

An "External Enemy": How Media Cover the 2009 Gas Crisis between Russia and Ukraine

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Abstract

This work provides analysis of media discourse based on articles about the 2009 gas crisis between Russia and Ukraine, which is resulted in Europe being left without gas. Using as an example of three national newspapers: *Izvestia*, *Kommersant* and *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* and three international broadcasters: the *BBC*, *Deutsche Welle* and *Russia Today* I examine how media presented the images of “external enemy” creating negative attitudes towards it. The Russian media actively portrayed Ukraine as the “external enemy” which was accused of stealing gas and blamed for the internal economic problems it brought for Russia. The Western media, however, undertook a similar exercise with Russia as the scapegoat. I believe that this case study provides a good example of the “external enemy” imaging supported by the media.

Using the methods of discourse analysis based on 15 articles I provide the evidence of “external enemy” images, apparent in the language and “voices” in the articles. I have found that the media uses subjective tone when describing the events, demonizing the counter-party and maintain the images of the “external enemy.”

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Introduction

In 2009, as the gas cuts continued across Europe, the Siberian oil fields flare as the excess gas is burnt off, Putin paces the hallways of the Kremlin awaiting a resolution. Suddenly he receives a phone call from the EU Commission President.

Putin is elated at the thought of restarting the gas flows, he picks up: "Manuel, how can I help you? Are you ready to talk about Siberian gas?", "Well, actually, Vladimir, yes. You see it would be really great if you could turn those lights down so I could get some sleep!"

Anecdotes of this sort accrued on RuNet during the 2009 gas crisis. Russian Internet reacted fast to the debates between the two countries over the new gas contract. Not only did Internet react so fast, but national Russian media were reporting this story on a daily basis as if it was a telenovela with a constantly changing plot.

During this gas dispute there was a significant informational war between Russian and Western politicians by means of the media outlets. Mainstream media were portraying the events from different angles favoring the position of their governments.

The crisis started right before the long seven day - holiday in Russia, before the New Year's Eve of 2008, when Ukraine was unable to repay its debt to Gazprom and gas was cut off in full on January 1, 2009. It is to be noted that gas disputes between Russia and Ukraine have a recurring character, while this crisis remains a sort of precedent when Gazprom cut off gas for so long. I believe that besides the economic reasons, Russian government pursued parallel goals in this gas saga. One of them was the goal to "punish" the neighboring Ukraine for its drift towards NATO and support of Georgia in the conflict with Russia in 2008.

In this situation Russian media were actively portraying Ukraine as the "external enemy" which was accused of stealing the gas and blamed for the internal economic problems in Russia caused by that. This effective maneuver allowed the government to create a negative attitude towards Ukraine in the society. The domestic support provided legitimacy to the state, and backed up its actions on the international arena.

At the same time, Western media pursued different goals: to attract attention to the behavior of "external enemies" - Russian politicians, in order to get foreign assistance and

change the nature of the crisis from a local to an international one. Russia was trying to justify its actions and blame Ukraine for stealing the gas which led to supply shortages for Europe. This dispute undermined the credibility and commitment of Russian government and led to more serious consequences than predicted.

I believe that this case study provides a good example of the “external enemy” imaging supported by the media.

Research question

In my paper I am aiming to provide detailed discourse analysis of articles taken from Russian newspapers and international broadcasters. I will particularly analyze the language used in the articles and how it can affect readers. I address the following question in my paper: How did Western and Russian media implement the idea of “external enemy” in the articles about the 2009 gas crisis?

I will analyze how print media behaved during this gas crisis, on the examples of the Russian daily national business paper *Kommersant*, and the mainstream daily newspapers *Izvestia* and *Nezavisimaya gazeta*. The main analysis of my study will be broadened and supported by the analysis of articles taken from three international broadcasters: the *BBC*, *Deutsche Welle International* and *Russia Today*. Despite the fact that *Russia Today* claims itself independent international broadcaster it is often accused of supporting the Kremlin’s politics. Therefore it is not surprising that its position covering the crisis was in favor of the Russian government. In this regard the example of *Russia Today* reinforces my findings of Russian newspapers. The *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* represent a focus group providing the opposite view on the story from European perspective. The articles from Western newspapers use similar language structure and phrases, despite the fact that they represent different countries. First of all, the articles create “enemy” images of Russian government, which is reflected in their vocabulary and language structures.

