

A critical discourse analysis of Jayland Walker's demise in digital journalism

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the shooting incident involving Jayland Walker, an African American citizen, on June 27, 2022, resulting from a traffic violation in Akron, United States, and its subsequent coverage across major online media outlets such as CNN News, NBC News, and The Washington Post. Utilizing qualitative methods and drawing on Van Dijk's (1985) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model, the study focuses on analysing the ideologies embedded in ten online news stories from June 2022 to August 2022. The findings highlight a discernible trend in the representation of Jayland Walker by CNN News and The Washington Post, where he is predominantly portrayed as a victim, with the police depicted negatively through strategic use of lexical elements and metaphors, underscoring the influence of media ownership ideologies in shaping news content. In contrast, NBC News maintains a more neutral stance, attributed to frequent changes in ownership. The research contributes theoretically to CDA, providing a conceptual framework for students engaged in critical discourse analysis studies, and offers insights into the complexities of media representation in incidents involving discrimination and police violence.

Keywords: *Critical discourse analysis; Jayland Walker; Online news; Text; Teun A. Van Dijk*

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1. Introduction

Recent discourse frequently centres on the harrowing incident where Jayland Walker, an American citizen, was fatally shot by Akron police in Ohio on June 27, 2022. This tragic event casts a spotlight on broader systemic issues within the United States, illustrating how varying state laws govern offenses, including those involving police officers who, despite their roles as guardians of the community, occasionally circumvent legal consequences. Moreover, this case is intertwined with the deep-seated stereotype that unjustly labels African Americans as criminals, a narrative that continues to pervade societal perceptions (Potterf & Pohl, 2018).

Over recent decades, news media have incorporated diverse methodologies like Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to dissect and critique how news is conveyed to the public (Samaie & Malmir, 2017). This study zeroes in on the media portrayal of Jayland Walker's demise, specifically analyzing coverage from CNN News for its broad reach, NBC News for its local insight, and The Washington Post for its long-standing prominence in American journalism. The analytical framework employed is Van Dijk's (1985) CDA theory, renowned for its incisive breakdown of text structure and discourse strategies in highlighting thematic elements and depicting various actors or scenarios.

Explorations in CDA reveal its extensive utility across fields. Khan et al. (2019) showcased how CDA could unveil Trump's narrative techniques in casting Muslims and Islam negatively while framing himself as a patriot. Khalil and Abbas (2018) leveraged Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach to unearth political candidates' ideologies. Tambunan et al. (2018) applied Norman Fairclough's CDA model to delve into the ideological discourse within presidential debates, offering insights from both Clinton and Trump's narratives. Studies like Aini and Widodo's (2018) analysis of the Jakarta Post highlight how the media can divert attention from core issues like terrorism by introducing unrelated topics. Dezhkameh et al. (2021) and Rulinawaty et al. (2022) exemplify how CDA can expose media biases, whether in political narratives during the Covid-19 pandemic or in coverage of vaccination rights in Southeast Asia.

This study emphasizes CDA's potency in investigating racial biases and systemic racism, illustrated by Yudhi and Tanto's (2022) examination of the US Police Department's portrayal in the media, Duffy et al.'s (2019) exploration of racial representations in tourism, and Trochmann et al.'s (2022) scrutiny of systemic racism stances in academic journals. Collectively, these investigations underscore CDA's capability in revealing the ideological underpinnings and power structures fuelling racial biases and systemic racism, thereby enriching our understanding of the complex dynamics between language, power, and social inequity, and highlighting the methodology's role in fostering racial justice and comprehension.

Despite the extensive applications of CDA, research focusing specifically on Jayland Walker's death using Van Dijk's model appears to be limited. The researchers in this study aim to bridge this gap by examining three critical research questions: How is the macrostructure employed by the media in reporting on Jayland Walker's case? What

role does the superstructure play in shaping the media narrative? And how is the microstructure utilized to frame the incident? These questions seek to unravel the underlying ideologies in the digital journalism coverage of Jayland Walker's death, providing a nuanced understanding of media discourse through the lens of Van Dijk's (1985) CDA model.

2. Literature review

2.1. Critical discourse analysis and Van Dijk's framework

Since its inception in the 1990s, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has become a fundamental linguistic paradigm, greatly influenced by the pioneering research of scholars like Teun Van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo Van Leeuwen, and Ruth Wodak (Wodak & Meyer, 2015). The core objective of CDA is to thoroughly analyze the relationship between communication and power dynamics, with a specific emphasis on how communication serves as both a means and a result of social power systems, as extensively explored by Van Dijk (2015).

The interdisciplinary essence of CDA enables a fruitful intersection with various critical social sciences like sociology, psychology, and anthropology, enriching its application across a spectrum of fields, including semiotics, literary studies, and communication studies (van Dijk, 2018). This interdisciplinary approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of texts and dialogues, placing them within their specific historical and social contexts, thus providing insightful observations on the interconnections between discourse and societal structures (van Dijk, 2021). It investigates how texts serve as conduits for and reflections of the wider social narratives, actively participating in the construction and perpetuation of these narratives (Dijk, 2010).

CDA's fundamental objective is to uncover and critique the covert power structures and ideological frameworks that permeate discourse (van Dijk, 2023). It advocates for marginalized groups by interrogating and challenging the entrenched narratives that support and propagate societal dominance and inequality (Van Dijk, 2008). Moving beyond conventional linguistic investigation, CDA explores the intricate relationships among text, its contextual environment, and the cognitive processes of social actors, thereby recognizing discourse as an integral component of social interaction that goes beyond mere exchange of information (Qowim & Degaf, 2024).

