

EXAMINATION OF THE NORTH KOREAN DIGITAL PROPAGANDA AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION CONTENTS THROUGH CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The fact that the production and management of information is one of the most remarkable means of obtaining power has disclosed the concept of propaganda is especially crucial for authoritarian states. In this framework, North Korea, as an authoritarian country without freedom of the press, seized the power of information and adopted various propaganda methods. Trying to adapt to digital transformations, North Korea has benefited from the internet as a propaganda tool. Naturally, this brings along the digitalization of propaganda. This article scrutinizes North Korea's digital propaganda and strategic communication methods through a critical discourse analysis of four North Korean news texts. The method of the article was determined based on Teun A. van Dijk's news discourse analysis. In this context, it has been attempted to reveal whether there is a relationship between the concepts of propaganda and strategic communication. Besides, the discursive changes of the propaganda contents depending on the period have been discussed. The claim that the critical discourse analysis has the authority-power relationship and the reflections of this relationship on discourse have been supported by North Korean propaganda.

Keywords: Digital Propaganda, Strategic Communication, North Korea, Critical Discourse Analysis.

KUZEY KORE DİJİTAL PROPAGANDA VE STRATEJİK İLETİŞİM İÇERİKLERİNİN ELEŞTİREL SÖYLEM ANALİZİ ARACILIĞIYLA İNCELENMESİ

Öz

Günümüzde bilginin üretilmesinin ve yönetilmesinin iktidarın elde edilmesinde en önemli araçlardan biri olduğu hakikati, propaganda kavramının özellikle otoriter devletler için önemli olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu bağlamda, basın özgürlüğüne sahip olmayan, otoriter bir ülke olarak Kuzey Kore bilginin iktidarını ele geçirmiş ve muhtelif propaganda yöntemleri benimsemiştir. Dijital dönüşümlere adapte olmaya çalışan Kuzey Kore, interneti bir propaganda vasıtası olarak kullanmaya başlamıştır. Haliyle bu durum, propagandanın dijitalleşmesini beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu

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makale, dört Kuzey Kore haber metninin eleştirel söylem analizi ile Kuzey Kore'nin dijital propaganda ve stratejik iletişim yöntemlerini incelemektedir. Makalenin metodolojisi Teun A. van Dijk'in haber söylem analizi olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu kapsamda, propaganda ve stratejik iletişim kavramları arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığı ortaya konmaya çalışılmış, propaganda içeriklerinin döneme bağlı söylemsel değişimleri ele alınmıştır. Eleştirel söylem analizinin güç-iktidar ilişkisi ve bu ilişkinin söyleme yansımaları olduğu iddiası, Kuzey Kore propaganda içerikleri ile desteklenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Dijital Propaganda, Stratejik İletişim, Kuzey Kore, Eleştirel Söylem Analizi*

Introduction

"The next information revolution is well underway. But it is not happening where information scientists, information executives, and the information industry, in general, are looking for it. It is not a revolution in technology, machinery, techniques, software, or speed. It is a revolution in concepts" (Drucker, 1998).

North Korea had to modify its traditional propaganda through the mass media as an authoritarian country that could not resist the rapid development of information and communication technologies. Although the media has a minimal role in the country, the media, as the production tool of ideology, is undergoing a structural change in the digital environment. Nonetheless, the literature frequently examines North Korea through the lens of military power and security. However, the changing face of propaganda and the phenomenon of strategic communication have emerged in recent years when it comes to North Korea, revealing that the country's goals are not limited to nuclear deterrence. It is observed that the country is using digital media and social media platforms to improve and develop its international image.

Apparently, propaganda and strategic communication are used with country-specific qualities in an authoritarian country, ranking last among 180 countries in the press freedom index (Reporters Without Borders, 2022). In this article, the relationship between digital propaganda and strategic communication will be explained in the theoretical framework section. Then, Teun A. van Dijk's analysis method of news discourse will be mentioned under the theoretical foundations and method title. Four propaganda news texts will be subjected to critical discourse analysis and will be interpreted in the findings section. In the concluding part, the relationship between propaganda and strategic communication will be evaluated within the framework of the findings.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Strategic Communication As A Key Concept

After the 9/11 attacks, Vince Vitto, Chairman of the US Defense Science Board Task Force on Managed Information Dissemination, put forward the expression of strategic communication (Paul, 2011: 1). In the report titled "Final Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication" chaired by Vitto, the Task Force recommendations include the understanding of global public opinion, strengthening the ability to communicate with global audiences, strategic communications such as public relations, public diplomacy, military information operations, coordinating all its components and establishing legislation on the planning, coordination, execution, and financing of strategic communication. Also, highlighting the vital importance of strategic communication for US national security and foreign policy, the report highlighted the importance of understanding cultures and exchanging ideas between people and institutions (Defense Science Board, 2004).

Christopher Paul claims that there are four fundamental elements of strategic communication: 1) The importance of informing, influencing, and persuading; 2) Effective informing, influencing, and persuading require clear goals, 3) The coordination and conflict resolution to avoid information fratricide, 4) The communication of actions. In this framework, Paul's definition of strategic communication is "coordinated actions, messages, images, and other forms of signaling or engagement intended to inform, influence, or persuade selected audiences to support national objectives" (Paul, 2011: 17). Hallahan and colleagues defined strategic communication as a multidimensional concept bringing together various disciplines, such as public relations, advertising, and marketing. They stated that, when used in achieving the mission of an organization, it is related to informational, persuasive, discursive, and also relational communication (Hallahan et al., 2007: 27). The UK government defines strategic communication as:

"A systematic series of sustained and coherent activities, conducted across strategic, operational and tactical levels, that enables understanding of target audiences, identifies effective conduits and develops and promotes ideas and opinions through those conduits to promote and sustain particular types of behaviour" (RN, 2008).

Strategic communication requires packaging a core message reflecting an organization's/actor's overall strategy, goals, values, and mission to persuade the target audience (Graham, 2017: 101). Strategic communication is like an orchestra, which can change behavior in the desired direction. The orchestra's conductor is the government, the musical note is the strategic communication plan, and the orchestra is the activity field. Music is a narrative. Depending on the desired effect, different parts of the orchestra will be used at different times or with different accents (MPhil RN, 2008: 3). For this reason, a planned and systematic communication strategy is required to

prepare and manage the message for the target audience, to understand and realize the communication process correctly.

The main features of strategic communication can be summarized as follows:

- It is carried out according to a predefined and systematic plan;
- It includes actions at the strategic, tactical, and operational levels;
- It has developed in a contradictory and competitive environment;
- It requires precise identification of targeted audiences;
- It demands a high level of coordination and synchronization among stakeholders;
- It requires the selection of the most appropriate communication channels;
- It aims to inform, influence, or encourage behavioral changes in target audiences;
- It is consistent with the overall objectives of the beneficiary country or organization;
- It focuses on the short and long term (European Parliament, 2021).

1.2. Digital Propaganda As A Part Of Strategic Communication

In the Post-Cold War order, propaganda entered a change process via accelerating globalization and the emergence of scientific-technological innovations. The 20th and 21st centuries have witnessed considerable growth in the scope and speed of communication technologies, outstripping the capability to control the constant flow of knowledge from countless sources. This progress has improved the ingenuity of the propagandist to spread a message quickly and efficiently. It is now probable to make propaganda on a wide range of topics. In particular, since the attacks of 9/11, there has been a significant advancement in satellite-based television news broadcasting competing for the attention of an international audience. The improvement of the internet has made it probable for new social media like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and the search engine Google to become prominent, uncontrolled sources of knowledge worldwide (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2012: 51-52).

