



Nominalizations in English and Arabic Newspaper Articles on Drug Addiction in Iraq

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Abstract:

Nominalization, as a grammatical process, involves the transformation of verbs and adjectives into nouns. This linguistic phenomenon serves the purpose of enhancing conciseness and facilitating comprehension in news articles. However, it also holds the potential to alter the representation of drug addiction. The objective of this study is to conduct an analysis of how drug addiction is portrayed in English and Arabic newspaper articles in Iraq, employing a systemic functional linguistics (SFL) perspective with a specific emphasis on the utilization of nominalization. To achieve this, two articles, one in English and one in Arabic, have been meticulously chosen for examination. The study delves into the impact of nominalization on the depiction of drug addiction in news coverage, exploring the diverse aspects of nominalization that contribute to the overall meaning conveyed in these articles. By investigating language choices, particularly the employment of nominalization, the research endeavors to comprehend how drug addiction is shaped and its societal implications. Drawing inspiration from the works of Michael Halliday and the concept of grammatical metaphor, the study seeks to unravel the role played by nominalization in condensing information and imparting significance within news articles. The findings of this research enrich our comprehension of the linguistic mechanisms employed in the portrayal of drug addiction within Iraqi culture and how this issue is framed within the realm of news reporting. Through an analysis of the linguistic strategies employed in newspaper articles, this study provides valuable insights into the construction of meaning and the portrayal of drug addiction in the media. Ultimately, the study concludes that the usage of nominalization in news articles concerning drug addiction can contribute to the perpetuation of stigma and discrimination against individuals grappling with addiction. It is imperative for journalists to be cognizant of how nominalization shapes the representation of drug addiction and to utilize this technique responsibly.

Keywords: Nominalization, drug addiction, articles, newspapers, systemic functional linguistics (SFL)



التسميات في مقالات الصحف باللغة الإنجليزية والعربية حول إدمان المخدرات في العراق

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المستخلص :

التسمية، كعملية لغوية، تشمل تحويل الأفعال والصفات إلى أسماء. يتم استخدام هذه الظاهرة اللغوية لتحسين الإيجاز وتسهيل الفهم في مقالات الأخبار. ومع ذلك، فإنها قادرة أيضًا على تغيير تصوير إدمان المخدرات. يهدف هذا الدراسة إلى إجراء تحليل لكيفية تصوير إدمان المخدرات في مقالات الصحف الإنجليزية والعربية في العراق، باستخدام منظور اللغويات الوظيفية النظامية (SFL) مع التركيز الخاص على استخدام التسمية. لتحقيق هذا الهدف، تم اختيار مقالتين، واحدة باللغة الإنجليزية وواحدة باللغة العربية، بعناية للفحص. تستكشف الدراسة تأثير التسمية على تصوير إدمان المخدرات في تغطية الأخبار، وتستكشف الميزات المتنوعة للتسمية التي تساهم في المعنى العام الذي ينقله هذه المقالات. من خلال دراسة اختيارات اللغة، وبالأخص استخدام التسمية، يسعى البحث لفهم كيف يتم تشكيل إدمان المخدرات وتأثيره على المجتمع. يستمد البحث إلهامه من أعمال مايكل هالدي ومفهوم الاستعارة اللغوية، ويسعى إلى كشف الدور الذي تلعبه التسمية في تلخيص المعلومات وإيصال المعنى في مقالات الأخبار. تساهم نتائج هذا البحث في تعزيز فهمنا للآليات اللغوية المستخدمة في تصوير إدمان المخدرات في ثقافة العراق وكيفية تصوير هذه المسألة في وسائل الإعلام. من خلال تحليل الاستراتيجيات اللغوية المستخدمة في مقالات الصحف، توفر هذه الدراسة رؤى قيمة حول بناء المعنى وتصوير إدمان المخدرات في وسائل الإعلام. في النهاية، تخلص الدراسة إلى أن استخدام التسمية في مقالات الأخبار المتعلقة بإدمان المخدرات يمكن أن يساهم في استمرار التمييز والتمييز ضد الأفراد الذين يعانون من الإدمان. من الضروري أن يكون الصحفيون على دراية بكيفية تأثير التسمية في تصوير إدمان المخدرات واستخدام هذه التقنية بمسؤولية.

الكلمات الرئيسية: التسمية ، إدمان المخدرات ، المقالات ، الجرائد ، علم اللغة الوظيفي النظامي (SFL)

1- Introduction

This study aims to examine the drug addiction as a general term for all addictive substances that people use in their daily lives, using a systemic functional linguistics perspective. The data is taken from newspapers in English in Iraq, and the analysis is based on Halliday's "nominalization" approach. The study shows that drug usage is a dangerous habit that people turn to in order to reach their goals, but it has severe consequences like leading to crimes or thefts. Therefore, the study draws the conclusion that since both cause negative actions, the impact of drug usage on society can be just as bad as that of terrorism.