Van Dijk's (1985) "social cognitive approach" to CDA offers an intricate framework for dissecting discourse, systematically breaking down textual analysis into macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure. The macrostructure is the overarching thematic essence of a text, playing a critical role in guiding the cognitive processing and comprehension of discourse (van Dijk, 2008). The superstructure pertains to the organizational and syntactic aspects of a text, directing the reader's interpretation and perception of the information presented (van Dijk, 2000). The microstructure involves a meticulous examination of the specific linguistic choices within a text, exploring the

nuanced meanings and implications carried by words, phrases, and syntactic structures (Kafi & Degaf, 2021; Zulhamsyah & Degaf, 2022).

Van Dijk's model offers a comprehensive framework for comprehending the intricate connection between language and power by integrating several textual characteristics. This model equips scholars with a robust analytical toolkit. This approach enhances the ability to conduct a more comprehensive analysis and interpretation of communication, allowing for a critical evaluation of the role of language in different social and cognitive environments. Van Dijk's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) contributes considerably to the scholarly conversation around power, ideology, and social structures by deepening our comprehension of these dynamics. This method underscores the crucial and transformational function that CDA plays within the realm of modern research.

2.2. *Characteristic of online news*

In the digital landscape of today, online news stands as a cornerstone of daily life, granting instantaneous access to an array of current events and narratives. Defined expansively, news is the detailed narration or portrayal of events deemed noteworthy or of public interest, crucial in educating, engaging, and at times shaping public discourse. Sumadiria (2005) describes news as a report of the latest facts or ideas, selectively crafted by a media outlet's editorial team not merely to inform but to captivate the audience with humor, emotional resonance, and deep insights into the developmental contours of the event (Zahro et al., 2021).

Building upon this, Zhang & Ghorbani (2020) depict news as a rapid conduit for the dissemination of facts or viewpoints, intentionally designed to captivate and resonate with a varied audience, highlighting news as a meticulously curated presentation of relevant and substantial information to the public. The critical aspect of timeliness in news accentuates the necessity of immediacy and pertinence, ensuring the audience remains informed about the latest developments. The appeal of news stories stems from their potential to engage readers or viewers, leveraging their significance, potential impact, or the ability to incite contemplation and evoke emotions. This fusion of precise reporting and compelling narrative aims to educate while keeping the audience's attention riveted. Nevertheless, it's vital to discern that not every piece of information or event qualifies as news; a thorough evaluation of its relevance, impact, and appeal is crucial to differentiate substantial news from trivial information, guaranteeing that what is presented as news holds value and utility for an informed and engaged society.

Further delineating the essence of online news, Ksiazek & Lessard (2016) identify five key characteristics that define news content: Timeliness, which underscores the urgency and currency of the news; Proximity, which refers to the event's nearness to the audience, enhancing its relevance; Prominence, which emphasizes the significance of the people or themes featured; Human interest, which focuses on the story's emotional

connectivity, appealing to the audience's empathy; and Consequence, which considers the lasting impact or importance of the event.

The combination of these characteristics provides a comprehensive structure for evaluating the worth and appeal of news, assisting digital journalists and editors in creating material that connects with their audience while upholding journalistic principles of importance and honesty. In the context of online news, the aforementioned attributes play a crucial role in guaranteeing that news not only provides information but also establishes connections with a worldwide audience, fostering a knowledgeable and actively involved community (Jang & Yoon, 2018).

2.3. Historical context of black discrimination

The historical backdrop of discrimination against Black individuals in America is deeply ingrained and complex, tracing back to the early 19th century and entwined with the overarching theme of racial bias and inequality. Hall (2010) underscores that African-Americans, especially those with darker skin, were historically perceived as diverging from the white ideal, a perspective steeped in profound racial prejudices. This discrimination escalated following the Atlantic slave trade and European colonization, periods marked by the embedding of anti-Black biases into the American societal fabric.

The metamorphosis of these discriminatory views into systemic racism resulted in the creation of varied racial categorizations, each showcasing distinct prejudices and biases. The remnants of colonialism, combined with the persistent presence of racism, led to the institutionalization of discrimination, rendering it a chronic issue within society (Islamy & Irawan, 2020). This institutionalization was not only sustained by oppressors but also internalized by the oppressed, perpetuating racist norms within communities of color, including African-descendant populations (Ikawati, 2018).

Employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a profound method to scrutinize this historical context, facilitating a thorough examination of the role of language and text in perpetuating racial discrimination (Matamoros-Fernández & Farkas, 2021). CDA facilitates the examination of linguistic practices that have perpetuated and established racial prejudices, evaluating the ways in which language in laws, media portrayals, educational materials, and public conversations has either upheld or challenged racial disparities. Critical Discourse Analysis elucidates the nuanced mechanisms through which language shapes and perpetuates the social identities of Black individuals, frequently perpetuating existing power imbalances (Dekelaita-Mullet, 2018).

When analyzed from a Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, this comprehensive historical account sheds light on the persistent obstacles of racial inequity and prejudice experienced by individuals of African descent in the United States. The enduring impact of these historical components, in conjunction with a scholarly examination of language and communication, underscores the imperative to understand and confront the historical origins of racial prejudice in order to foster a fairer society. Through the exploration of language's role in upholding systemic issues, CDA paves the

way to uncover and potentially amend the deep-seated biases affecting Black Americans' lives.

3. Method

3.1. Research design

The rationale for employing a qualitative research strategy in this study is supported by its appropriateness for conducting a comprehensive and intricate analysis necessary for the assessment of news text. According to Moleong (2007), qualitative research is particularly effective in analyzing unprocessed, non-quantitative data, providing a comprehensive comprehension that is crucial for evaluating the complex interplay of language and context within news media. This methodology is especially advantageous in analyzing the various levels of significance, ideology, and context inherent in news texts, facilitating a comprehensive examination of the nuanced manners in which news material can shape and mirror society attitudes and conventions.