As Harold Lasswell described, the phenomenon of “influence” collective attitudes by manipulating significant “symbols” (Laswell, 1927: 627) has occurred throughout the history of humankind. In the classic sense, making propaganda through digital platforms is an approved point of view. The major application fields of digital propaganda are now the internet and social media. Networks such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are remarkably efficient digital propaganda platforms. Because people spend time on social networks, and carry out political, social, and cultural practices. Nevertheless, with the progress of social media and internet technologies, propaganda content production and consumption have increased. Digital propaganda, which can be called "an attempt to disseminate information on

digital platforms with the aim of deception and misleading", thoroughly changes the production, collection, dissemination, and interpretation of information (Bjola, 2018). The conception of digital propaganda generally lacks theoretical simplicity. Propaganda is like an umbrella concept incorporating several connected conceptions such as fake news, disinformation, manipulation, and post-truth.

"The Internet is now becoming an increasingly important source of information in our society and has begun to take over the role played by traditional journalism sources.... The potential for propaganda in such a climate is infinite. Anyone can spread a message, true or false, or manipulate information or even alter a picture to suit his or her own ends" (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2012: 160).

Propaganda offers people the comfort of validating their ongoing commitments by disseminating a nation of slogans, memes, images, and ideas reinforcing their present viewpoint. Although the roots of the conception of propaganda date back to before the communication revolution, the endeavors to present a scientific perspective on the subject coincide with the advance of mass communication technologies in the 20th century. In this background, the value of traditional media channels such as radio, television, cinema, and newspaper has left its superior position to digital propaganda studies with the advance of the internet. Unlike traditional mass media, the internet permits interaction in the communication process. The internet, which provides active communication in the digital environment, creates a digital society and enables the masses to come together.

Taylor thinks that propaganda can be good or bad, and the critical question is intent. According to him, it is defined as "the tool that uses communication to convey a message, an idea, or an ideology that serves the self-interests of the person or persons performing the communication" (Taylor, 1990: 13). According to Jowett and O'Donnell's definition, "propaganda is the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that supports the desired intent of the propagandist" (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2012: 16). Both definitions include propaganda within strategic communication.

Although propaganda is integrated with negative meanings, it can be used as a tool for strategic communication. Some studies define propaganda as a form of strategic communication carried out by an organization to achieve goals (Wilbur, 2017). Holtzhausen and Zerfass (2015) explain strategic communication as an intentional, purposeful, and communicative entity. These issues coincide with the aims of the propaganda. For instance, in the People's Republic of China, propaganda effectively integrates technological developments into the public sphere. Extremist groups such as al-Qaeda

consistently conduct propaganda with non-violent strategic communication methods (Holtzhausen and Zerfass, 2015).

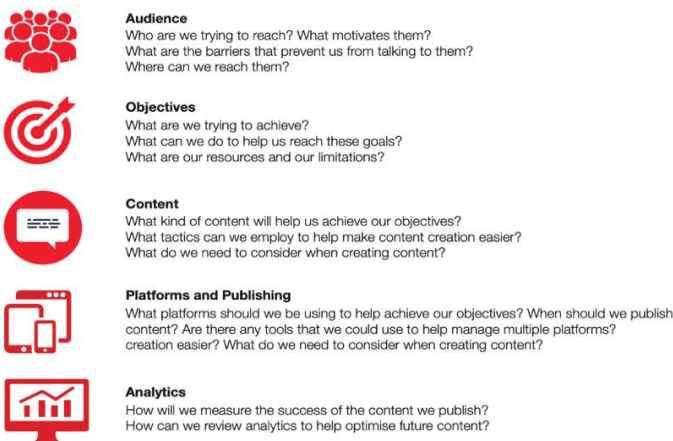
The development of the internet is related to freedom of expression and democratization. Because anti-democratic countries consider the spread of information and internet technologies a threat, the tendency towards information control has increased in such societies. Therefore, the relevant states seek ways to control the flow of information through censorship and manipulation (Tang and Huhe, 2020: 143). On the one hand, the tendency for democracies to deceive themselves that they are not related to propaganda is an inherent weakness often exploited by their enemies. In the black-and-white world of propaganda, democracies exist through persuasion and consensus, and there is a perception that propaganda comprises pressure and power.

Conserva (2003) categorized all propaganda and strategic communication methods in seven ways in his book:

- Diversion or Evasion
- Faulty Logic
- Appealing to the emotions
- Using trickery or falsehood
- Playing on human behavioral tendencies, mental capacities, and processes
- Writing or speaking style
- Reason or common sense

The figure below summarizes the main topics and topics of strategic digital communication.

Picture 1. Digital Strategic Communication



Kaynak: Beds SU, n.y.

Strategic communication has also been digitalized with the digitalization of the communication environment. Digital technologies suggest opportunities to disseminate the messages to be delivered to broad audiences quickly, effectively, and inexpensively and to create specific narratives for the target audience. Strategic communication patterns in the digital field can lead to effects such as altering the public sphere, family, and business life, expanding the influence of popular culture, and contributing to the production of popular culture and disinformation. The transformation of communication generates a digital culture industry necessary.

2. METHODOLOGY

The method of this study was determined based on Teun A. van Dijk's critical discourse analysis method (CDA). Critical discourse analysis is applied to analyze the power structure in all kinds of discourse and the ideological background of the discourse. CDA examines how the relations of inequality and domination are animated and reproduced by the text in the socio-political context (Dijk, 2001: 352). The CDA is informative in researching news, articles, and political discourse associated with power and ideology (Fairclough, 1995). The most critical issue that the CDA foregrounds is that discourses shape ideologies. While ideological groups emphasize the good qualities of their own groups and deny that they have bad qualities, they emphasize the negative aspects of outgroups (Dijk, 2006: 115). Hence, discourses reflect the value judgments of those who construct the discourse. Individuals' actions, thoughts, and information are reached through discourses.

Van Dijk's news discourse analysis method is the fundamental method of this study. It reveals the text's content, rhetoric, semantics, and narrative through the analysis of macro and microstructure. The media explains how the social structure behind the discourse (power relations, values, ideologies, identities, etc.) turns into linguistic constructs. The stages of critical discourse analysis created by Van Dijk for news texts can be schematized as follows:

A. Macro Structure

1. Thematic Structure

a. Titles

- b. News Entry: Spot/s. If there is no spot, the first paragraph of the news text should be taken. If the news consists of a single paragraph, the first sentence can be taken as a news entry.

c. Photograph

2. Schematic Structure

- a. Status: (Presentation of Main Event, Results, Background Information, Context Information)

b. Comment: (News sources, Comments by the parties to the event)

B. Micro Structure

1. Syntactic Analysis (Active or passive sentence structures, simple or complex sentence structures)
2. Regional Cohesion (Causal Relationship, Functional Relationship, Referential Relationship)
3. Word Choices
4. News Rhetoric (Photo, Credible Information, Eyewitness Statements) (Beyazyüz, 2021: 522).

