



The Coverage and Reception of
the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict



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THE HEADLINES IN ROMANIAN AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE MEDIA COVERING THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT – A COMPARATIVE STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

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STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

1. METHODOLOGY

1.1. Research design, data collection and sampling

1.2. Analytical framework

2. RESULTS

2.1. Stylistic use of nouns

2.2. Stylistic use of adjectives

2.3. Stylistic use of verbs

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INTRODUCTION

CORECON Project (<https://grants.ulbsibiu.ro/corecon>)

The present paper is part of the project “The coverage and reception of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in Polish, Romanian and English-language media: A comparative critical discourse study with recommendations for journalism training”, which aims to apply the eclectic toolkit of Critical Discourse Studies to raise public awareness of the extent, techniques, and implications of media technologies and discourses regarding the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.



BACKGROUND AND KEY CONCEPTS

✓ Coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in the media



✓ Stylistic approach (morphological and syntactical)



✓ Headlines – Headlines

- spark curiosity
- frame the reader's understanding before they engage with the full article



RESEARCH DESIGN



Aim:

- ✓ to demonstrate how stylistic choices influence meaning, shape public perception, and attract reader interest

RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

RQ: *What similarities and differences are there between Romanian and English in terms of stylistic elements?*

H: *Romanian and English share comparable linguistic tools and stylistic techniques, yet the way these are applied in headline creation varies subtly, shaped by the unique syntactic structures inherent to each language.*

DATA COLLECTION AND SAMPLING



www.digi24.com; 125 headlines - RO



www.cnn.com; 125 headlines - EN

SELECTION CRITERIA

- ✓ **Relevance of the media source** (according *Reuters Institute's Digital News Report - 2024*)
- ✓ **Keyword** – *Ucraina/Ukraine*
- ✓ **Timeline** – 24.02.2022–28.02.2024
- ✓ **Frequency and relevance of the news** – first most relevant 5 pieces of news/month

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

- ✓ **Quantitative analysis**
 - ← AntConc Digital Tool
 - ← manual annotations
 - ← statistical and graphical methods