I assume that if the media owners pursue their own interests and support the government, the media source they own will automatically reflect this position and therefore will maintain the image of the “external enemy” provided by the government. The latest gas crisis between Ukraine and Russia provides the brightest example of the “enemy” imaging and mobilization of the nation in Russia as a consequence.

Structure of the paper

The first chapter of my thesis addresses the theoretical questions of “external enemy” imaging, relations between nationalism, foreign policy and media role in it. The chapter is dedicated to the conceptualization of the main concepts, while providing some vital examples for the better understanding.

The second chapter analyzes the journalistic practices in Russia, questions of media ownership and its relation to the media loyalty to the government. This chapter is vital for my research due to the fact that it explores the issue of media dependence on its owners, regulating the news. It is particularly noticeable on the example of Russian newspapers covering the gas crisis. The gas dispute is considered a sensitive issue for the state, therefore I argue that Russian media does not experience freedom when dealing with this sorts of sensitive issues.

The third chapter provides a quick overview of the crisis, with the chronological overview and expert opinions on the events.

In the fourth chapter the theoretical framework will meet the empirical assessment of the “enemy” imaging. With the help of discourse analysis I will explore the language of articles taken from Russian newspapers and compare it to the position of international broadcasters: *the BBC*, *Deutsche Welle World* and *Russia Today*. This will help me in addressing the issues related to “enemy” imaging during the crisis and reveal the differences between the newspapers’ positions.

Chapter 1. “External enemy,” nationalism, foreign policy, and the media

The word “enemy” is usually associated with conflict or fight and the phrase “external enemy” is connected to a military conflict or war. I argue that the concept of the “external enemy” is also used by governments and media in the peace time in order to manipulate the public conscience. “Enemy” is portrayed in a mild way in peace time rather than during the actual military conflict, when there is a threat for territorial integrity.

Governments create the idea of “external enemy” manipulating audiences, thus establishing the groups of friend-or-foe, and portraying the nation as a single ethnic entity. Russian government used this manipulative trick many times over the last years. In 2006, 2007 with the help of the Russian Federal Agency for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Supervision the government blocked import of Georgian and Moldovan wine, fish from Latvia, and meat from Poland. These decisions were political in the first place and aimed to “punish” the neighbors. Russian media supported the government in all of these conflicts maintaining the images of “external enemies” of the nation.

The 2009 gas crisis between Russia and Ukraine provides another example of the “external enemy” imaging by Western, Russian and Ukrainian politicians and media. As it appears, national news outlets as well as international broadcasters were providing one-sided information about the “enemy” maintaining its negative image. In my work I examine the ways of shaping these images in Russian newspapers, and international broadcasters.

I assume that the idea of the “external enemy” could be considered as one of the key elements in shaping the worldview of a nation and the foreign policy of countries. In this regard Benedict Anderson describes a nation as an “imagined political community”; it is imagined because it is impossible for group members to know or to hear about all the members of it, even if the community is relatively small. Therefore, he argues that

“communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.”¹ In this sense “imagined communities” are consolidated under the threat of the “external enemy,” even though the threat is not military but rather economic and political. People are forced to create negative opinions against the counter party under the condition that the opponent is “demonized” by the language the media uses.

1.1 Framing the image of the “external enemy”

The existence of the “external enemy” is normally grounded on nationalism and nationalistic ideas. In this regard I would strongly support the claim of Anderson that the predicted end of nationalism fell short of expectations.² Therefore the political power of still existing nationalistic ideas should not be underestimated. Framing the image of the “external enemy” could be considered as one of the most powerful mechanisms in the process of shaping and maintaining the national identity of the society. This is a successful manipulative trick because the idea of the “external enemy” unites a community against the threat of the “enemy.”