At the core of our analytical method is van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, an approach that systematically examines the interrelationship between discourse and social power structures (Van Dijk, 1985). Van Dijk's model proposes a holistic examination that encompasses textual, socio-cognitive, and social aspects, enabling a thorough investigation into the construction and operation of news communication within wider social frameworks. This study seeks to utilize Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the intricate mechanisms via which news texts either uphold or contest societal power relations. By doing so, it intends to provide insight into the significant influence of media communication in molding public perceptions and social realities.

3.2. Data sources

The data utilized in this study were systematically gathered from three prominent online news platforms, namely CNN, NBC, and Washington Post. These platforms were selected based on their unique viewpoints and pertinence to the incident involving Jayland Walker, an individual who tragically lost his life as a result of police shooting in Akron, Ohio. CNN, due to its extensive global coverage, provides a comprehensive perspective on the foreign perspectives of policing in the United States. On the other hand, NBC, headquartered in Akron, offers a localized viewpoint, and Washington Post, one of the oldest magazines in the nation, contributes historical insights. The objective of this excerpt is to analyze the impartiality or potential partiality of the media, specifically within the framework of contemporary media's inclination to conform to particular narratives. The analysis is centered on stories that were published between June and July 2022. This specific timeframe was selected due to its close proximity to the incident, allowing for a direct examination of the media's reaction.

3.3. Data collection

The data for this study were sourced from online news portals, focusing on the case of Jayland Walker, a topic that has garnered significant media attention. To collect this data, a systematic approach was adopted, involving searches for news articles on Jayland Walker's death across selected news portals, including CNN, NBC, and Washington Post. Each portal was examined individually to ensure a comprehensive collection process. Relevant articles were then downloaded from these portals for further analysis. Each article was read multiple times to ensure a thorough understanding, and pertinent information related to the research topic was meticulously selected and highlighted.

The data were subsequently organized and analyzed using a Critical Discourse Analysis framework, segmented into three distinct analytical categories: Macrostructure (the overall structure and thematic framework of the text), Microstructure (the detailed linguistic and stylistic features), and Superstructure (the broader social contexts and implications). This analysis aimed to compare how these outlets presented the news, assessing neutrality versus potential biases related to police actions and the media outlets' owner ideologies. The news articles were gathered over a specific period, from June to July 2022, to ensure the analysis was both current and relevant.

3.4. Data analysis

The researchers utilized a qualitative descriptive technique in the Data Analysis portion, employing Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis models to further explore the linguistic intricacies of the chosen texts. This approach, which serves as a substitute for conventional content analysis, redirects attention away from solely identifying the content of a statement towards comprehending the manner in which it is conveyed. Consequently, it reveals the latent meanings and implications embedded within the linguistic framework. Van Dijk's conceptual framework offers a complete perspective for analyzing the contributions of each level, namely Macrostructure, Superstructure, and Microstructure, to the entire discourse and the reader's perception.

The analysis adhered to a methodical procedure: first, texts were carefully selected from the selected news sources, guaranteeing their relevance to the research inquiries. Subsequently, the analysis was conducted meticulously, examining each text at the macro, super, and microstructural levels as delineated by Van Dijk. This process entailed not only the identification of the material, but also the analysis of how language is employed to shape narratives, expose prejudices, or construct realities. As a result, the analysis is closely aligned with the aims of the study. Discussions and interpretations were based on the Critical Discourse Analysis methodology, which allowed for a detailed examination of the language used by media organizations when reporting the incident. Ultimately, the results were elucidated, establishing a connection with the research inquiries in order to illustrate the potential impact of media representation on public opinion. This comprehensive examination concludes with a synthesis of the acquired

insights, providing a contemplative perspective on the significance of language in media narratives pertaining to controversial occurrences.

4. Findings and discussion

The researchers thoroughly analyze the study's results, establishing a strong connection between each finding and the empirical data obtained from the three separate media sources. This ensures that every insight is firmly based on the gathered information. The subsequent phase of this study entails a complete analysis, followed by an in-depth evaluation of the research findings. This section aims to provide a full exploration of how each outcome contributes to the greater understanding of how the media portrays the event under investigation. This part serves the purpose of providing a contextual framework for the findings within the study's scope. Additionally, it explores the ramifications of these results, presenting a nuanced interpretation of the data in connection to the broader research aims.

4.1. Critical discourse analysis of Jayland Walker's death in CNN news

Table 1 below provides an overview of four news articles from CNN News Media. The text structure within the four news stories from CNN News suggests the presence of macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure, accompanied by discernible ideologies evident in the news coverage and relation between implicate of the news with ideology from the owner.

Table 1

CNN news.

No.	News Media	Analysis	Summary
1.	CNN News	Macrostructure	Across all articles, the macrostructure consistently revolves around the central theme of Jayland Walker's tragic death as a result of a police shooting.
		Superstructure	Jayland Walker consistently emerges as the central figure around whom the narrative is structured.
		Microstructure	The consistent uses of terms like "excessive force," "unnecessary use of force," and carefully chosen expressions like "arrogance" collectively paint a negative representation of the police actions. Additionally, the microstructure consistently aligns with the victim's perspective, emphasizing emotions such as fear and panic experienced by Black individuals during police encounters.
		Ideology	CNN appears to be leaning towards an empathetic attitude towards victims and their families. CNN emphasized that there is an anti-police ideology and is not racist towards black people.