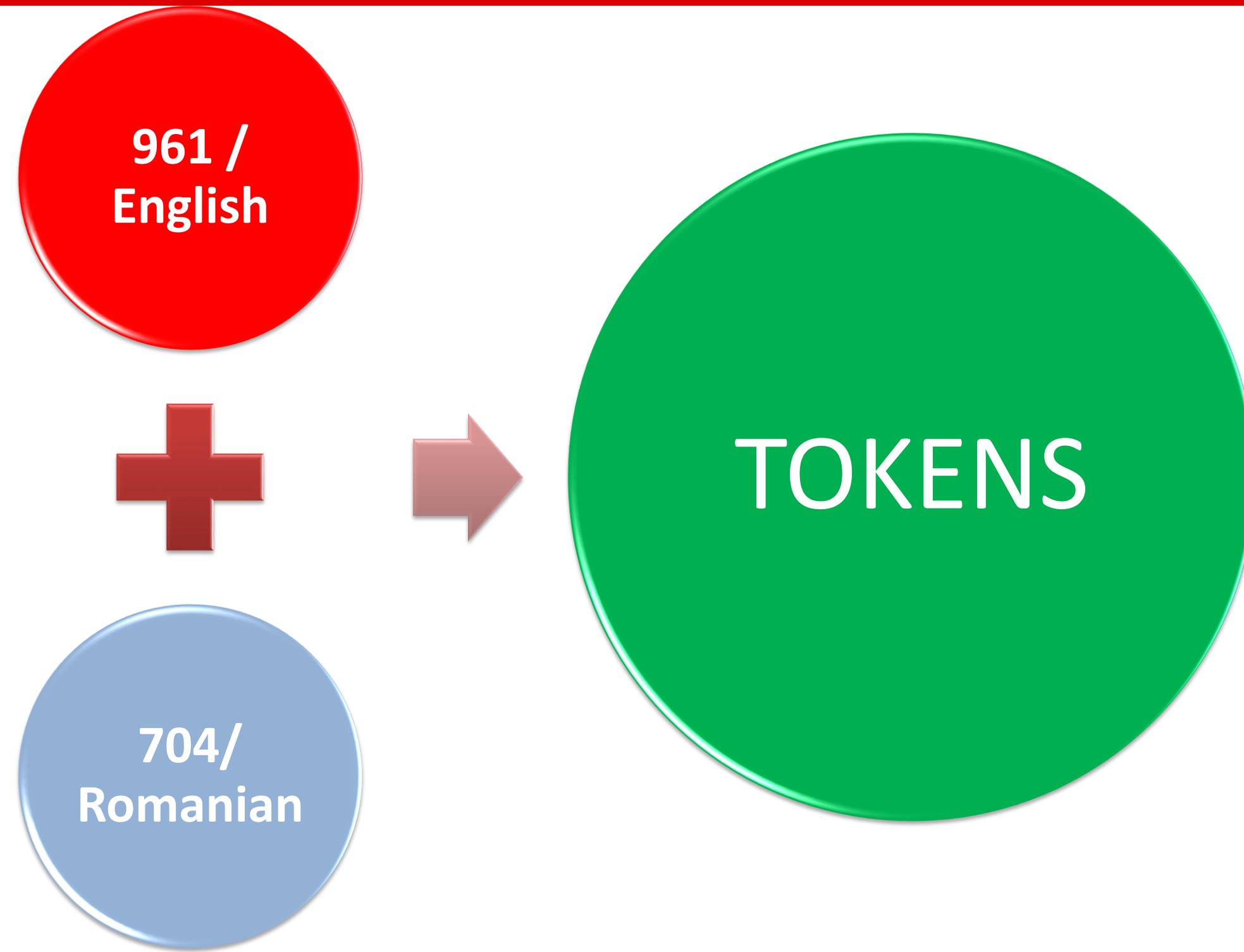
- ✓ **Qualitative Analysis**



Stylistic devices:

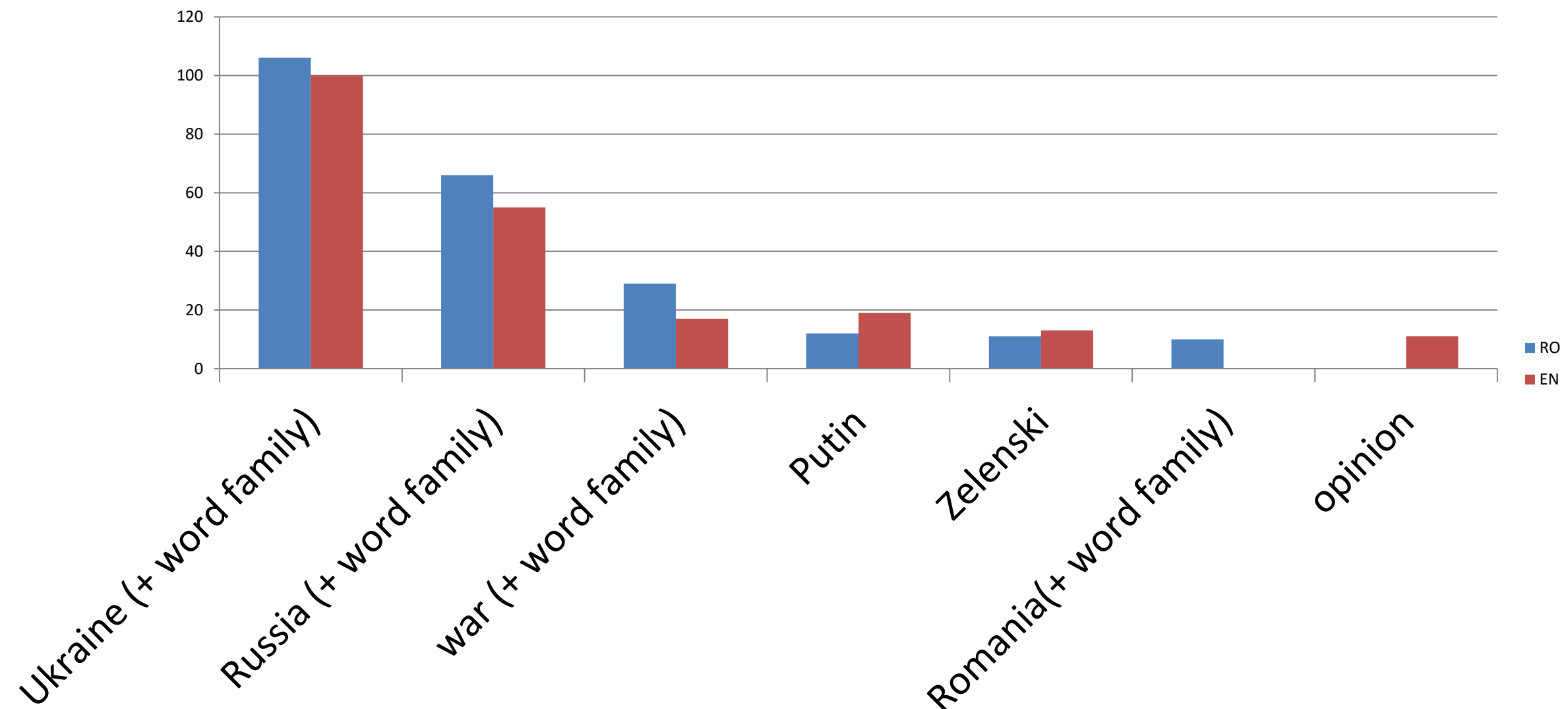
- ❖ morphological
- ❖ syntactical

RESULTS – Quantitative analysis



RESULTS

STYLISTIC USE OF NOUNS



RESULTS

STYLISTIC USE OF NOUNS

Only **three** headlines in **RO** dataset lack proper nouns, while in the **EN** sample there is just **one** headline that contains exclusively common nouns.

Proper nouns:

- ☐ people
- ☐ places
- ☐ organizations

RESULTS

STYLISTIC USE OF NOUNS - SYNECDOCHE

e.g. *Norvegia* anunță un ajutor de un miliard de euro pentru *Ucraina* (01.07.2022) [*Norway* announces one billion Euro aid for *Ukraine*] *(RO)*

e.g. *Kyiv* and *Moscow* agree deal to resume *Ukraine* grain exports from Black Sea ports, UN chief says (22.07.2022) *(EN)*