2.1. Analysis Of The North Korean Digital News Content Through Critical Discourse Analysis

Despite its extraordinarily tight system, North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) could not remain indifferent to the developing technological opportunities and evolved the classical propaganda understanding by transferring it to the digital field. The North Korean propaganda, which gained popularity with propaganda posters and traditional mass media, is now notorious with the official website of the North Korean Central News Agency and other propaganda websites. A significant difference from other authoritarian regimes is that almost all the country's population does not have internet access, except for a limited elite minority. This point reveals at North Korea's digital propaganda content is state-sponsored.

In this study, the propaganda components of digital news content, one of the most frequently used propaganda methods in North Korea, will be examined systematically by applying Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis method. Therefore, it aims to establish a relationship between digital propaganda and strategic communication. The sample of the study consists of four texts. In the first two texts, after the North Korea-South Korea summits in 2018, the news about the subject published on the official news channel of North Korea will be examined. One of the news is in English, and the other is in Korean. The reason why the language of the news is determined as Korean is to disclose the propaganda of North Korea against South Korea and the people whose mother tongue is Korean. The last two texts will discuss news containing North Korea's counter-rhetoric against the US-South Korea joint military exercises that took place in 2022 when tensions re-escalated on the Korean Peninsula. In this part, Korean news analysis will be done similarly. By comparing the texts, ideological discourse, and propaganda techniques will be examined. Besides, the changing form of propaganda and communication will be tried to be revealed.

Within the scope of the study, the headlines to be analyzed for the years 2020 and 2022 are as follows:

- "Era of Independent Reunification, Peace and Prosperity Ushered in by Great Love for Nation" (Ryugyong, 2018).
- "《김정은위원장의 파격행보로 평양남북정상회담에서 <최초>, <처음>이 쏟아졌다》" (Ryugyong, 2018) (Because of the President Kim Jong Un's unconventional moves, "firsts" rained down at the North-South summit in Pyongyang)
- "WPK Solemnly Declares Its Immutable Will to React to Enemy's Nuke and Full-frontal Confrontation in Kind" (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).
- "전쟁광신자의 정체는 절대로 가리울수 없다" (Uriminzokkiri, 2022). (The identity of the war fanatic can never be covered)

2.1.1. Critical Discourse Analysis Of The News Titled "Era Of Independent Reunification, Peace And Prosperity Ushered In By Great Love For Nation"

2.1.1.1. Thematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

According to Van Dijk, the best-remembered information in a discourse is the structures that convey the subject. Topics abstractly characterize the meaning of an entire discourse. The subject is often formulated concretely with parts such as the title and summary in the text (Dijk T. A., 2000: 45). The title should be analyzed initially. Semantic macrostructures point out what the discourse in the text is about and cover the meaning of the discourse.

On the news website, the headline is written in a greater font than the text and in bold letters. In the upper left corner of the main title, there is a phrase meaning "주체 107(2018)년 10월 17일 《기사》", 17 October Juche 107 (2018) 《Article》. Although the content of the text is in English, the logo and categories of the website are preferred in Korean. In addition, although the news belongs to 2018 according to the international calendar, North Korea is in the year 107, according to the Juche calendar, starting with the birth of Kim Il Sung. This emphasis on the year of Juche appears on virtually every North Korean website.

Picture 2. Ryugyong News Title and Website Appearance



Source: Ryugyong, 2018.

When the conditions of the period are evaluated, it is obvious that as of October 2018, two summit meetings took place between the two Koreas on the Korean Peninsula. In this context, the news title "Era of Independent Reunification, Peace and Prosperity Ushered in by Great Love for Nation" stands out with its emphasis on peace, prosperity, unity, and love of the nation. The sender's conscious intent determined the title. By focusing on the basic knowledge/meaning to be conveyed with the title, it is aimed at the recipient to understand in the desired direction. In this direction, the title has two propositions: 1) The greatness of the love of the nation, and 2) The age of independent union, peace, and prosperity has begun. These two propositions summarize the main information of the text. Thus, it can be understood that the discourse emphasizes peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula. In the news's headline it is aimed to emphasize that peace can be established on the Peninsula thanks to the "love of the nation of the North Koreans". This emphasis creates the psychological background of the effort to establish peace and welfare. In this case, it may have been intended to generate the perception that North Korea is making an effort for a peaceful union if peace cannot be established on the Peninsula.

The expression "nation" in the title and the text is another point that needs to be underlined. Does the phrase "Great Love for Nation" refer only to the North Koreans? Or does it include the full Korean Peninsula? Although this point is unclear, the use of the word 'nation' in the news may be an example of North Korea's claim over the whole Korean Peninsula since peace has not yet been established on the peninsula and the ceasefire agreement remains in existence.

The news entry is one of the highly powerful parts of the text. Because the receiver who reads the news decides whether or not to continue reading the text at this stage. Answers to the 5W1H questions (what, where, when, how, why, who) should be followed in this section. The initial sentence of the news text in question is, "This year; the Korean Peninsula has witnessed a

series of historical events that serve as a milestone in opening up a heyday of peace, prosperity, and reunification" (Ryugyong, 2018). There are insufficient answers in this news text other than who and when questions. The introductory sentence highlights the phenomenon of peace, prosperity, and reunification on the Korean Peninsula, supporting the text's central idea. It is also stressed that a series of historical events took place as a milestone for this purpose. Then, the news content is mentioned in the news entry, and the state language is revealed. However, it was also stated that these historical events were the crop of Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un's noble love for the nation. It was also emphasized that North Korea has had a crucial role in providing peace on the peninsula. Thus, there appears to be an information omission in the text. South Korea, one party to the meeting, was not mentioned in the introductory sentences.

Picture 3. News Text Photo



Kaynak: Ryugyong, 2018.

The famous propaganda poster system of North Korea was applied in the news text. In the North Korean dialect, the word “propaganda” is often synonymous with “poster”. The North Korean propaganda posters are tools that were promptly practiced, especially during the Cold War era, and they have a homogeneous style, representing the image of the country (Park, 2020). Ordinarily, propaganda posters bearing the principles of Juche, the official state ideology of the country, present a different appearance in the news

content in question. At the top of the poster is the sentence "북과 남이 뜻과 힘을 합쳐" (The North and South Join Forces). Right in the midst, it refers to 조선반도의 평화와 번영, 통일을 위한 판문점선언 (Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity, and Unification of the Korean Peninsula) in large, colorful letters. The Panmunjom Declaration is highlighted in giant letters. At the bottom of the poster, in blue and capital letters 력사적인 판문점선언을 철저히 리행해나가자! (Let us Thoroughly Implement The Historic Panmunjom Declaration!). Via the effect of viewing the propaganda posters as an effective ideological weapon in North Korea, a sun rising above the depiction of all the resisting Korean people in the text represents the peninsula union, and the two outstretched hands represent North and South Korea.

Picture 4. The Logo of The Ryugyong Website



Kaynak: Ryugyong, 2018.

It would be appropriate to analyze the logo of the news source in the photography section because the message intended to be given in the logo sheds light on the mentality of the media organization. On the left part of the logo is a historical Korean temple among the trees; on the right, the modern side of North Korea is displayed. This issue can be considered a symbol expressing that North Korea has a continuity from past to present, takes place in a line combining traditional and contemporary, and accepts the elements of early culture.