Originally, the term "drugs" referred to a variety of medications used to treat pain and dull the senses. Despite the fact that some people still use the term "narcotics" to refer to all drugs, it is currently exclusively used to describe opium, opium derivatives, and semi-synthetic substitutes (Nehlig, 2004). Drug abuse can result in psychological dependence, where the user may discuss and think about using drugs even after their desire has subsided and may experience stress from



juggling their daily responsibilities. Relapse is probable without changing the environmental factors or psychological drivers that contributed to drug abuse (Nehlig, 2004).

Reading a newspaper is an effective way to stay informed about current events and news around the world. Newspapers can also provide valuable information about local events and developments within the community, thus,

According to Elkarte (2010), the adherence to specific values, such as prominence, effect, conflict, timing, and other elements, determines the quality of news. Newspapers can offer readers insight into future developments in addition to keeping readers informed about past and present occurrences. Newspapers are a more easily understood source of news as compared to other media formats because of their accessibility and convenience. Newspapers provide a variety of news, such as forecasts for the weather, reporting from other regions, business information, and more (Jucker, 2007). Newspapers can be a source of enjoyment in addition to information. Overall, newspapers are a useful, current, and accessible resource for research and education (Blommaert, 2005).

As newspapers began to compete with other types of journalism for the title of the primary and most trustworthy source of information on a global scale in the twentieth century, technical improvements had a profound impact on the language of newspapers (Crystal, 2008). The name "newspaper" suggests that the material is made up mostly of news and editorial opinion on the news. Newspapers can, however, contain a wide range of content, including pictures, advertisements, news commentary, and even games. Some newspapers focus on particular themes other than news, albeit covering a wide range of topics. For instance, some people have a keen interest in celebrities, TV personalities, or the antics of a particular clan or group, like the royal family (Cotter, 2010). According to Breeze (2011), a newspaper's aim is to learn unique information about subjects that interest readers. Newspapers can also present facts, express opinions, and engage in a variety of other activities. People gauge the importance of news according to the introduction of unusual news.

Nominalization can be a useful tool to investigate when using the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) perspective to analyze drug addiction stories in an English-language newspaper in Iraq. Nominalization reduces clausal constructs and simplifies information, making news pieces more direct and effective at getting their point across. SFL study could look at how nominalization is applied to depict drug addiction and its effects on society in news articles.



Nominalization, which tries to decrease the number of sentences and compress information into nominal groups, is, according to Halliday (1994), the most significant resource for packaging information at high density. Thus, the use of nominalization in news items can offer important insights into how language is utilized to convey and build meaning regarding drug addiction in Iraqi culture and how the issue is being framed in the news.

2- Research Questions

- 1- How does the use of nominalization affect the way that drug addiction is represented in the news?
- 2- How do the different features of nominalization contribute to the meaning of the news articles?

3- Aims of the Study

- 1- Evaluate how nominalization is used in drug addiction stories in an English-language daily in Iraq.
2. Identify the aspects of language that this context's nominalization is related with.
- 3- Examine the impact of nominalization on the news media's representation of drug addiction.

4- Literature Review

Michael Halliday (1976, 1978, 1985) claimed that language is a means of generating meanings. It is a semantic system. He argues that linguists are so enthralled by the code that they have forgotten that language is a social phenomenon. It involves people, places, things that happen, and social connotations. Language is the social expression of human relationships, and written communication keeps a record of these observable events.

Language as a social phenomenon, the mechanics of text structure, function, and meaning are an issue, according to Halliday's SFL. The study of language in social contexts, where lexical and grammatical decisions are influenced by the social and cultural background, begins. The meaning of a clause or text is determined by the linguistic choices made at the paradigmatic and syntagmatic levels of speech, where the words are arranged. Lexico-grammatical and extralinguistic (contextual) linguistic components are thought to converge at the level of meaning. According



to SFL (Halliday and Martin, 1993; Lock and Jones, 2011), language is a tool for meaning creation rather than a repository of rules.

The "generalized metafunctions that relate language to the outside world," or how speakers produce utterances and texts to express their intended meanings, are the main emphasis of SFL. Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is a field that studies choice theory. Halliday and Webster (2009) assert that there are various modes of meaning transmission. Taverniers (2006) asserts that SFL divides language into three general functional categories known as metafunctions. According to Matthiessen et al. (2003, pp. 110–111), "there are two basic kinds of grammatical metaphor, differentiated in terms of the metafunctional model of meaning: interpersonal grammatical metaphor and ideational grammatical metaphor."