In the critical discourse analysis of CNN's coverage of the Jayland Walker case, a thorough examination through macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure lenses reveals a consistent depiction of Walker as a victim. The macrostructure particularly highlights in the critical discourse analysis of CNN's coverage of the Jayland Walker case, a thorough examination through macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure lenses reveals a consistent depiction of Walker as a victim. The macrostructure particularly highlights his victimhood, weaving together the tragic circumstances of his death, societal reactions, the detailed autopsy report, and prevailing doubts about the investigation. This narrative construction aligns with a broader discourse of injustice, framing Walker's demise as part of a larger societal issue.

Delving deeper into CNN's coverage, the article *What We Know about The Fatal Police Shooting of Jayland Walker* serves as a focal point for this analysis. The macrostructure of this piece encapsulates a comprehensive narrative, integrating elements such as the harrowing circumstances of Walker's death, public reactions, and intricate details from the autopsy report, all of which contribute to a narrative of injustice. This coverage meticulously details the incident's context, including Akron's charged atmosphere, the dissemination of police body camera footage, and the enforcement of a curfew, providing a layered view of the events. Notably, the article highlights Walker's unarmed status at the time of the shooting juxtaposed with the discovery of a gun in his vehicle, enriching the narrative with complexity and nuance, and situating Walker's tragic end within a broader context of societal unrest and calls for justice.

The narrative also examines public and police reactions, the ongoing investigation, and the personal impact on Walker's family, enriching the narrative and adding a human element to the story. This comprehensive presentation, aligned with van Dijk's theory, not only narrates the incident in detail but also examines the underlying themes and potential biases. It provides insights into how narratives can influence public discourse and perceptions concerning law enforcement and justice, highlighting the media's role in shaping societal understanding and conversations.

The superstructure effectively organizes information chronologically, presenting Walker as a law-abiding man and fostering empathy in the narrative. It consistently builds a coherent and chronological storyline, depicting Walker sympathetically and highlighting the victim's perspective. The superstructure of CNN's article, *What We Know about The Fatal Police Shooting of Jayland Walker*, is meticulously crafted, presenting Walker as a law-abiding individual, which fosters empathy within the narrative. This narrative structure ensures a coherent, chronological storyline that portrays Walker in a sympathetic manner, emphasizing the victim's perspective.

The summary initiates the narrative with the headline *What we know about the fatal police shooting of Jayland Walker* and the lead, capturing the tense atmosphere in Akron, Ohio, *with the city of Akron, Ohio, is on edge this Fourth of July, one week after the fatal police shooting of 25-year-old Jayland Walker*. The main story progresses,

detailing that *Walker was unarmed at the time he was killed, Akron Police Chief Stephen Mylett told reporters. A gun was found in Walker's vehicle after the shooting, police said, and officers claimed Walker fired a gun from his vehicle during the car chase.*

In the background section, the article addresses the ongoing investigation and the community's quest for answers, stating, *many questions about Walker's death remain unanswered, and an investigation by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations is ongoing.* The article then covers comments and verbal reactions, notably *Eight police officers were "directly involved" in the shooting, Mylett said, and all have been placed on paid administrative leave pending the investigation, according to department protocol.*

The conclusion offers a personal touch, with the family's perspective shining through: *Walker's family wants answers from police officials, their attorneys said in their own news conference Sunday, but they have also asked that any protests in response to Walker's killing remain peaceful to honor his memory.* This personal angle portrays Walker as a vibrant individual, contradicting the tragic nature of his death.

The microstructure analysis delves into linguistic and rhetorical choices shaping readers' perceptions, using language to convey the tragic circumstances surrounding Walker's death and presenting a negative view of the police's actions. Careful word choices, bold sentences, and metaphors emphasize the victim's story and quest for justice. The microstructure consistently employs language and rhetorical devices to align with the victim's perspective, emphasizing empathy and raising questions about the police's actions and the investigation's integrity. Specifically, the microstructure analysis highlights CNN's careful word choices, describing the victim's death as a result of violence and characterizing the police officer's actions as "arrogance." This detailed analysis underscores the imperative for a critical examination of journalistic framing and language choices in reporting sensitive subjects like police shootings. In summary, CNN's article takes a sympathetic stance towards Jayland Walker and the broader issues of fear and anxiety experienced by Black Americans during police encounters, with the overall tone and framing emphasizing understanding and empathy for the victim's point of view.

Television station owners possess an ideology that shapes the direction of their media. CNN's original owner, Robert Edward "Ted" Turner, underwent a significant political transformation from a young conservative to self-identifying as a "socialist at heart" (Herman, 2020). His initial association with the Young Republican Club in 1963 suggested conservative influences, but Turner's socialist beliefs signaled a substantial ideological shift. Importantly, there is no documented evidence that he held anti-black sentiments. Nevertheless, Turner has publicly expressed regret over the excessive politicization of CNN during his tenure, raising concerns about editorial impartiality. Despite these concerns, research from [statista.com](https://www.statista.com) shows CNN's broad credibility, with 23% giving it high praise and 30% giving it fair praise (Watson, 2022). In contrast, 20% expressed skepticism. This February 2022 study underscores the positive public reception of CNN.

Leftist ideology, rooted in progressive principles concerning social and moral dimensions, is actively committed to addressing and rectifying social inequalities. This commitment extends to advocating for women's rights, minority rights, and the rights of black individuals. An implicit narrative surface, suggesting that individuals subscribing to leftist ideology, particularly those in positions of ownership, inherently recognize and confront the prevailing discrimination against the black community.

