

War And Peace Journalism: A Comparative Analysis Of American And Chinese Print Media Coverage Of Russia And Ukraine War

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Abstract: *The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine has been a sensitive topic for many years, and depending on whether it is covered through the perspective of war journalism or peace journalism, it is frequently portrayed in the media in different ways. This conflict has its roots in historical and cultural difficulties, competing for political and economic objectives, and international power struggles. The study aims to focus on the representation of Russia-Ukraine conflict in the print media of US (New York Times) and China (China Daily). Keeping the framing analysis as basis, the study found that The New York Times published more news (80.88%) focusing wartime setting, highlighting the newspaper's attention on the military aspects of the struggle. On the other hand China Daily paid more attention to Peace oriented themes (73.33%).*

Keywords: War & Peace Journalism, Print Media, Framing Theory, Russia-Ukraine war

Introduction

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union (EU), have enlarged its boundries since 1999 into the former Soviet space, Major countries of the Europ including Germany, the UK, and France, are all considered to be part of the West and are parties to the ongoing conflict known as the Ukraine crisis. Three major time periods can be used to describe the crisis (Smith, 2016). The protests against the former president Yanukovych started when his government refused to sign the with the EU under pushing from Russia (November 2013–February 2014) were the beginning of it.

The Russia-Ukraine war started in the year 2014, February soon after the Ukrainian Revolution, with a concentration on the two recognize Ukrainian regions of Crimea and Donbas. In 2021 and the first half of 2022, Russia organized a substantial military deployment on the Ukrainian border.

Russia on 24 February 2024 started the biggest war in Europe after the 2nd World war. They launched a full-scale targeted operation invading Ukraine through land, sea, and through the air, targeting both the Ukraine military forces, their assets and cities all around the country. President of the United States Joe Biden called the strike "unjustified" and imposed harsh sanctions on key Putin administration officials. In a special session of the UN General Assembly on March 2, 2022, 141 of the 193 UN members voted against the Russian takeover and demanded that Russia leave Ukraine right now. Depending on the location, different perspectives and terminology are used to describe what has been happening in Ukraine since February 24.. Several social networking sites have been used by journalists, political leaders, people, and especially Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to capture the devastation of the war for a worldwide audience.

Compared to other recent wars, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has drawn the most focus from the general public (Gharib, 2022). People all around the world have been following the conflict through a variety of news media, including conventional newspapers, television, radio, internet news sites, social networking sites, etc (Newman et al., 2022).

When it comes to covering conflict circumstances, peace & war journalism are two major types. War journalism is an approach/model that emphasizes propaganda-oriented, violence-oriented, elite-oriented, and victory-oriented reporting. While peace journalism focuses on the problems' underlying roots and potential remedies. Galtung's (2003) argued that peace journalism is focused on people since it emphasizes victims and, in some ways, offers the voiceless a voice. This kind of journalism exposes all concealed truths or lies and views propaganda as a means of escalating or maintaining hostilities. "Peace Journalism represents the reality as compared to propaganda and deception. Galtung in (2002) viewed that neutral media upholds the interests of all and offers everyone a voice. while Hanitzsch (2004) describes the peace journalism method as a "special mode of socially responsible journalism" and a framework of media coverage that promotes peace.

The Russia-Ukraine war for the last few years is among the few most frequently reported international conflicts, where the international media (Print, Electronic and digital etc) playing a key role in shaping public perception. This coverage sticks to either a war journalism frame—which focuses on violence, military strategies, and patriotic narratives—or a peace journalism frame, which is focusing on the hidden causes of the war, the impacts on humanity (humanitarian), and prospects for resolution. A considerable attention has been paid to Western media portrayals however, least attention has been give to comparative analysis of the print media of the major geopolitical players like the United States and China—having different political systems and international interests—to how they frame the same conflict through their respective interests.