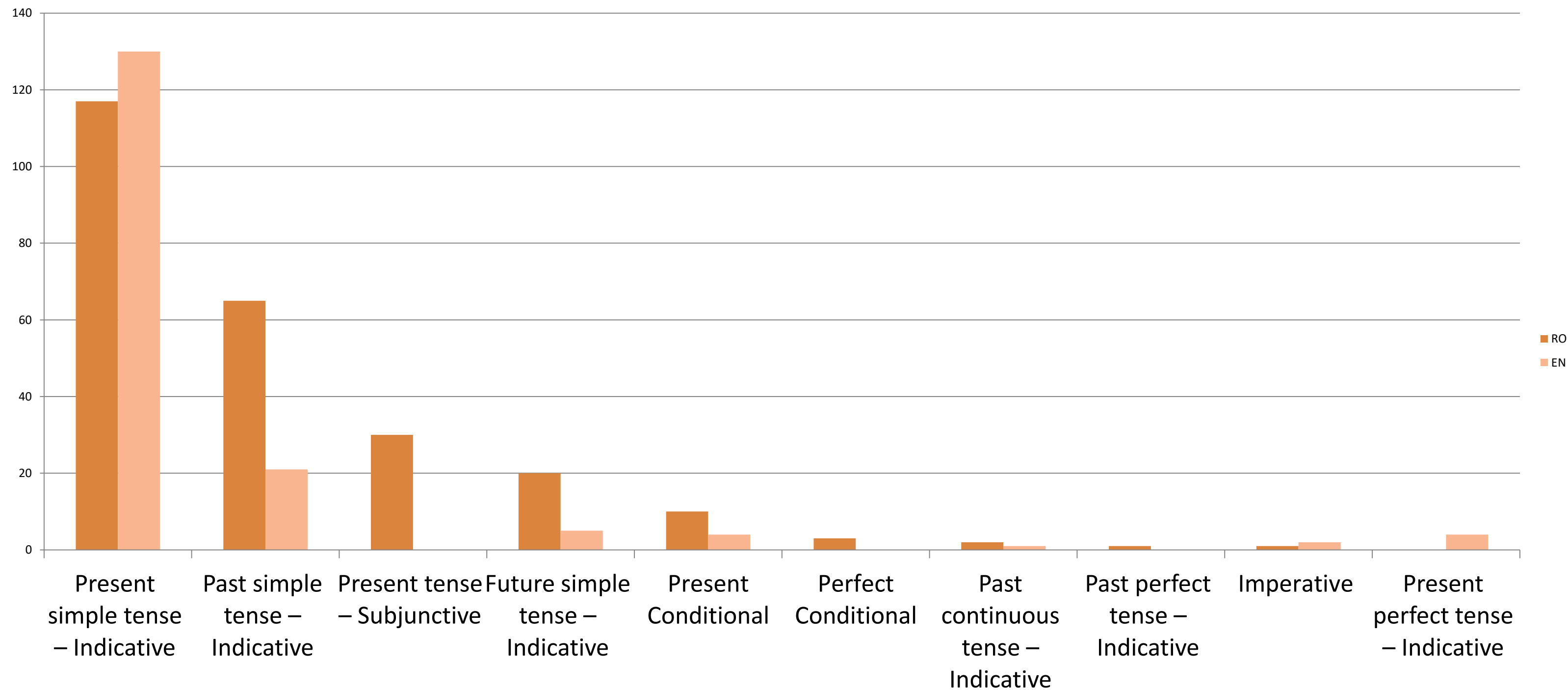
RESULTS

STYLISTIC USE OF ADJECTIVES - SUPERLATIVES

- e.g. Herson este probabil *cea mai minată* zonă din lume (17.11.2022)
[Kherson is probably the **most mined** area in the world] (RO)
- e.g. *Incredibila* poveste a lui Vasile, câinele-soldat care și-a ros singur laba pentru a nu cădea prizonier la ruși (04.02.2023) [The **incredible** story of Vasile, the soldier dog who chewed off his own paw to avoid being captured by the Russians] (RO)
- e.g. Opinion: Zelensky's **biggest** test yet (19.12.2022) (EN)
- e.g. **Remarkable** photos show what blackout in Ukraine looks like from space (25.11.2022) (EN)

RESULTS

STYLISTIC USE OF VERBS



RESULTS

STYLISTIC USE OF VERBS

- e.g. Un an de la masacrul din Bucea, care *a șocat* o lume întreagă. Zelenski: „Nu vom ierta niciodată” (31.03.2023) [One year since the Bucea massacre, which ***shocked*** the entire world. Zelensky: “We will never forgive”] *(RO)*
- e.g. Indignare în Serbia din cauza recrutării unor mercenari Wagner pentru războiul din Ucraina. Vucic *a reacționat nervos*. (20.01.2023) [Outrage in Serbia over recruitment of Wagner mercenaries for war in Ukraine. Vucic ***reacted angrily***] *(RO)*

RESULTS

ELEMENTS OF EXPRESSIVE SYNTAX

Categories of headlines:

- ✓ assertive (110 in RO and 119 in EN)

e.g. Biserica Ortodoxă ucraineană se rupe de Moscova și se declară „independentă total” (27.05.2022) [The Ukrainian Orthodox Church breaks away from Moscow and declares itself “totally independent”] (RO)

- ✓ interrogative (13 in RO and 4 in EN)

e.g. How Orban’s ties to Putin are putting European aid to Ukraine at risk (28.01.2024) (EN)

- ✓ mixed: assertive and interrogative or assertive and imperative (2 in RO and 2 in EN)

e.g. Ukraine claims a new ‘foothold’ in the south. What does that mean for Kyiv’s efforts to keep the West on its side? (16.11.2023) (EN)

DISCUSSION

❑ **Headlines** is used to create “**hooks**” that engage the readers and motivate them to follow the news reports of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict

❑ **Validation of the hypothesis**

- **SIMILARITIES:** Romanian and English language journalists use:

- ✓ morphological elements (especially nouns, verbs and adjectives);
- ✓ syntactical resources (different manners of constructing headlines, ellipses, topicalization).

- **DIFFERENCES:** based on language specificity:

- ✓ syntax - verbs: aspect, meaning, connotation, and structure

e.g. subjunctive Romanian $\leftrightarrow$ modals English

continuous aspect of English verbs

infinitive with a future value in English

CONCLUSIONS

HEADLINES = POWERFUL TOOLS THAT SHAPE AUDIENCE PERCEPTION AND ENGAGEMENT

- **trigger attention**
- **provoke interest**
- **influence reception**
- **act as filters - condense important information**
- **evoke curiosity - *superlatives, metaphors, imperatives***
- **contribute to the construction of knowledge systems**

**The audience's worldview is influenced by
WHAT is presented, and equally, by HOW it is linguistically expressed.**

SELECTIVE REFERENCES

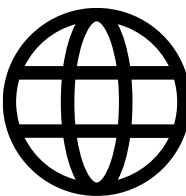
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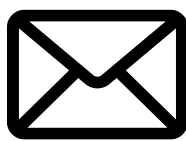
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