In delving into the nuances of this ideological alignment, it becomes imperative to cast a comprehensive gaze upon the broader perspective and philanthropic endeavours of figures like Turner. Such individuals, exemplified by Turner's own trajectory, showcase a disposition characterized by generosity and a genuine commitment to societal betterment. While the political landscape is not devoid of occasional motives, it is essential to underscore the absence of concrete evidence that points towards Turner leveraging his media holdings for personal gain. This assertion gains particular significance when scrutinizing any potential exploitation within the context of the black community. Turner's actions and the philanthropic dimensions of his endeavours contribute to a more intricate narrative that challenges simplistic assumptions about ideological alignments and personal motivations in the realm of media ownership.

4.2. Critical discourse analysis of Jayland Walker's death in NBC news

Table 2 below provides an overview of two news articles from NBC News Media. The text structure within the four news stories from NBC News suggests the presence of macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure, accompanied by discernible ideologies evident in the news coverage and relation between implicate of the news with ideology from the owner.

Table 2

NBC news.

No.	News Media	Analysis	Summary
1.	NBC News	Macrostructure	The central theme revolves around the death of Jayland Walker and the potential failure of Akron police officers to meet Ohio standards for pursuits and the use of force. The sub-themes emphasize the importance of adherence to state standards, linking them directly to public safety and the fair execution of law enforcement duties.
		Superstructure	The superstructure effectively establishes the context, details, and implications of the news article.
		Microstructure	The news appears to take a critical stance on the actions of the police, calling for accountability without explicitly favouring the police or the victim. Semantics elucidates motivations and key facts surrounding Jayland Walker's death, emphasizing the potential consequences of the

police's failure to meet state standards. Syntax analysis highlights the structured coherence of information, while stylistics delves into lexical choices such as "gun," "handgun," and "firearm," crucial in discussions about the use of force.

Ideology

The news article from NBC adopts a critical perspective on the actions of Akron police officers, emphasizing the importance of adherence to established state standards. While not explicitly taking sides, favouring or bias towards either the police or the victim. However, within this neutral stance, there is a clear emphasis on the importance of police compliance with established standards.

In the analyses conducted by NBC News, the macrostructure intricately focuses on the tragic death of Jayland Walker, exploring the Akron police officers' compliance with Ohio standards for pursuits and use of force in one segment, and subsequently highlighting Walker's positive attributes as a wrestler and natural leader in the next. Sub-themes, encompassing Walker's death, pursuit policy, and the implications of non-compliance, contribute to a thorough examination of the incidents. The articles emphasize the broader significance of police adherence to state standards for public safety and lawful law enforcement, underscoring the necessity for accountability. An example of this analysis can be found in the NBC News article titled *Jayland Walker's Family Calls for DOJ Investigation Into his Death, Questions Integrity of New Information*.

The macrostructure analysis of *Jayland Walker's Family Calls for DOJ Investigation Into his Death, Questions Integrity of New Information* presents themes and sub-themes that scrutinize several crucial aspects related to the Jayland Walker case. It examines how the pursuit policy and use of force by Akron, Ohio police officers relate to the standards set by the state of Ohio. A police pursuit is an action taken to follow and apprehend a vehicle or individual suspected of legal violations, and this pursuit must align with the procedures regulated by applicable laws and regulations to ensure the safety of all involved parties.

Ohio, like many states in the United States, has a certification process for police departments that includes evaluation and oversight to confirm adherence to specific standards, including those related to vehicle pursuits. While federal law doesn't set specific requirements for police car chases, states like Ohio have their internal guidelines to ensure public and officer safety.

The narrative in this story emphasizes the critical need for Akron police officers to adhere to Ohio's standards for pursuits and use of force. This emphasis not only pertains to the Jayland Walker case but also serves as a broader commentary on the importance of compliance with legal standards. It reflects on whether the police officers' actions during the pursuit and the use of force were consistent with Ohio laws and regulations,

highlighting the broader implications of such compliance or violation. This theme underscores the critical values of accountability, transparency, and adherence to state-set standards to safeguard the rights and safety of citizens.

Superstructure divisions into summary and story sections create a well-organized narrative, introducing critical information and delving into intricate details, covering aspects such as law enforcement agencies, investigations, and the imperative for enhanced police training. In the superstructure analysis of the NBC News article titled *Jayland Walker's Family Calls for DOJ Investigation Into his Death, Questions Integrity of New Information*, the narrative is methodically structured into summary and story sections, unfolding a detailed examination of crucial themes. The summary commences with the headline *Akron officers may not have pursued or shot Jayland Walker if they had met Ohio standards for police*, implying a potential discrepancy with state guidelines. The lead further elucidates this point, stating, "*The Akron Police Department may not have met a state standard that could have prevented the type of police pursuits that ended in the death of Jayland Walker, an unarmed Black man who was shot 90 times by eight officers.*"

The story section expands on the situation, highlighting that police officers in *Akron, Ohio, likely would not have pursued or fired upon Jayland Walker if they had complied with the police standards established by the state of Ohio*. It introduces the background, discussing *the standards set by the state of Ohio regarding vehicle pursuits and the use of force by police officers*, emphasizing the importance of these guidelines for the safety of the public and police officers.

Comments in the article reflect on the investigation by *the Ohio Attorney General's Office into whether the officers breached any laws or department policies*. The narrative raises concerns about the Akron Police Department's pursuit policy, suggesting it might not conform to state standards, and highlights the opportunity for local governments to *enhance police officer training in pursuit and use of force, with a focus on understanding and adherence to existing standards*.

The conclusion drawn from the article is significant, noting that *Akron officers probably would not have chased or shot Jayland Walker if they had adhered to Ohio police standards*. This conclusion underscores the vital importance of law enforcement following state guidelines, showcasing this incident as a crucial example of why adherence to standards is essential for public safety and the lawful execution of law enforcement duties. Through this structured narrative, the NBC News article emphasizes the need for accountability and improved training in law enforcement, highlighting the importance of compliance with standards to prevent such tragic events.