This study tends to address the gap by using a quantitative content analysis of American (New York times) and Chinese (China Daily), print media incorporating framing model. The study tends to understand the differences and similarities between war and peace coverage in Print media of the two super power countries i.e. China and US (*China Daily* and *New York Times*) regarding Russia and Ukraine War and analyze the broader political and strategic issues that are highlighted by the press of two countries. The researchers formulated two different research questions i.e. What are the differences and similarities of war and peace approaches in *China Daily* and *New York Times* regarding Russia and Ukraine war? and How the broader politico-strategic issues regarding the conflict of Russia and Ukraine are framed in the selected press?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The media's coverage of Russia-Ukraine war has been highly debated, with many contending that it has been biased towards one or the other side. Whether media coverage of conflicts can affect the public's perceptions and governmental decision-making is one of the major topics of discussion in the literature on peace and war journalism. The same has compelled researchers and scholars across the globe to understand the stance and position of global press over this conflict. There are dozens of comparative studies available that aimed to explore how Print media of different countires and other legacy press outlets framed and narrated the issue of Russia and Ukraine (Akinboade, 2023; Stawski, 2024; Chernov, 2023). These researchers found systematic differences by country and organization own political affiliation, usage of different types of frames and a divergent terminology (Stawski, 2024; Chernov, 2023).

According to Stawski (2024) & Akinboade (2023) the western print media like US, France, Germany etc) commonly focus on frames which shows the aggression of Russia and Victimhood of Ukraine while the Russia own press, that is controlled by the state, depict Russia as actor of playing defensively and reclaiming own territories (Chernov, 2023; Sulzhytski, 2024). Akinboade (2023) & Stawski (2024) saw

that several studies have been seen, which used the comparative analysis techniques, to have both shared frames like politics & geopolitics but severe differences in the human-interest, war, and peace frames across national media systems. Akinboade (2023) added that ideological and national interest of a country highly influence the media coverage patterns of any organization. Sulzhytski (2024) Verbytska (2024) revealed an intense divergence in narratives of media outlets of the two countries, clustering different concepts and actors in their reporting.

Number of researcher are primarily interested in understanding state influence and propaganda use in the media system. Time (2023) explored that coordinated messaging, censorship, and legal restrictions in the Russian State media are the elements that contribute to a pro-government narrative. However, Fisher (2023) found that certain media outlets in the west use binary “us vs them” framings, which raise questions about the genuinity of the Journalism, sourcing procedure followed and the norms of peace vs. war journalism. Both, state controlled and normative approaches shape how print media present causes, responsibility, and human costs of the conflict (Time, 2023).

Wozniak, Liu, & Lind (2024) compared the leading Print Media in Brazil, India and South Africa and found Brazilian Press more focused towards “war frame” however the Indian print media kept its composure and avoid open labels of aggression. They added that Brazilian and South African media used aggression while the Indian press focused on human interest stories.

Umland (2016) investigated how the conflict between Ukraine and Russia was covered in Western media. The researcher revealed that many Western media outlets portrayed Russia as the aggressor in the conflict, with coverage frequently favoring Ukraine. Kondakov and Chernenko (2018) examined how the conflict was covered in Russian and Ukrainian press. The study indicated that both Russian and Ukrainian media sources presented biased reporting, with Russian newspapers being more supportive of Russia's actions in Ukraine and Ukrainian newspapers are being more critical of Russia.

However, other studies contend that the media's ability to shape public opinion is constrained. According to a study by Milovanovic (2018), political ideology, individual values, and social identity have a greater impact on public opinion than media coverage. Roose and Brabander (2016) investigated the function of peace journalism in conflict in their research. According to the study, there was a dearth of peace journalism, which attempts to offer a fair representation of all sides in a dispute, in the reporting on the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Overall, the body of research indicates that the media has favored one side over another in its portrayal of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Although there is some controversy regarding the media's impact on public opinion, it is certain that the media has a significant impact on how the public views the conflict. The media must do a better job of fostering peace and understanding between the two parties going forward and provide more neutral and impartial coverage of the dispute.

Theoretical Framework

The framing theory is used as a theoretical lens for analyzing the news coverage of the conflict in both newspapers. Framing refers to the way in which media organizations construct means, The message is the medium, and humans can only interact with one another in ways that are compatible with that medium when they have access to one. According to McLuhan (2005), the media's most significant function is to shape our knowledge and thought processes (McLuhan, 2005). Media representation is the creation of elements of "reality" in any medium, particularly in mass media, such as individuals, locations, items, incidents, identities based on culture, and other mysterious ideas (Hall, 2013). He defines representation as "the procedure by which the people of a society use language to generate meaning" (Hall, 2013, p. 61). It is believed that everything we see or hear in the media is fabricated. Only reality or another person's perception of reality can be reflected in the media (Lessonbucket, 2019). When the media covers a news article, they replicate the news item's subject. These news reports, however, are unable to cover the incident completely, objectively, or from all perspectives. Whether

intentionally or unintentionally, reporters and editors choose and report on material that they believe to be relevant and create an event from a particular aspect. Therefore, the manner in which they recount an incident could suggest a particular viewpoint.