2.1.1.2. Schematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

In the news dated 17.10.2018, the main event is the inter-Korean summit in April 2018 and the inter-Korean summit in September 2018, which has not yet taken place in the new date. The narrative does not share the content and objectives of the summits but focuses on the realization of the will for reunification thanks to the person and leadership of the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. While the emphasis continued on "negotiations through Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un," South Korean President Moon Jae In was not mentioned even once.

The presentation of the news does not consist of long paragraphs. In the news, consisting of nine short paragraphs, the parts that mention Kim Jong Un and Kim Il Sung are written in bold and large font. The presentation of the main event is given in the concluding part of the news instead of the introduction.

The news did not present the background and context information of the event. Van Dijk states that background and context information are structural and historical and that the events comprise social and political aspects (Özer, 2001: 122). The development of inter-Korean relations, which forms the context of this news, results from negotiations, agreements, and policies that have increased in intensity since the 1990s. However, this background and context information is excluded from the analyzed news. The news is based on the rhetoric of "Kim Jong Un's greatness, love for the nation and transparent will". However, the negotiations taking place in the Peninsula did not develop only with the will of Kim. There is a background of this event. The main striking events (the North-South summit in Panmunjom in April, the 27 April Declaration, and the Pyongyang Joint Declaration to be held in September) were not featured in the news but were hidden at the end of the news text.

The news source is the Ryugyong Clip website, headquartered in China Unicom, the domain name "Korea 615 Shenyang Co." Company. The same company also operates the Uriminzokkiri and Our Nation School websites (38 North, 2010). The news source is partial and biased and carries propaganda elements.

2.1.1.3. Microstructural Analysis

- This year, *the Korean Peninsula* has witnessed a series of historical events that serve as a milestone in opening up a heyday of peace, prosperity, and reunificatio.

- Such eye-opening reality is a fruition of the noble love for the nation shown by *Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un*.

- *Kim Jong Un declared* that the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) and the DPRK government would join hands with anyone who truly wants the reunification of the country and the peace and prosperity of the nation and make responsible and patient efforts for accomplishing the historic cause of national reunificatio.

- *He said* that the north and the south should respect each other and, as partners in national reunification, work together to open a new phase in improving inter-Korean relations and reunifying the country.

- As Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un *stands* in the van in opening up the new era of independent reunification, peace and prosperity, the desire of the Korean nation will come true as early as possible (Ryugyong, 2018).

In the news text, active and compound sentence structure was used on a large scale. Active sentences may have been preferred to reinforce the emphasis that the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is the actor in the peace talks and the hope of reunification on the Korean Peninsula. Thus, it is observed in the reader's perception that North Korea is adopted under the leadership of Kim Jong Un as the builder of the negotiations. Giving the statements of news sources in an active structure can be evaluated as a positive approach to the source's opinions. Moreover, in many sentence structures, it is found that the text writer adds his own comments. For example, "He in his New Year Address advanced the line to bring about a great turn in the inter-Korean relations, which has enjoyed full support at home and abroad for reflecting his warm love for the nation and transparent will for reunification" (Ryugyong, 2018). The sentence includes subjective judgments and expressions, and the reader is presented with his own interpretation.

Checking the sentences, it is observed that a causal relationship has been established. In the sentence "Such eye-opening reality is a fruition of the noble love for nation shown by Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un" (Ryugyong, 2018), the reason for the historical events witnessed by the Korean Peninsula, as indicated in the preceding sentence, is revealed as Kim Jong Un's love of nation.

"He in his New Year Address advanced the line to bring about a great turn in the inter-Korean relations, which has enjoyed full support at home and abroad for reflecting his warm love for the nation and transparent will for reunification" (Ryugyong, 2018).

It is planned to provide the sub-message that a transformation will not take place without the will of Kim Jong Un. Regarding the referential link, it is observed that expressions are attributing a sacred quality to the leader, such as "Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un".

The study applied "word frequency analysis" when analyzing word choices. The frequency of words was scrutinized within the framework of discourse analysis. The most frequently practiced words in the text are reunification, nation, peace, prosperity, historical, and summit, respectively. Because of the conditions of the period, it is apparent that issues such as peace, unity, prosperity, respect, and development of relations dominate the discourse.

The author of the text wants to direct the reader to his ideas in news rhetoric. The own comment of the newspaper is embedded in the text. The photograph is also proof of the theme in the news. In addition, the names of summits, declarations, and references to congresses can ensure credibility. Numerical data, another reliability strategy, is seldom included. Numbers only report date and event, as in the sentence, "In April, the historic Panmunjom north-south summit took place, and the April 27 declaration was adopted to end the division and confrontation and further improve the north-south

relations" (Ryugyong, 2018). Thus, the text's credibility is damaged, and a one-sided news perception is formed.

2.1.2. Critical Discourse Analysis Of The News Titled “《김정은위원장의 파격행보로 평양남북정상회담에서 <최초>, <처음>이 쏟아졌다》”

2.1.2.1. Thematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

The title of this news article is "Because of the President Kim Jong Un's unconventional moves, 'firsts' rained down at the North-South summit in Pyongyang." Expressions like 처음 (first) and 최초 (first) emphasize two aspects: 1) Being the initial meeting of the Presidents 2) Having many firsts (raining of firsts). 최 "most" means 처 "beginning". It is stated that with its extraordinary steps, firsts have taken place on the Korean Peninsula and these are also a leading.

The news text is taken from the Ryugyong Clip website. Therefore, it has the same site view as the news above. The title is given in square brackets, the words with the meaning of "first" are also highlighted in parentheses, and the name of Kim Jong Un is written in a larger font in the same way. In the upper left corner of the main headline, the date of the news is stated as "주체 107(2018)년 10 월 6 일" means 6 October Juche 107 (2018). Again, it is seen that the Juche year is highlighted. The news covered the talks of President Kim Jong Un and President Moon Jae In at the summit. However, there is no emphasis on the event in the title. So, the title is partial and ambiguous. It may have been pointed out that Kim Jong Un would break new ground so that the recipient could interpret the text as desired.

The first sentence of the news text is “남조선언론들은 《김정은위원장의 파격행보로 평양남북정상회담에서 <최초>, <처음>이 쏟아졌다.》, 《<사상최초>의 수식어가 계속 이어졌다.》고 하면서 다음과 같이 보도하였다” (Ryugyong, 2018). (The South Korean media said, "Because of President Kim Jong-un's unusual move, "firsts" were marked at the North-South summit in Pyongyang, and "a first in history" took place"). The events taking place at the inter-Korean summit are defined as a first in history, and the reason is attributed to the actions of Kim Jong Un. What these firsts were is hidden for the next sentences with striking headlines. In the news entry, a partial repetition of the headline, it is stated that the South Korean media covered the action in question. It is also emphasized that it is interpreted as "first and historical". Thus, it is desired to create the perception that this image is the thought of South Korea. There is no reference to the source of the statement.

Only one photograph was used in the news text. This photo was added after the information in the last paragraph of the article about Moon Jae In is watching the North Korean gymnastics show and art performance. Although the photo captures such a show at a large stadium, there is no image of Moon Jae In watching the show. On the one hand, it is essential to present such an image of North Korea, which aims to use sports as a tool for public diplomacy.

Picture 5. News Text Photo



Kaynak: Ryugyong, 2018.