Microstructure analysis examines the meaning, structural, style, and communication of a text, revealing the reasons behind it, assuring consistency, and highlighting the possible outcomes of not following rules. Significantly, the articles adopt a critical perspective towards police activities, refraining from clearly displaying bias towards either the police or the victim. This approach promotes empathy and

comprehension, facilitating a comprehensive examination of the situations. In the NBC News article titled “*Akron officers may not have pursued or shot Jayland Walker if they had met Ohio standards for police,*” a detailed microstructure analysis reveals how language choices convey the narrative's depth, influencing readers' understanding and emotions regarding Jayland Walker's tragic death.

The semantic analysis delves into the article's background, providing a context where Ohio's police standards, particularly concerning pursuits, are scrutinized. The article notes that “*A key element that resulted from the assessment by the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board requires every police department to add a provision to its pursuit policy prohibiting or discouraging car chases ‘when the suspect is known to the officers or easily identifiable’ for it to fulfill the state's vehicle pursuit standard.*” This background sets the stage for exploring how the Akron Police Department's adherence to these standards might have altered the course of events leading to Walker's death.

Syntax analysis within the article reveals a mix of sentence structures that serve to present the facts while maintaining reader engagement. For example, the article uses active voice in stating that “*Akron is one of eight agencies this year seeking pursuit certification, according to the governor’s office,*” and employs passive voice to describe Walker's encounter with the police: “*Walker's car was chased by officers from the nearby New Franklin Police Department at 2:30 a.m., the day before he was killed.*” These syntactical choices weave a narrative that alternates focus between the actions of the police and their impact on Walker.

Stylistically, the article's lexical selections are poignant and impactful. Words like “gun,” “handgun,” and “firearm” are not merely descriptive but are loaded with connotations that evoke serious implications of the encounter between Walker and the police. These terms anchor the narrative in a reality where the potential for lethal outcomes is starkly highlighted. Rhetorically, the article employs powerful metaphors and expressions to evoke a stronger connection with the reader. Phrases like “*a dark day for our city*” and “*Justice for Jayland*” are not just mere words but are evocative calls that resonate with the broader issues of police accountability and community trust. The article effectively uses these rhetorical devices to amplify the emotional gravity of the situation and to position the incident within the larger context of societal calls for justice and reform.

Through a comprehensive microstructural analysis, the NBC News article emerges as a nuanced piece that not only informs but also engages readers emotionally, prompting them to reflect on the deeper societal and systemic issues highlighted by Jayland Walker's death. The article's careful construction of language, from semantics to rhetoric, underscores the importance of narrative in shaping public discourse around police practices and community relations.

The appointment of Noah Oppenheim as NBC News president in 2017, following his two-year leadership of the “Today” show, has been marred by controversies. Ronan

Farrow’s claim that Oppenheim attempted to impede reporting on the Harvey Weinstein sex case has cast a shadow over his leadership, a charge vehemently denied by Oppenheim. In June 2019, Oppenheim, alongside two other US broadcast news chiefs, pledged a more in-depth and “nuanced” approach to coverage during the 2020 presidential election cycle. He asserted that NBC News had gathered a substantial number of journalists, including those from local newspapers, to ensure comprehensive reporting on election security and misinformation. Despite this rebuttal, NBC News, under Oppenheim’s leadership, asserts a strong stance, although challenges persist.

Given NBC’s diverse ownership, the president’s alignment may not necessarily prioritize the advocacy for victims of discrimination or Black individuals. However, during the period under discussion, Oppenheim remained in office. While his right-leaning ideology may not overtly conflict with racism, NBC News, in this instance, appears to maintain a neutral stance, concentrating more on Akron police standards than explicitly siding with Black victims of discrimination or law enforcement. There are implications between the ideology of the news owner and the news content, namely the nature of the news which half-heartedly helps victims of discrimination. So, the NBC news story asked more about Akron police standards and did not directly side with black victims of discrimination or side with the police.

4.3. Critical discourse analysis of Jayland Walker’s death in Washington post

Table 3 below provides an overview of four news articles from Washington Post Media. The text structure within the four news stories from NBC News suggests the presence of macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure, accompanied by discernible ideologies evident in the news coverage and relation between implicate of the news with ideology from the owner.

Table 3

Washington post.

No.	News Media	Analysis	Summary
1.	Washington Post	Macrostructure	The macrostructure underscores the emotional impact on his family and friends, emphasizing the human aspects of the situation. The overarching theme centres on the tragic circumstances of his death during police interactions.
		Superstructure	The superstructure analysis reveals a structured presentation in all articles, with clear summaries, stories, and reflections on broader issues.
		Microstructure	Stylistically, lexical choices, metaphors, and expressions are used to convey emotional impact and emphasize key points. Semantically, the articles highlight Walker’s positive attributes, the emotional impact on his family, and the demand for police accountability

Ideology	Washington Post emphasizes empathy and understanding for the victim, calls for transparency, and raises questions about police actions, signalling a critical examination of law enforcement conduct. The ideology in this news is not anti-Black but rather anti-police, as conveyed through expressions like “ <i>Ninety shots</i> ” and the metaphor “ <i>It was almost like a slaughter.</i> ”
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The analysis of Washington Post's coverage of Jayland Walker's death provides a nuanced examination through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis, focusing on the macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure within the articles. The macrostructure accentuates the emotional resonance of the event, particularly highlighting its impact on Walker's family and friends and framing his death within the broader context of police interactions.