The process of choosing and rearranging factual information about what actually occurs, what has meaning, and what exists is known as using frames in news reporting (Gitlin, 1980). Entman (1993) asserts that news framing serves four purposes: explaining the problem, establishing or clarifying significant details associated with the problem; casual understanding and describing the reasons for and effects of the issue; ethical assessment, establishing moral judgments about the problem; and treatment recommendation, offering suggestions for how to handle the issue and emphasizing potential outcomes.

Kahneman and Tversky (1984) identified frames as cognitive structures in memory. while Semetko & Valkenburg (2000), identified the responsibility, conflict, economics, human interest, and morality frames as the frequently used in Western Media. These researchers use conflict to illustrate "conflict between people, organizations, or institutions as an approach of attracting public attention". A responsibility frame suggests that the government, an individual, or society is typically held accountable for the sources of the problems or their solutions. An economic frame emphasizes how a situation or problem affects people, societies, or countries economically and a human interest frame emphasizes narratives or sentiments, which improves the news's story content.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the content analysis technique to evaluate how the print media in the US and China (*The New York Times* and *China Daily*) presented the Russia-Ukraine conflict. News stories published in both dailies between 24-02-2022 and 24-05-2022 were taken as the sample size.

This approach (Quantitative content analysis) involves the systematic examination of the content of media sources to identify patterns and differences in the coverage of a particular topic. Our study primarily focus on peace and war journalism covered by the China Daily and New York Times. Framing is the strategy of presenting a specific topic via a distinct lens generated by the choice, assessment, identification, labeling, and portrayal of significant elements in the story.

The researchers selected two prominent English language newspapers, namely the **New York Times** and the **Daily China**, claiming the highest circulation rates. Given the widespread usage and comprehension of the English language among the privileged class, it follows that the chosen newspapers assume a crucial role in shaping national politics and facilitating discourse. Moreover, these newspapers provide a depiction of the policy-making processes pertaining to the policy within the nation. The Nexis Uni database was utilized to gather data through the application of diverse key terms that have been employed in prior research, such as "Ukraine-Russia war," "US and Russia," and "Ukraine Conflict." The search yielded a total of 612 news stories that were published in the chosen newspapers in the selected time frame.

The New York Times published a total of 436, whereas China Daily published 176 news stories on Russia-Ukraine war. Following the preliminary assessment, redundant, irrelevant, and extraneous narratives were eliminated from the data set. Consequently, the final figures were determined, amounting to 387 news stories from the New York Times and 150 news stories from the China Daily.

The analysis process involved a comprehensive examination and individual treatment of each news story relevant to the subject of the study. In order to determine the predominant framework utilized in war journalism or peace journalism, even the slightest inclination towards one of these frameworks was meticulously considered, resulting in the classification of the story within the prevailing framework. The careful methodology employed guarantees that the analysis comprehensively encompasses the subtleties and patterns that are commonly found in news stories, thereby illuminating the broader

perspective in which the subject matter is presented in relation to war or peace journalism.

The data regarding the published stories of both newspapers in specified time period was collected through Nexis Luxis software because the complete data of specified time period was not available in archives of both newspapers. The following keywords Ukraine, Rusia, Ukraine-Rusia conflict, war, special military operation were used for data extraction through nexis lexis. The data collected analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The content of the articles coded and analyzed for themes related to peace and war journalism. The themes were compared and contrasted between the *China Daily* and the *New York Times* to identify differences in coverage.

The study created the basic code-book of 13 indicators of war journalism and 13 indicators of peace journalism based on the classification of Galtung (1986, 1998) cited by Al-Watary (2018). The excellent reliability of the method was demonstrated by the fact that many other scholars used comparable techniques to analyse war and peace journalism (Garca-Perdomo et al., 2022). The thirteen indicators of each genre of journalism include two key criteria that were taken from Maslog et al. (2006) and Ha et al. (2020) respectively.