2.1.2.2. Schematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

In the news dated 06.10.2018, the inter-Korean talks between North Korea and South Korea and the visit of South Korean President Moon Jae In to North Korea are presented as the central events. In the narrative, the content of the talks includes these expressions: “Special airport pickup”, “Unusual Salute”, “Joseon Workers Party building bravely opened to the public”, “Unexpected joint dinner and joint event program”, “The President of South Korea’s North His first speech in front of Korean citizens”. These subheadings are not included in the news headline because they do not have a real subheading value and are expressed in short sentences. The presentation of the news comprises small paragraphs. As in the other news, the name of Kim Jong Un is stressed throughout the content from the title, in bold and large font. The presentation of the primary event is given throughout the text, except for the introductory sentences.

Background information is not enough in the news. Although the details of the inter-Korean talks and the situations that took place for the first time are explained, no preliminary information is offered regarding the reasons behind the talks. Therefore, the historical and political dimensions of the message are insufficient. According to Van Dijk, language use and discourse production affect the communicative situation that language users interpret. These subjective state definitions express context. Context ensures the discourse is socially appropriate (Van Dijk, 2006: 121). Context is the cultural, attitudinal, religious, ethnic, political, etc., of those who produce the discourse. It is related to the position of the discourse and the quality of the philosophy

carried by the discourse (Günay, 2018: 87). The context of this news is entirely based on Kim Jong Un's attitudes and behaviors, steps, and actions taken during the talks. A typical value and belief are tried to be revealed, implicitly or explicitly, with various references.

The source of this news is the same as the news source above. The news was published in Korean via the Ryugyong Clip website.

2.1.2.3. Micro Structure

- 남조선언론들은 《김정은위원장의 파격행보로 평양남북정상회담에서 <최초>, <처음>이 쏟아졌다.》, 《<사상최초>의 수식어가 계속 이어졌다.》고 하면서 다음과 같이 보도하였다. (The South Korean media said, “Because of the President Kim Jong Un’s unusual move, “firsts” were marked at the North-South summit in Pyongyang, and “a first in history” took place.”)

- 《김정은위원장이 리설주녀사와 함께 18 일 오전 평양순안공항에서 전용기로 도착한 문재인대통령내외를 직접 영접한것은 행사의 첫 최초기록으로 된다.》 (President Kim Jong-un personally greeted President Moon Jae In and his wife, who arrived with Ms. Ri Sol Ju on a private plane from Pyongyang Sunan Airport on the 18th morning of the month.)

- 《김정은위원장이 권력의 핵심공간을 과감히 공개하였다.》 (Chairman Kim Jong-un boldly revealed the core space of power)

- 《김정은위원장이 로동당 위원장이라는 자신의 위치도 부각하고 정상국가면모를 대내외적으로 보여주었다.》고 하였다. (President Kim Jong-un emphasized his position as the head of the Workers’ Party of Korea and showed a normal state appearance both internally and externally.)

- 《김정은위원장이 문재인대통령에게 15 시간이상을 투자하며 거의 대부분 공식일정에 동행하였다.》 (President Kim Jong Un has been with President Moon Jae In for more than 15 hours and accompanied him on almost all official programs.)

- 김정은위원장이 마련한 대집단체조와 예술공연을 관람한 후 문재인대통령이 역대 최초로 북의 시민들을 상대로 대중연설을 펼쳤다고 하면서 《문재인대통령은 최초로 북에서 대중연설을 한 <한국대통령>으로 역사에 기록되게 되었다.》고 하였다. (President Moon Jae In made history when he became the President of South Korea, he gave a public speech in front of North Korean citizens for the first time in its history)

after watching a large group of gymnastics and art performances organized by President Kim Jong Un.)

Active and compound sentences are frequently used in the text. Words and proper nouns for emphasis are highlighted with square brackets each time. In particular, the emphasis on Kim Jong Un's name overlaps with other news texts. For instance, in the last sentence above on the news site, while the name of Kim Jong Un was written in bold and large font, Moon Jae In was mentioned once without emphasis; in the next bet, he is only mentioned as 한국대통령 (The President of South Korea). Therefore, emphasis is placed on the strength and determination of the subject. In addition, although the news text is short, some sentences may be kept long and complex to increase the importance of the information.

There are also passive sentences in the text. For example; “《김정은위원장과 문재인대통령이 조선인민군 의장대를 사열할 때 북이 레포 21 발을 올린것은 남북력사상 처음이었다.》고 하였다” (Ryugyong, 2018). In this sentence, for the first time in the history of the South Korea and North Korea, during the tour of the Heads of State, it is said that salute was given with 21 gun shots. The sub-title of this sentence is stated as 《파격적인 레포발사》, “unusual salute shot”. Since the passive sentence structure does not reveal the perpetrator of the action concretely, it may be used where author's intention is not wanted to be clearly stated.

There is a causal relationship between news sentences. “남조선언론들은 《김정은위원장의 파격행보로 평양남북정상회담에서 <최초>, <처음>이 쏟아졌다.》, 《<사상최초>의 수식어가 계속 이어졌다.》고 하면서 다음과 같이 보도하였다” (Ryugyong, 2018). In the sentence, the realization of some issues for the first time in the inter-Korean talks and a causal relationship was established by connecting Kim's extraordinary moves.

“남측정상이 북정치의 심장부인 로동당청사에서 회담을 진행한것은 물론 남측 언론에 건물내부가 공개된것은 처음있는 일이라고 하면서 《김정은위원장이 권력의 핵심공간을 과감히 공개하였다.》, 《김정은위원장이 로동당 위원장이라는 자신의 위치도 부각하고 정상국가면모를 대내외적으로 보여주었다.》고 하였다” (Ryugyong, 2018).

These sentences explain that the fact that the meetings were held in the Workers' Building and the building was disclosed to the South Korean media caused North Korea to be perceived as a normal state. Kim was trying to show his power's main center and leading position.

It is also apparent that there is a functional relationship in the sentences. In the paragraph with the subheading 《예상을 뛰어넘은 동석식사와 공동행사일정》, the following is summarized respectively:

- The negotiations of Heads of State in the reunification process exceed the original plan.

- Moon's eating seven times in two nights and three days.

- Being with Kim at four of these meals

- Two leaders spend more than half of the day together.

From the point of view of the referential relationship, the idea that Kim took many significant steps for the future of the Korean Peninsula has been emphasized throughout the news, with discourses such as Kim Jong Un's unusual moves, a private airport encounter, an unusual salute, the courageous opening of the building to the public, and the hospitality that is hard to find at foreign summits.

김정은위원장 (The President Kim Jong Un), 문재인대통령 (The President Moon Jae In), 남측 (The South), 처음 and 최초로 (first, beginning), 대중연설을 (public speaking) are the most frequently applied and especially preferred words. Two words are utilized to express "the president". When referring to North Korean President Kim Jong Un, the word 위원장, which means Chairman, Chairman of the Board/Committee, was used, and the word 대통령, which means Head of State, was used when talking about the South Korean President Moon Jae In. The phrase "the plunder of firsts" analyzed in the title section also discloses the nuance in the choice of terms and the intended message in the background.

Like the news above, the reader's ideas are directed in news rhetoric. Throughout the text, Kim Jong Un's actions are described as extraordinary, and the steps taken in this context are almost listed. It has been tried to increase the news's reliability by using numerical data. For example, the two leaders met seven times, staying together for over 15 hours. These data support this sentence: "이러한 최초기록들은 두 정상간 신뢰는 물론 친밀도를 대내외적으로 과시하는 효과가 클 것이다.》고 하였다" (Ryugyong, 2018). (The trust and friendship between the two leaders, who have shown such closeness for the first time, will significantly impact both at home and abroad.) An ideological production has been revealed in the news discourse.