In the Washington Post article titled “*After a Black man is killed by police, a city cancels its July Fourth celebration,*” the macrostructure analysis unveils thematic elements intertwined with specific topics. The article underscores the Mayor of Akron's response to the shooting, illustrating how the event led to the cancellation of the city's Fourth of July celebrations, a significant decision reflecting the community's unrest and protest against the incident.

The news theme focuses on the Mayor of Akron's reaction, detailing how the shooting's aftermath affected the city's social fabric, leading to a collective mourning and a symbolic gesture of cancelling a major public celebration. This action underscores a community standing in solidarity, highlighting the gravity of the situation. The article's headline, “*After a Black man is killed by police, a city cancels its July Fourth celebration,*” plays a critical role in framing the narrative. It not only marks the sequence of events but also connects the tragic incident with a broader social and political response, indicating a causal relationship between the shooting and the subsequent public action.

Furthermore, the sub-theme explores the sequence of events as described by the authorities, contrasting it with the family's perspective: “*Police tried to pull over Jayland Walker, a 25-year-old DoorDash driver, for a traffic infraction early Monday, authorities said. The department said that during the pursuit, Walker fired a gun from outside the vehicle—a claim that Walker's family had refuted.*” This segment presents a contested narrative, offering insights into the conflicting accounts and the quest for clarity surrounding the circumstances of Walker's death.

In summary, the macrostructure of the Washington Post story encompasses the mayor's demonstration by canceling the July Fourth festivities, which serves as a manifestation of collective unity and opposition. It is enhanced with comprehensive descriptions of the event, comparing official statements with family testimonials, so enhancing the story with other viewpoints and intensifying the conversation on responsibility and fairness following Jayland Walker's demise.

The narrative's superstructure is well-organized, offering clear summaries, detailed storytelling, and reflections on larger societal issues. The superstructure in The Washington Post's coverage, "*After a Black man is killed by police, a city cancels its July Fourth celebration,*" provides a clear and structured narrative, from the summary with its impactful headline and lead to the detailed storytelling in the story section that reflects on broader societal issues.

The summary sets the stage with the headline, "*After a Black man is killed by police, a city cancels its July Fourth celebration,*" immediately establishing a cause-and-effect relationship that draws the reader's attention to the gravity of the incident and its repercussions. The lead follows, detailing how, "*Days after a Black man was killed by police officers who reportedly fired almost 100 rounds during a chase that started as a traffic stop, officials in Akron, Ohio, announced that the Fourth of July celebration was canceled in response to a fatal shooting that has rocked the city this week.*" This introduction succinctly presents the core issues and sets the tone for the deeper exploration in the story section.

The narrative section explores multiple facets, commencing with the scenario where protests and demands for responsibility are emphasized: "*The killing has sparked protests and calls for accountability from Walker's family and residents angry over the third fatal police shooting in the northeast Ohio city since late December.*" The background provides a broader context, comparing the incident with national data on police shootings and emphasizing the disproportionate rate at which Black Americans are affected.

Comments from Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan further underscore the community's turmoil: "*The blowback led Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan (D), who called the killing 'a dark day for our city,' to announce that the city's Fourth of July celebration was canceled.*" Horrigan's reflections, "*I completely understand that some residents and guests will be disappointed by the decision to cancel the festival this holiday weekend. Independence Day is meant to be a celebration and a time of gathering with friends and family,*" convey the conflicting emotions and the decision's symbolic weight.

The conclusion of the news piece encapsulates the gravity of the situation, noting that Jayland Walker's death led to significant public outcry and action from the city's leadership, demonstrating the profound impact of the incident on the community and the broader dialogue on police conduct and racial justice. Through this structured narrative, The Washington Post effectively communicates the multifaceted implications of Walker's death, intertwining individual tragedy with larger societal and systemic issues, thereby offering readers a comprehensive view of the incident's significance and the ensuing public response.

Microstructurally, the language choices, including metaphors and lexical selections, are strategically employed to amplify the emotional gravity of the incident and underscore Walker's virtues, the bereavement of his loved ones, and the calls for accountability in law enforcement. In the microstructural analysis of The Washington

Post's article "*After a Black man is killed by police, a city cancels its July Fourth celebration*," the use of language is meticulously crafted to amplify the emotional impact of Jayland Walker's death and to emphasize the broader societal implications. The semantics of the article delve into the background of the incident, detailing how the death of a Black man at the hands of police sparked significant community response, leading to the cancellation of a major city celebration. The details of the protests and the strong reactions from the community are highlighted to underline the depth of societal unrest.

The syntax of the article is varied and intentional, with sentence structures ranging from passive to active voices to convey the gravity of the events and the active engagement of the community. Coherence is achieved through cause-effect relationships and parallel constructions, guiding readers through the unfolding narrative and connecting the individual incident to larger themes of justice and accountability.

Stylistically, the article employs precise lexical choices that are loaded with connotations. Terms like "Black man," "killed by police," and "cancels" are selected to evoke specific responses and to frame the incident within a context of racial dynamics and systemic issues. The language is not just informative but also evocative, aiming to engage the reader on an emotional level and to prompt reflection on the underlying issues.

The rhetorical elements of the article, including metaphors and expressions, further enrich the narrative. Phrases such as "a dark day for our city" and "cause Akron to burn" use vivid imagery to convey the emotional turmoil and potential for unrest. Expressions like "Justice for Jayland" and "a terrible, terrible way" encapsulate the community's grief and outrage, personalizing the tragedy and amplifying the calls for accountability and reform.

Through these microstructural elements, The Washington Post's article transcends mere reporting, creating a compelling narrative that not only recounts the events but also situates them within a broader discourse on race, justice, and community response. The strategic use of language choices, including metaphors and lexical selections, serves to deepen the reader's understanding of the incident's impact and to foster a more profound engagement with the critical issues at hand.