Following are the indicators followed:

War and Peace Indicator

War Indicator	Peace Indicator
A focus on winning at any costs: This is known as a zero-sum mentality.	Win-win orientation: The dispute has several objectives and problems, with a focus on finding solutions.
Focusing on the visible consequences of conflict, such as the number of casualties and harm, and destruction of property	Reporting on the invisible (psychological and emotional harm, sociological and culturally harm) as well as apparent (number of casualties and material destruction) repercussions of war
Reactive: delaying reporting until the dispute has already occurred or is likely to do so	Early dispute detection and reporting
Emphasizing elite sources: Authorities and affluent individuals are cited as the key actors and information sources.	Using non-elite sources: acting and gathering knowledge from regular people
Outlining the disagreements that sparked the fight	Reporting the areas of consensus that could help resolve the conflict
Present-day reporting: current news and events	Reporting the causes and effects of the conflict
Dividing conflicting parties into good and bad acts	Refrain from designating conflict's good and bad participants.
Two-party orientation: In a fight, one side wins and the other loses	Multi-party orientation: giving conflicting parties' voices a platform
Partisan: supporting one side in a dispute	Nonpartisan: does not support either side in a dispute
Using derogatory terminology, such as "devastated," "pathetic," "tragic," etc.	When reporting on what has been done and what could be done, avoid using victimizing rhetoric.
Using obscene terminology, such as cruel, inhumane, violent, extremist, etc.	Using more specific descriptors, names, and titles that people give themselves will help you avoid using demonizing language
Using strong language, such as "genocide," "assassination," "massacre," etc.	Avoiding emotive language by utilizing neutral, objective language and refraining from exaggeration

Source: (Al-Watary, 2018)

These indicators are used to identify news stories from a war and peace perspective. The war-related news pieces are coded as "1", peace-related news is coded as "2" .

DATA ANALYSIS

Table No # 1:

Frequency distribution of published stories in *New York Time* and *China Daily*

Newspaper	Published Stories	Percentage
<i>New York Time</i>	387	72.1%
<i>China Daily</i>	150	27.9%
Total	537	100%

Explanation:

The above table shows the overall number of stories published in the selected newspapers. The data reveals that New York Times gave more space to the Russia-Ukraine war in terms of number of published stories i.e. 387 (72.1%) of the total number of stories. While the China Daily has published 150 (27.9%) stories regarding the same.

Table No# 2:

Frequency distribution of War and Peace Frames in the selected Newspapers

Newspaper	War Frames	Peace Frames	Total
New York Times	313 (80.88%)	74 (19.12%)	387 (100%)
Daily China	40 (26.67%)	110 (73.33)	150 (100%)
Total	353	184	537

Explanation

This table reveals the results of the both newspaper regarding the war versus peace journalism frames. The data shows that New York Times used war journalism frames around 313 which is 80.88% in its news stories out of its total number of stories related to war. However the same newspaper published 74 (19.12%) stories where it used peace journalism frame.

On the other hand China Daily has published a small number of stories in peace frames creating a large gulf of frames differences with New York Times while covering the war. The total number of stories of China Daily published in war frames are 40 (26.67%) while in peace frames the same newspaper published high number of stories which are 110 (73.33%) out of its total number of stories while covering of war.

Table No #3:

Frequency distribution of news stories in New York Times and China Daily under Peace Indicator

Peace Journalism Indicators	<i>New York Times</i>	<i>China Daily</i>	Total
Solution Oriented	6	3	9 (4.89%)
Invisible Effects	7	8	15 (8.15%)
Early Dispute Detection	3	9	12 (6.52%)
All Sources	11	10	21 (11.41%)
Consensus To Resolve	3	7	10 (5.43%)
Causes and Effects	8	9	17 (9.24%)
Refraining from Good and Bad	9	15	24 (13.04%)
Multi Party Oriented	8	12	20 (10.87%)
Non-Partisan	5	15	20 (10.87%)
Avoid Victimization	7	10	17 (9.24%)
Avoid Demonizing Language	3	6	9 (4.89%)
Avoid Emotive Language	4	6	10 (5.43%)
Total	74 (40.22%)	110 (59.78%)	184 (100%)

Explanation:

The data in the table above shows the number of stories published in both the dailies under the peace journalism indicators. A total of 184 news stories were published in peace journalism indicators in both the dailies. The *New York Times* published a total of 74 stories holding 40.22% of the total number of published news stories while *China Daily* has published high number of stories i.e. 110 (59.78%) out of total number of stories i.e. (184).