2.1.3. Critical Discourse Analysis Of The News Titled “WPK Solemnly Declares Its Immutable Will To React To Enemy’s Nuke And Full-frontal Confrontation In Kind”

2.1.3.1. Thematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

The title of this news text is “WPK Solemnly Declares Its Immutable Will to React to Enemy’s Nuke and Full-frontal Confrontation in Kind.” In the title, declaring the unwavering will of the WPK (Korean Workers Party), an enemy subject is created, and the discourse of which reactions to which actions of the enemy will be given is constructed. The point to be explained in the title is understood most clearly when the spot sentence is read. The spot sentence of this text is “General Secretary Kim Jong Un guides test fire of new-type ICBM of DPRK’s strategic forces” (The Pyongyang Times, 2022). So, the anti-enemy reaction expressed in the headline is the North Korean strategic forces launching new types of intercontinental ballistic missiles under the guidance of Kim Jong Un.

Picture 6. The Photo of News Headline



Kaynak: The Pyongyang Times, 2022.

The news headline is in an orange box with a white font. The spot title is written under the photos in black and bold font. Here, there is a movement from the general to the specific. The opening of a general meaningful title is made in the spot part. The newspaper focused on the revolutionary actions of Kim Jong Un, and expressed this with the headline “General Secretary Kim Jong Un’s Revolutionary Activities,” written in a yellow font in a red box independent of the news. The news date (19.11.2022) is indicated on the left under the main title. There is no reference to the Juche calendar on this news site.

The intro sentence of the news text, “The DPRK strategic forces test-fired a new-type ICBM on November 18 amid the strict implementation of the top-priority defense-building strategy of the Workers’ Party of Korea and the

DPRK government on regularly bolstering up the most powerful and absolute nuclear deterrent” (The Pyongyang Times, 2022). In the introductory sentence, the main event of the text is summarized, the event is clarified with historical information, and an introduction is made to the narrative of the event. Besides, the ongoing country security strategy is revealed with the discourse that the nuclear deterrence strategy, which is the ultimate goal of North Korea, will be rigorously implemented. The introductory sentence consists of a detailed repetition of the spot title.

In the news, 23 photographs were used in one flow. The launch moment of the missile, Kim Jong Un watching the launch with his daughter, Kim Jong Un with his daughter in front of the missile vehicle and military officials in the back, his wife and military officials watching the event with enthusiasm are a general summary of the photographs. Some images will be examined within the analysis.

Picture 7. Kim Jong Un, His Daughter, and Wife



Kaynak: The Pyongyang Times, 2022.

In the images above, Kim Jong Un watches the last missile launch with his daughter. The importance of these photos getting a place in the press is the first time Kim Jong Un's daughter appears in the media. Even though her daughter's name and age remain uncertain, her first media appearance by the leader indicates she may occupy essential positions in the future. It may also have been media-served that his wife, Ri Sol Ju, tied her hands together and looked at Kim while smiling. The hand-drawn photo of Kim and her daughter in the photo above left may emphasize tight family ties and future leader discussions.

2.1.3.2. Schematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

The news described the new intercontinental ballistic missile launch on November 18, 2022. The reasons for the missile test, which authorities accompanied Kim Jong Il, the aims of the test shot, and the message he wanted to give were explained respectively. The newspaper presented the main event regarding threats and the need for security.

“The test fire was conducted under the intolerable condition that the reckless military confrontational moves of the US and other hostile forces persistently driving the military and political situation on the Korean peninsula to the red line have gone beyond the limit, and hypocritical and brigandish sophisms have been justified even in the UN arena to brand the right of a sovereign state to self-defense as a provocation in every way” (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

It is clear that the perception of threat is felt owing to the confrontational actions of the USA and other enemy forces (The South Korea and other US allies), and this situation leads to the legitimization of missile tests with an emphasis on the sovereignty of the country. The presentation of the news comprises many short paragraphs. The name of Kim Jong Un is written in large font throughout the text, overlapping with other news.

The background information in the news was restricted to the actions of the US and enemy forces that made the Korean Peninsula insecure. South Korea was not mentioned as an enemy power, and the issue was limited by emphasizing “the acceptance of rogue nonsense even in the UN arena”. Therefore, sufficient background information is unavailable. The news only tells the event and action from a specific frame. The context of the news is to explain the reliability and power of the weapon systems representing the strategic power of North Korea. This point is supported by expressions such as “the strongest strategic weapon in the world”, “the successful test fire”, and “a sovereign state to self-defense as a provocation in every way” (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

The source of this news is The Pyongyang Times. The newspaper is the only English-language newspaper in North Korea, starting its publication life

in 1965. It offers the latest and detailed information about what has been happening in the country in politics, economy, culture, and other sectors. In addition, the article gives specific information about Pyongyang and other parts of the country (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

2.1.3.3. Micro Structure

- *Kim Jong Un*, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and the president of the State Affairs of the DPRK, guided the test fire on the spot (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

- *Jo Yong Won, Ri Il Hwan, Jon Hyon Chol, Ri Chung Gil, Kim Jong Sik and other senior officials of the WPK Central Committee* watched the test fire in the presence of the General Secretary (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

- *Kim Jong Un was greeted* on the spot by Colonel General Jang Chang Ha, leading officials in the defense scientific research sector and commanding officers of the Red Flag Company (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

- *The new-type ICBM Hwasongpho-17*, launched at Pyongyang International Airport, traveled up to a maximum altitude of 6 040.9 km and flew a distance of 999.2 km for 4 135s before accurately landing on the preset area in open waters of the East Sea of Korea (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

- *Kim Jong Un said* that our Party and government should clearly demonstrate their strongest will to retaliate against the hysteric aggression war drills by the enemies seeking to destroy peace and stability in the Korean peninsula and the region (The Pyongyang Times, 2022).

Active sentence structures are mainly applied in the text. In the news, including names, especially from the government circle, the perpetrators of the missile tests are stated. Kim Jong Un is described with different adjectives, specifically as the country's leader and the Labor Party's General Secretary. In the sentences used in the news, the details regarding the launch of the missiles are usually in the passive sentence structure. As an example, the following sentence can be mentioned: "The test fire was conducted under the intolerable condition that the reckless military confrontational moves of the US and other hostile forces persistently drove the military and political situation on the Korean peninsula to the red line have gone beyond the limit, and hypocritical and brigandish sophisms have been justified even in the UN arena to brand the right of a sovereign state to self-defense as a provocation in every way" (The Pyongyang Times, 2022). While the determination and power of the subject are at the forefront in active sentence structures, passive sentence structures aim to legitimize the action. Also, sentences in the text are often long and complex.

There is a causal relation in this news text. The reason for North Korea's nuclear armament and the missile test that is the subject of the news has been stated as the imperialist actions of the enemy and war exercises. In the news, there is a referential relation where there is no functional relation. Many

expressions label the USA and South Korea as enemies. (The US and other hostile forces persistently driving the military and political situation on the Korean peninsula, the US and other hostile forces' military threats, etc.)