From an ideological standpoint, the coverage provided by the Washington Post appears to cultivate empathy towards the victim, promoting the principles of transparency and engaging in critical examination of police behavior. The coverage exhibits a tone that exhibits a greater degree of criticism towards law enforcement rather than being anti-Black. This is evident through the use of terms such as "Ninety shots" and metaphors that imply a significant injustice. According to this research, the stories mostly emphasize the narrative of empathy and justice for Walker and his community, however they also serve as a platform for questioning and challenging police behavior.

Within a wider framework, the acquisition of the Washington Post by Jeff Bezos, a prominent individual frequently linked to conservative ideas, presents a noteworthy aspect to the media organization's position on matters pertaining to race. Despite Bezos' expertise in business, he has shown a visible commitment to combat racism, as evidenced

by his significant financial contributions to groups that aim to solve systematic racial inequalities. This role situates him with other prominent figures in the technology industry, as they together support the Black Lives Matter movement. This suggests a possible change in the approach of persons with conservative ideologies towards social justice matters.

This study posits that despite being owned by an individual such as Bezos, the Washington Post demonstrates a dedication to addressing racial injustices and fighting for structural change through its coverage of events such as the killing of Jayland Walker. The evaluated stories demonstrate a commitment to meticulous journalism, effectively considering multiple viewpoints while prioritizing empathy, community influence, and the call for policing reform. The coverage provided by The Post serves the dual purpose of informing the general public and contributing to the wider conversation surrounding racial equality and justice. This media strategy demonstrates a keen awareness of the intricate nature of racial matters in present-day America.

4.4. Historical, institutional and social context of Black people

The scholarly examination of the historical, institutional, and social frameworks concerning Black individuals casts a revealing light on the profound influence of language and media representations in molding societal beliefs and ideologies (Udasmoro, 2018). The genesis of racist content production is deeply intertwined with the entrenched prejudices of its creators, who themselves are shaped by societies riddled with systemic racism (van Dijk, 1988). This intricate relationship underscores the notion that language is far more than a tool for communication; it is a formidable force in constructing and perpetuating social narratives (van Dijk, 1995).

The historical narrative surrounding Black individuals is laden with persistent racist terminology, most notably the term "nigger." This word, derived from Spanish, historically denoted enslaved individuals in 18th-century America, starkly embodying the pervasive discriminatory practices against Black people (Starr & Freeland, 2023). The term "Black," while serving as a classification based on politics and skin color, covers individuals with a range of skin tones, from medium to dark brown. This categorization underlines the complexity of racial identity, which is not solely determined by skin color, thereby challenging the simplistic binary often prevalent in Western cultural discourse (Latimore, 2021).

Institutionally, the term "Black man" evolves beyond a mere identifier, embodying a symbol fraught with the historical and current weight of power dynamics, privilege, and discrimination. The systemic challenges faced by Black individuals, especially men, across various societal sectors—be it the judiciary, education, or law enforcement—mirror the deep-rooted institutional biases that persist (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). By dissecting the language used within these contexts, we gain critical insights into how terminology not only reflects but also shapes the lived experiences of marginalized communities.

The evolving portrayal of Black individuals in the media signals a shift toward greater awareness and empathy, particularly in the American context (Kumah-Abiwu, 2020). The increased focus on Black murder victims, as highlighted by the alarming statistics from 2022, indicates a concerted media effort to present Black experiences with authenticity and counteract long standing stereotypes. This shift necessitates a rigorous analysis to discern whether it marks a genuine paradigm shift in perspective or merely a transient adaptation to shifting societal norms.

At a more expansive societal level, the designation "Black man" encompasses the shared challenges and tenacity exhibited by the Black community, serving as a representation of the continuous struggle against institutional racism and inequity. The media, literature, and popular culture assume significant roles within this narrative. Media outlets have the potential to either reinforce existing preconceptions or function as mediums for presenting alternative narratives that question the prevailing norms and promote social justice. In doing so, they can play a role in transforming societal perspectives and cultivating a more just and fair global community.

5. Conclusion

The critical discourse analysis applied to news articles from CNN and The Washington Post, exploring the tragic death of Jayland Walker, offers profound insights into media representation in police-involved shooting cases and the influential role of media owners' ideologies in shaping reporting. The analysis consistently exposes a trend in media narratives, depicting Jayland Walker as a victim and portraying the police in a negative light, particularly evident in CNN's coverage. This nuanced portrayal suggests that CNN's predominantly leftist ownership contributes to alleviating discrimination against black individuals.

In contrast, NBC News adopts a more balanced approach, avoiding overt bias against either the police or victims. This neutrality is attributed to evolving media ownership dynamics, where diverse ideologies influence news coverage. Similarly, The Washington Post, aligned with a pro-victim stance, emphasizes the Mayor's condemnation and the cancellation of Fourth of July celebrations, framing the incident within the broader context of police shootings in Akron. Jeff Bezos, the owner of The Washington Post, holds a right-wing ideology, further contributing to reduced discrimination against black individuals in the media he publishes, evident through his support with donations to organizations combating racism.

The correlation between CNN News and The Washington Post emphasizes the intricate nature of journalistic responsibility, highlighting the need for media outlets to navigate their role thoughtfully in shaping public perceptions around sensitive events. The research highlights the influential role of language in shaping perspectives, underscoring the importance of presenting comprehensive, accurate, and balanced accounts of events. This study initiates ongoing discussions on media ethics, objectivity, and responsible journalism, urging media practitioners to approach sensitive subjects with

an unwavering commitment to accuracy, balance, and the promotion of social justice. In essence, it emphasizes the pivotal role of the media as conveyors of information and facilitators of public discourse, contributing to a society that is better informed and more empathetic.

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