The transitivity system and nominalization are the two parts of IGM. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, P. 656), nominalization "is the single most powerful resource for creating a grammatical metaphor." This method allows for an information-dense speech by figuratively rewording processes—which are logically expressed as verbs—and properties—which are logically expressed as adjectives. According to Halliday (2004, p.124), "the power of the nominal group is simultaneously both grammatical (its potential for structure) and semantic (the nature of entities)". So from a grammatical and semantic standpoint, treating objects as nouns is advantageous.

GM's fundamental origins may be found in western science, claim Halliday and Martin (1993, p. 15), and as a result, the development of a grammatical metaphor can be viewed as the semiotic manifestation of the beginnings of science. Derivational morphology, a grammar tool, may have been employed to encode the meanings of one class of words in terms of another, according to Halliday and Martin (1993, p. 12). In other words, nominalization was a possibility. As a result, dynamic processes may now be classified and used as entities. The usage of embedded clause structures to increase the breadth and number of meanings of the nominal group may also be a tendency in grammar.

Nominality, according to Halliday (1967, p. 24), "means freedom of movement; When processes, qualities, states, interactions, or attributes are "objectified," they assume potentialities that would normally be reserved for people and things. According to Jamshid (2005), the primary purpose of nominalization is to "objectify" properties and procedures so they can be subject to other language operations. Information density is a property of nominalization. The language



concision that nominalization creates is challenging to match with a more cogent clausal style. Given that nouns have more potential for modification and embedding than verbs, they may be able to fit more meanings into a single pattern, providing the nominalized process with more expressive alternatives.

Eggins (2004) argues:

“Nominalization enables us to move beyond the inherent chronological order of spoken language, where we connect a series of actions in which we play an active role. Through the process of nominalizing actions and logical connections, we can structure our written text not in relation to ourselves, but in relation to concepts, rationales, and causal factors. By converting words and other parts of speech into nouns, we expand the potential substance of our text, thereby enhancing its lexical density. ”(p.95)

In conclusion, this study determined that the primary role of nominalization in texts is its condensing function, allowing for the inclusion of a greater amount of information within a reduced number of clauses.

4-Methodology

4.1 Data collection

In order to verify consistency, the study looks at two articles from two different publications, one in English and the other in Arabic.

1- Soaring drug addiction blights lives in Iraq’s war-shattered Ramadi

This article by Mohammed Alyahya, which appeared on Arab News on July 25, 2023, examines the drug addiction issue that is becoming more and more of a concern in Ramadi, Iraq. Daily English-language newspaper Arab News is published in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. One of the most read publications in the Middle East, it was established in 1975. The newspaper is published in print and online and has a circulation of over 100,000 copies.

2- Breaking Baghdad: How Iraq’s crystal meth epidemic is ravaging the nation

The article gives a thorough summary of the causes, effects, and current state of the crystal meth pandemic in Iraq. Journalist Bel Trew has written extensively about the crystal meth outbreak in Iraq. Her reporting has aided in bringing attention to the problem and the necessity of taking action. On April 13, 2021, The Independent published the article.



4.2- Data analysis:

The most comprehensive frameworks for examining nominalization as a grammatical metaphor of ideation are presented by Halliday (1994), Halliday and Matthiessen (1999, 2004), and Martin et al. (1997). These models were developed after an extensive review of the existing literature on nominalization, aiming to explore its characteristics and categorize them appropriately. Halliday (1994) emphasizes that each metaphorical domain should possess a corresponding congruent language to differentiate various types of processes.

Most scientific genres are difficult to understand because nominalization creates extended noun phrases that provide informationally rich compositions. The nominalization of processes is one of the distinctive grammatical features of scientific writing, according to Halliday and Martin (1993). It is crucial to contrast a non-congruent expression with an analogous congruent realization in order to determine whether it is metaphorical (Halliday & Martin, 1993; Knowles & Moon, 2006).

4.2.1 - Examples of nominalization in article one:

Following years of conflict, foreign control, and disregard from the central government, the residents of Ramadi are struggling to make ends meet, grappling with significant unemployment rates.

The central government **has been warring** in Ramadi for decades. It has also **been occupying** the city and **neglecting** its people. As a result, the people of Ramadi are **barely surviving**. They are **unemployed, poor, and criminal**.

Jasim expressed that the court's belief that imposing severe sentences would lead to a decline in drug consumption was incorrect. According to Jasim, the lack of healthcare facilities capable of providing treatment to individuals convicted of drug use, coupled with the authorities' belief that incarceration alone would resolve the drug problem, contributes to this misconception.