The most frequently used word patterns in the news are:

- The Workers Party of Korea
- The US and other hostile forces
- The nuclear forces of the DPRK
- The defense scientific research sector
- The test fire

The words frequently used in the news are strategic, nuclear, military, defense, weapons, ICBM, and hostile. In particular, the perception of insecurity and the need for defense are emphasized. The way the parties to the event are defined in sentences gives the ideology of the news. The USA and South Korea are “hostile” while North Korea is described as a “sovereign power”.

When the persuasion processes of the news are evaluated within news rhetoric, it is found that news photos are a striking element. In the news, consisting of many photographs, it is desired to normalize the missile test by breaking it out of its context. This may be why Kim mainly introduces her daughter in the photos. In addition, numerical data was also used in the news. In the sentence, “The new-type ICBM Hwasongpho-17, launched at Pyongyang International Airport, traveled up to a maximum altitude of 6 040.9 km and flew a distance of 999.2 km for 4 135s before accurately landing on the preset area in open waters of the East Sea of Korea” (The Pyongyang Times, 2022), how many kilometers the missile can reach, its duration and speed are stated. Thus, the reliability of the news is tried to be ensured.

2.1.4. Critical Discourse Analysis Of The News Titled “전쟁광신자의 정체는 절대로 가리울수 없다”

2.1.4.1. Thematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

The title of this news text is “전쟁광신자의 정체는 절대로 가리울수 없다”. In the title, translated as “The identity of the war fanatic can never be covered,” a target is clearly shown. Information about who this target is, where, when, how, and in what way he displayed war fanaticism is not available. However, he is claimed to show himself as pro-war in every way. There is no spot headline in the article. In the news dated 10 November 2022, the date of Juche (111) is also stated.

The intro sentence of the news text is “지금 남조선의 윤석열괴뢰역적패당이 북침전쟁광기를 더욱 공공연히 드러내고있다.” (Now, the South Korean puppet group of traitors Yoon Seok Yeol is more

openly revealing its war madness for the invasion of North Korea). The sentence targets South Korean President Yook Seok Yeol, characterizes him and his entourage as a puppet group, and states that they are planning to invade North Korea. Thus, in the introductory sentence, there is an answer to the questions of whom and for what reason the news headline is targeted.

2.1.4.2. Schematic Analysis Of Macro Structure

In the text, South Korean President Yook Seok Yeol and his team are presented as a representative example of the war exercises carried out by South Korea and the United States. The news opposes South Korea's characterization of these exercises as defensive and justifies the rhetoric of the unending war threat. In the sentence, *세상사람들이 미국에 아부굴종하며 반공화국대결책동의 돌격대로 날뛰고있는 괴뢰역적패당의 군사적망동으로 하여 언제가도 조선반도에서의 전쟁위험은 가셔질수 없다고 하는것은 바로 이때문이다* (Uriminzokkiri, 2022), it is stressed that the danger of war (괴뢰역적패당) on the Korean Peninsula will not end, by citing the military recklessness of the puppet traitor gang. The words and expressions to be emphasized in the news are indicated with two square brackets. All text in this article is written in the same font.

The background and context information is expressed in the news. The background of exercises such as “Vigilant Storm”, “Taeguk Drill” is given by dating. The information on the names and shapes of the Taeguk Exercise was underlined, and it was stated that it had been carried out for the invasion of the North Korea since 1955. The background of the event has been mentioned with a new title since 2005, but with the emphasis that it has continued to exist for the same purpose.

“《태극연습》은 괴뢰들이 남조선강점 미제침략군으로부터 《평시작전통제권》을 넘겨받은 이후인 1995년부터 《압록강》연습이라는 명칭을 달고 시작한 북침전쟁연습이다.

괴뢰군단독으로 압록강까지 《진격》하여 공화국북반부를 타고앞으려는 흥심을 그대로 드러낸 이 전쟁연습이 2005년부터 현재의 명칭으로 바뀌었지만 그 불순한 목적은 오늘까지도 변하지 않았다” (Uriminzokkiri, 2022).

The context of the news is entirely about making South Korea and the US hostile with their actions, creating the perception that the country is a

victim, and making North Korea threatened. In the last sentence, along with the introductory sentence, South Korea was described as a “war fanatic,” and this idea was tried to be proven in the content.

The source of this news is the Uriminzokkiri (Our Nation). Uriminzokkiri, a North Korean propaganda website, broadcasts in many languages. Among all the news, the reporter writing the news for the first time is given at the end of the news. The primary source of this news is Kim Seung Deog 김승덕. There is no information about this person.

2.1.4.3. Micro Structure

- 지금 남조선의 윤석열괴뢰역적패당이 북침전쟁광기를 더욱 공공연히 드러내고있다 (Uriminzokkiri, 2022).

- 지금 괴뢰역적패당은 다른 군사연습들과 마찬가지로 이번 《2022 태극연습》을 놓고 《년례적》이요, 《방어적》이요 하면서 그 무슨 《위협》에 대비한 훈련이라고 떠들어대고있다 (Uriminzokkiri, 2022).

- 괴뢰역적패당이 우리의 정당한 국방력강화와 자위적대응조치들을 《위협》으로, 《도발》로 매도하면서 황당한 궤변과 갖은 오그랑수로 침략전쟁연습을 합리화하려고 해도 자루속의 송곳은 감추지 못한다 (Uriminzokkiri, 2022).

In the text, weighted factors and compound sentence structure are used. Sentences usually comprise long and abundant adjective/noun phrases. In this way, it is possible to legitimize the discourse. Notably, South Korean President Yook Seok Yeol and his team are presented as subjects in most news headlines. With the active structure, the subject is emphasized and brought to the fore.

There is a causal relationship in this news. The perception that the Korean Peninsula is under threat and may be invaded is attributed to the exercises that South Korea carries out together with the United States and sometimes alone. Indeed, in the sentence “조선반도에 진짜 위협이 존재한다면 그것은 오직 반공화국대결에 환장한 미국과 남조선괴뢰들이 항시적으로 가해온 전쟁위협뿐이다” (Uriminzokkiri, 2022), the existence of a real hazard to the Korean Peninsula only denotes the anti-North Korea conflict. It has been evaluated depending on the war threat of the US and South Korean puppets who are obsessed with it. In the sentence “병력과 장비가 동원되지 않는다고 하여 우리를 겨냥한 침략전쟁연습이라는 본질과 성격이 달라지겠는가 하는것이다”

(Uriminzokkiri, 2022), if troops and equipment cannot be mobilized, the nature of offensive warfare exercises targeting North Korea will evolve. When evaluated in terms of referential relationship, it is seen that South Korea and its allies are tried to be made hostile with expressions such as “gang”, “puppet”, “rebel”, and “provocation”.

Word choices reflect the ideological attitude of the news. 괴뢰역적패당 (puppet traitor gang), 위협 (danger), 전쟁연습 (battle drill), 비질러트 (vigilant), 전쟁위험 (war risk), 침략적인 (invader), 방어적 (defense), 군사적망동 (military) The use of words such as revolt, 북침전쟁 (The Northern Invasion War), 전쟁광신자 (war fanatic) indicates an offensive language and the use of securitization elements in the narrative.