Table No# 4:

Frequency distribution of news stories published in *New York Times* and *China Daily* under War Indicator

War Journalism Indicators	<i>New York Times</i>	<i>China Daily</i>	Total
Zero Sum	20	1	21 (5.95%)
Visible Consequences	26	11	37 (10.48%)
Reactive	25	5	30 (8.5%)
Elite Source	39	5	44 (12.46%)
Spark Part	21	5	26 (7.37%)
Present Day Reporting	29	6	35 (9.92%)
Good and Bad	28	3	31 (8.78%)
Two Party Orientation	25	0	25 (7.08%)
Partisan	32	1	33 (9.35%)
Derogatory Terminology	32	2	34 (9.63%)
Obscene Terminologies	20	1	21 (5.95%)
Strong Language	16	0	16 (4.53%)
Total	313 (88.67%)	40 (11.33%)	353 (100%)

Explanation:

The data in the table above reveals stats of number of published news stories both newspapers under war journalism indicator. Reference to above table the total number of stories falls in the framing of war journalism i.e. n=353 in which the *New York Times* published 313 (88.67%) of stories while the *China Daily* has published n=40 (11.33%).

Conclusion

The major goal of this research was to examine the framing strategies of the two highly circulated newspapers i.e. The New York Times and the China Daily in their news stories on the Russia-Ukraine war.

The study uses Johan Galtung's peace theory, which contends that war and peace journalism constitute two opposing frames. The researchers sought to find trends and differences in the news coverage, especially in regard to the policies of each state.

The framing of both newspapers was carefully examined throughout the study's early phase. Notably, the New York Times emerged as a top source for war-centric, giving priority to reporting on the military dimensions of the conflict. The China Daily, on the other hand, favoured non-military viewpoints and humanitarian endeavours in the midst of the conflict, leaning more towards peace and humanitarian causes.

The New York Times published more news stories on the Russia-Ukraine war and a considerable number of 80.88% of the total published stories hold news stories related to war journalism frame which highlights the newspaper's attention towards military aspects. In such a setting, serious media personnel would be unwise to ignore capturing the region's violence, assassinations damage, and combats. Furthermore, in contradictory situations, state policy matters and frequently influences media organizations. Various academics have argued that the media is unlikely to stay neutral or peace-

oriented when reporting on any conflict involving its own government/state (Bennett, 2003; Hiebert, 2003; Jespersen, 2011). The China Daily, in contrast, had less pieces on the topic. However, a startling 73.33% of the total number of pieces published by the China Daily were devoted to peace frames. This demonstrates a clear tendency for their reporting to place a strong emphasis on peaceful solutions and humanitarian endeavour.

The findings reveals the different approaches/strategies followed by both the dailies to covering the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The China Daily tends to favouring/emphasizing peace-oriented themes, while the New York Times prefers to priorities a more aggressive stance and followed war-centric slant.

It is crucial to remember that changes in the conflict's dynamics over time may have affected the variances in news coverage that have been seen. This research shows how various media sources may portray varied narratives while reporting the same worldwide event and offers insightful information on how news stories are framed. Understanding these subtleties may help to provide a more thorough examination of how the media portrays such complicated geopolitical situations and how the public perceives them.

Recommendations for Future Studies:

This research endeavour, taking inspiration from the notable peace scholar Johan Galtung and other esteemed academics in the field of peace studies, namely Jake Lynch, Michael Gryphon, and Maslog, makes a quantitative contribution to the domain of conflict communication. This research offers valuable insights into the framing of conflicts by different media outlets through a focused analysis of news coverage of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in two prominent newspapers, namely the New York Times and China Daily.

Future scholarly investigations in the domain of news articles may consider

1. Expanding their purview to encompass an examination of captions, photographs, and diverse news sources beyond the two newspapers that were examined in this study.
2. An examination of the impact of visual elements and varied sources on the framing of conflicts has the potential to enhance our comprehension of how information is disseminated to the general public.
3. Expansion of this study to encompass additional conflicts in diverse regions would yield a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the portrayal of war and peace journalism within various contextual frameworks.
4. The examination of how various media platforms depict conflicts in different regions of the globe can provide insights into potential trends and predispositions in journalistic coverage.

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