"The court believed heavy sentences would mean the consumption of drugs would fall"

The nominalization "consumption of drugs" represents the process of people using drugs as an object. The congruent counterpart would be the verb phrase "people using drugs."



- **"We do not have any health institutions that can offer treatment to convicted drug users"**

The nominalization "treatment to convicted drug users" represents the process of providing treatment to people who are addicted to drugs as an object. The congruent counterpart would be the verb phrase "providing treatment to people who are addicted to drugs."

- **"The authorities believe locking people will solve the drug issue"**

The nominalization "locking people" represents the process of putting people in jail as an object. The congruent counterpart would be the verb phrase "putting people in jail."

Academic writing frequently uses nominalizations since they can help the writing become more succinct and objective. They may, however, also weaken the writing's clarity and activity. The nominalizations in this piece of writing make the writing less engaging and unambiguous. For instance, the phrase "The court believed that heavy sentences would mean the consumption of drugs would fall" would be more active and understandable if it were phrased as "The court believed that heavy sentences would cause people to use drugs less." Additionally, it demonstrates that drug users are solely responsible for their own behavior. The authorities cannot solve the drug problem by simply locking people up. They need to provide treatment and support services to help people overcome their addiction.

4.2.1.1- Discussion

The nominalization numbers in this article are 168 per 1494 words. This means that, In the case of this article, the nominalizations make the writing less active and less clear. Thus, the author tends to use the congruent version of the text which is more active and easier to understand. Overall, using nominalizations in drug article is not effective. Nominalizations can make the text less active and less clear, and they can also obscure the agency of the people involved. This can make it difficult for readers to understand the real-world implications of the problem of drug addiction.

4.2.2- Examples of nominalization in article two:

- **"The rising tide of crystal meth abuse"**
 - The nominalization "abuse" is derived from the verb "to abuse". In SFL, this is an example of a **material process** nominalization, which refers to an action or event.



- **" hidden epidemic"**
 - The nominalization "epidemic" is derived from the adjective "epidemic". In SFL, this is an example of an **adjectival process** nominalization, which refers to a quality or attribute.
- **"The need for more treatment facilities"**
 - The nominalization "need" is derived from the verb "to need". In SFL, this is an example of a **mental process** nominalization, which refers to a cognitive state or process.
- **"The government's response to the crystal meth epidemic"**
 - The nominalization "response" is derived from the verb "to respond". In SFL, this is an example of a **relational process** nominalization, which refers to a relationship between two entities.
- **"The devastating consequences of crystal meth addiction"**
 - The nominalization "consequences" is derived from the verb "to consequence". In SFL, this is an example of a **material process** nominalization, which refers to an action or event.

Nominalizations are often used in news articles to make this writing more concise and to focus on the main points of the story. They can also be used to create a sense of objectivity and distance, as they are less personal than verbs or adjectives.

4.2.2.2- Discussion

An article by Bel Trew titled "Crystal Meth Addiction in Iraq: A Hidden Epidemic" has 1,606 words. The article contains 171 nominalizations in total. The article's use of nominalization has a variety of effects on how drug addiction is portrayed. The usage of generic terms like "addiction," "epidemic," and "problem" first renders the issue impersonal. By portraying addiction as a concept or social problem, this approach distances addiction from the unique struggles and experiences of those who are impacted by it. Second, the nominalizations serve to generalize the issue by using words like "epidemic" and "increase" to describe drug addiction as a pervasive issue in Iraq. This definition ignores the particular circumstances and individual stories that accompany addiction, which could lead to a less nuanced comprehension of the problem. Thirdly, the language highlights the adverse impacts and risks related to addiction by utilizing verbs like "destruction" to underline the consequences and dangers of drug usage. The presented knowledge is given credibility by the use of nominalizations. The emphasis on abstract concepts could make it difficult to understand the distinctive experiences and viewpoints of Iraqi addicts, which might also lead to a lack of personalization from this approach.



5- conclusion

Nominalizations are a useful tool for writers, but they should be used in control especially in any health discourse. When used effectively, nominalizations can make writing more concise, formal, and sophisticated. However, when overused, they can make writing sound stilted and unnatural, and they can make it more difficult to understand. Texts often use nominalization, a common process that results in grammatical metaphor, to make their writing more engaging, vibrant, compelling, and colorful. In both genres, nominalization has been utilized to change the process from a verb to a noun. As a result, the writing's tone seems more formal and abstract. The goal of adopting nominalization in both genres is to allow the speaker to manipulate the lexis and syntax to achieve a certain effect. The use of nominalizations in drug addiction news articles is not always appropriate. In some cases, it may be more effective to use active verbs and to describe the people and actions involved in the story. However, in general, nominalizations can be a useful tool for clearly and objectively conveying factual facts concerning drug addiction.

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