There is no analytical data in the news apart from the date information. This situation undermines the probability of the news. Apart from analytical data, reliable sources, such as expert assessments and eyewitness statements, were excluded. Moreover, the reader’s opinions are wanted to be changed to the perception that the leader of South Korea is a gang member and leader. The tension in the Korean Peninsula has escalated due to President Yoon, and North Korea has to defend itself. In the headline and the last sentence, the statement that the identity of the pro-war cannot be concealed was repeated, and South Korea was presented as “pro-war”.

3. FINDINGS INTERPRETATION

When the North Korean digital propaganda contents are examined, it is observed that specific discourse structures always keep their existence, even though noticed that the discourses change according to the periodical conditions. While examining the related news, Van Dijk’s news discourse analysis method was used, and the macro and micro structures of the contents were examined in depth. In the analysis, in which many issues such as the title, news entry, photographs, syntactic structure, regional harmony, presentation of the event, background and context information, and news rhetoric were examined, some findings were reached.

As one of North Korea’s limited external resources, digital media seeks to influence and build consensus on the message’s recipients. The North Korean media, which cannot be thought of independently from the state, expressed the power/authority relationship of critical discourse analysis by conveying the discourse shaped according to the government’s will. The analyzed news was selected based on two different periods. The period when the first two news stories were written corresponds to the inter-Korean talks when a peaceful atmosphere prevailed on the Korean Peninsula. The last two account stories were written when tensions in the Peninsula escalated and reactions to the US-South Korean military exercises increased.

According to the results of the thematic analysis of the news, the titles and news entries attracted attention and wanted to direct the reader to a particular emotion. News titles and introductory sentences do not answer all 5W1H questions. Therefore, although the intended message is understood, the main event of the news is not figured out. While there was a positive atmosphere in the first two news stories, the titles were not particularly emphasized. In the last two news, the titles are more emphatic and specific. Emotional expressions and subjective judgments dominate all news. In extension, the sender's intention reflects the state language. Photographs are available in all the news except one. However, the third article, "WPK Solemnly Declares Its Immutable Will to React to Enemy's Nuke and Full-frontal Confrontation in Kind" contains many (23) photos. This news has the aggressive language. Photos are compatible with headlines and news entries. Propaganda posters were also included in the photographs. In addition, the names of the leaders in all news are written in bold and large font.

When we check the results of the schematic analysis of the news, many issues come to the forefront. In the news, the narration of the main event is hidden in the last paragraphs. In addition, the main event is not covered in detail. All news is composed of short paragraphs. The difference is that while the background and context information is insufficient in the first two news, In the last two news, the background and context information are presented in more detail. Especially the historical background is mentioned with historical information. It also is desired to create an enemy profile with the context information. All news sources are integrated with the power holders. In only one news report, the reporter's name was given; however, information about the person could not be accessed in the research. In this way, it has been determined that dominant discourses are reproduced and included in the discourses of news sources.

When the text is examined within microanalysis, it is found that there are apparent differences in the word choices that dominate the news content. The news texts focused on positive words such as peace, unification, and cooperation in 2018. In 2022, alienation and making the enemy clear have dominated the word choices. Nonetheless, sentence structures are generally active and compound. The preference for active sentences gives the impression that the subject is the power source. Passive sentence structures, rarely encountered in the news, legitimize the action. Although there is a theme difference in the news, North Korea is emphasized as the source of power/communication/peace as the subject in the active sentence structure. Subjective comments are frequently included in news texts. There is also a causal relation and a partially referential relation. Numerical statistics and expert opinions were not employed much in the news. More place was given to numerical data in the last two news articles, which were written in a language and aggressively against South Korea. Numbers are widely utilized when expressing dates.

Conclusion

Propaganda: It is a means of disseminating values put forward to influence ideas, control, and shape people's behavior. With its closed societal structure, it is indispensable for North Korea to continue its control mechanism. North Koreans cannot exist in the digital space. Though only a handful of elites, state propaganda is carried out on social media and other media platforms. Developments in science and technology have transformed the country's propaganda style; traditional propaganda posters have been replaced by digital content. Although the methods used by propaganda have changed, its aims remain the same: to maintain the current regime, to ensure obedience to it, and to convince the foreign public that North Korea is a livable country.

Using the method of critical discourse analysis, this article examines this new face of North Korean propaganda within the structure of strategic communication. In this context, when considered within the groundwork of the issues summarized in the findings section, the meanings of the words in the discourse, beyond their dictionary definitions, represent the context. In discourse analysis, the content of the text and the issues such as who said it, on what basis, its purpose, and to whom it was said are important. Evaluating the concepts of strategic communication and propaganda based on issues such as the receiver of the message, its aims, and content facilitates the research. In this background, the article sought answers to the following questions to analyze North Korea's digital strategic communication design:

1. Who are the audiences?
2. Where can we reach them?
3. What are the objectives?
4. What kind of content will help us achieve our objectives?
5. Which platforms are effective in conveying the message?

Within the framework of the news texts and sources analyzed, the target audience is understood as the English-speaking international community and Korean language speakers (South Koreans). North Korea prefers the websites of media channels to reach the target audience. The article did not examine North Korea's visibility on social media platforms. However, the country has active social media accounts. Analysis of these accounts could be the subject of a broader study). The objectives set are to convey the message that, regardless of the event mentioned in the news, North Korea's power, the leader's greatness, and the message that peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula can only be possible thanks to North Korea. To achieve these goals, propaganda-intensive news content was preferred. Despite having limited digital visibility, North Korea heavily uses official state media and news

channels to deliver its messages. Pyongyang Times and Rodong Sinmun are visible media channels, especially broadcasting abroad.

Within the propaganda and strategic communication methods mentioned above, it is clear that tactics such as appealing to emotions, using lies or cheating, and changing the writing style are used in news texts. As linguistic structures on which ideologies are built, the news is the most active tool in using these elements. The writers of the North Korean news texts make news in line with the interests of the sovereign power and legitimize these interests. There may be issues in the news that the writer of the text did not mention or gave a missing place. However, it is aimed to ignore these issues with word games, which show propaganda. North Korea's political values and attractiveness are limited North Korea's limited political values and attractiveness, so the country needs to benefit from strategic communication and public diplomacy elements to carry out effective digital propaganda. In this context, the country has a limited but accumulating profile. Likewise, determining the target audience, environmental analysis, and targets should be carefully analyzed and synthesized. After determining the target audience and objectives within propaganda, the parallel determination of communication targets brings steps to change the masses' ideas. Although North Korea's current practices and perception of strategic communication have differences, the reliability of propaganda is tried to be ensured with strategic communication elements.

As seen in the news texts analyzed, adopting Juche principles, the state ideology in North Korea is the most critical discourse element. Today, North Korea does not see the media only as a propaganda tool for its people. The efforts to represent the positive image of North Korea, together with the principles of Juche, transform the media into a tool for public diplomacy and strategic communication. Because propaganda, which aims to impose false/erroneous information on the interlocutors and to spread misleading information, is like propaganda to spread ideas, views, and attitudes towards the targets, even though it is evaluated independently of strategic communication. Therefore, strategic communication can be considered an umbrella concept that includes propaganda.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış Bağımsız

Yazar Katkısı: Aybala Lale % ? Bilal Karabulut % ?

Destek ve Teşekkür Beyanı: Çalışma için destek alınmamıştır.

Etik Onay: Bu çalışma etik onay gerektiren herhangi bir insan veya hayvan araştırması içermemektedir

Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı: Çalışma ile ilgili herhangi bir kurum veya kişi ile çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

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