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**THE USE OF HALLIDAYAN TRANSITIVITY TO ANALYZE THE
DISCOURSE OF THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT AND
COMMITMENT TO DESTROY ISIS:
A CORPUS LINGUISTICS STUDY**

Abstract

This study on the discourse of the U.S. State Department using Halliday's transitivity theory aimed to find out to what extent the U.S. is committed to destroying ISIS. The U.S. State Department's discourse on ISIS is compared with their action by analyzing the U.S. government's speech regarding the terror group. ISIS has shocked the world with its atrocities and violence against mankind and civilization. The U.S. vowed to fight the terror group and defeat it, but ISIS seemed unfazed by airstrikes made by 60 nations, including Russia. These airstrikes have raised concerns for nations bordering ISIS, like Lebanon, about when this conflict will come to an end. This research used Hallidayan transitivity, in particular the clause as a representation, by looking into the six types of processes – material, existential, relational, behavioral, verbal, and mental – to see how the U.S.'s discourse progresses as war continues. It also studied power in the U.S. government's speech at the micro and macro levels by Van Dijk and Fairclough. It is a corpus linguistics study using AntConc concordance software to analyze over 200 pages of corpora, consisting of official documents released by the U.S. State Department looking for high-frequency words, verbs of action, modality, and the rates at which they use sensing, behaving, and saying verbs, and how those verbs collocated with the goal, phenomenon, receiver, and attribute to gauge whether the U.S. is really willing to defeat ISIS. The study analyzed how many processes the U.S. has been through since the onset of the ISIS crisis in August 2014 to see how the discourse fluctuated. The research showed that the U.S. is willing to fight ISIS only as a part of a coalition and is under no obligation to commit.

Keywords: concordance, corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis, functional grammar, modality, and transitivity theory.

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