turkey. Only the Turkish politician Yildiz employs *the mental process* 'listened' to minimise any aggressive or unilateral actions taken by Turkey toward Iraq by emphasising Turkey's image as cooperative and responsive and actively engaging in dialogue rather than unilaterally imposing decisions. Only the Iraqi politician Al-Abadi employs *the relational attribution process*. He uses 'is' in the phrase 'is political and electoral' to downplay the possibility that the water crisis could be perceived as a neutral or humanitarian issue, emphasising that it is a result of Turkey's deliberate political manipulation. Additionally, he utilises 'is' in the phrase 'is in contacts with the Turkish and Iranian sides' to emphasise the Iraqi government as a cooperative, rational, and diplomatic actor that engages in dialogue rather than confrontation.

The overall mentions of the transitivity processes are presented in the table below to illustrate the frequencies and percentages of each.

Table 2. *Types of Processes in the Selected Social Media Report*

Types of Process	Freq.	Per.
Material Processes	9	60%
Verbal Processes	3	20%
Mental Processes	1	6.66%
<i>Relational Attribution Process</i>	2	13.33%
Total	15	100%

5. Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the analysis in direct relation to the study's research questions. Drawing on Fairclough's (1989) dialectical-relational approach and van Dijk's (1998) ideological square, the researchers identify that ideological representations are

deeply embedded in the language employed by politicians in relation to war of waters. Concerning the first research question, which states: *“What are the types of transitivity processes most frequently used in the politicians' utterances regarding the war of waters between Iraq and Turkey in the selected social media report?”*, the findings reveal that although both sides employ various transitivity processes, not all process types appear in their utterances. Material processes occur most frequently, with a total of nine instances (**60%**), reflecting a strong emphasis on concrete actions and tangible events. Verbal processes appear three times (**20%**), highlighting the significance of communication and dialogue in addressing war of waters issue. Relational attribution processes occur twice (**13.33%**), indicating some attention to defining roles and attributes. In contrast, mental processes appear only once (**6.66%**), suggesting limited focus on inner thoughts and perceptions. Concerning the second research question, which states: *“How are the positive self-representation and negative other-representation uncovered in the politicians' utterances at the micro level regarding the war of waters between Iraq and Turkey in the selected social media report?”*, the findings reveal that both Iraqi and Turkish politicians strategically sought to construct a positive self-representation and a negative other-representation in their utterances. They focused on portraying their own sides favourably while deliberately avoiding any reference to their weaknesses that might undermine their public image. Conversely, they highlighted and emphasised the shortcomings of the opposing side. Concerning the third research question, which states: *“What are the differences and similarities in the use of transitivity processes by the politicians at the micro level to demonstrate the positive self-representation and negative other-representation at the macro level regarding war of waters between Iraq and Turkey in the selected social media report?”*, the findings reveal that both Iraqi and Turkish politicians employ similar linguistic tools, specifically transitivity processes, to construct their narratives and ideologically represent the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ in distinct ways. In some instances, they

utilised similar linguistic strategies to serve different ideological purposes, while in others, they adopted different linguistic tools that reflected contrasting ideological representations.

6. Conclusion

This study examined a social media report in the context of war of waters, revealing significant ideological representations embedded in the language of politicians. The findings reveal that material processes are the most frequently used in the politicians' utterances, highlighting their focus on concrete actions and tangible events. Through these linguistic tools, they emphasise positive self-representation and de-emphasise, or delegitimise, the opposing side. The findings also reveal that in some instances Iraqi and Turkish politicians employ similar linguistic tools to shape their narratives and to ideologically represent the self and the other in different ways. In other instances, they employ different linguistic tools with different ideological representations. The findings are significant because they illustrate how language functions as a tool of ideological influence in political communication, offering insights into regional discourse dynamics. A corpus-assisted CDA of war of waters in Arab newspapers could be conducted in future research to examine ideological representations across diverse media.

Conflict of Interest: The corresponding author, on behalf of second author, confirms that there are no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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