Nationalism is also connected to the particular territory associated and occupied by the nation. Huntington distinguishes the territorial element as one of the crucial factors in shaping the national identity. He also includes other aspects like race and ethnicity as ascriptions, religion and language as cultural, state and ideology as political elements. Even economic elements like traditional farming could have an impact on the process of shaping the national identity³.

¹ Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. and extended ed. (London ; New York: Verso, 1991). p.6.

² Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. p.3.

³ Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? : The Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004). p.30.

Indeed being territory-bound is an important factor in exercising and seeking political power within geographically determined areas. Territories are used to separate identities and nationalities; and basically people still stay territorial animals in politics,⁴ while every ethnos and nation connects itself to a particular territory. Furthermore every ethnos has its own set of “friends” and “enemies” among neighbors. Therefore politicians play the card of “external enemy” based on the territorial boundaries and the idea that there is a “threat” for the nation and its sustainability.

Nationalistic ideas of “enemy” imaging also may be followed by the racial prejudices existing in societies. In his essay “Hostility and fear in social life”⁵ Franz Alexander pointed out that during the periods of economic stress and high unemployment, the level of “racial prejudice will be enforced by the racial motives of competition.”⁶ He also says that during war time hostility between the ethnic groups increases, therefore the group is ready to sacrifice its aspirations towards expansion. Alexander uses the phrase “antagonistic cooperation” to describe the phenomenon when the members of different groups cooperate in a friendly way and still have hostile feelings against each other. From the perspective of psychoanalysis he says that members of the groups have abandoned personal hostile feelings due to the basic utilitarian factor which is intensified by the “clan spirit, class solidarity, and nationalism” which strengthens the ties between the group members. Erich Fromm called this trend “group narcissism.”⁷ The presence of the “external enemy” provides a hostile attitude towards the “external target.” Alexander also says that “as long as there is an external enemy on whom these hostilities can be vented there is no danger of internal disruption.” Despite the

⁴ Ivo D. Duchacek, “Antagonistic Cooperation: Territorial and Ethnic Communities,” *Publius* 7, no. 4 (1977). pp. 3-29.

⁵ Franz Alexander, “[Hostility and Fear in Social Life]: Discussion,” *Social Forces* 17, no. 1 (1938).

⁶ Alexander, “[Hostility and Fear in Social Life]: Discussion.” p.27-29.

⁷ See Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, [1st ed. (New York,: Holt, 1973).

fact that his essay was published in 1938, some of his ideas are still up-to-date in modern societies when the concept of “external enemy” is deliberately used by governments.

It is also noted by Matthew S. Hirshberg⁸ that people hold positive stereotypes about their own nations, as keeping this image helps in maintaining the political order and public approval of certain policies. In his research Hirshberg was aiming to identify the American patriotic self-image presented in the news reports using several examples. He says that biases are rooted in the society; they strengthen the national self-image and “patriotic stereotypes about America.” He points out that political stability in democracy is almost impossible with the existence of a negative self-image. Positive self-image allows governments to expect support from the public during a crisis. At the same time political, sociocultural and psychological processes maintain the patriotic images. I believe that in this regard positive self-imaging is contrasted to the negative “enemy” imaging, while sets of “enemies” change throughout time.

Individuals’ necessity for self-esteem, as Huntington argues, leads people to believe that their ethnic group is better than that of others. People prefer to be “worse off absolutely but better off compared to someone they see as a rival rather than better off absolutely but not as well off as that rival.”⁹ In the meantime people have a necessity to demonstrate the superiority of their way of living to the enemy’s ways. This also leads to the creation of stereotypes and demonization of the enemy in extreme cases.

The psychological necessity for people to have enemies as well as allies should play a crucial role in the analysis of ethnic or international conflicts. During the crisis time people

⁸ Matthew S. Hirshberg, “The Self-Perpetuating National Self-Image: Cognitive Biases in Perceptions of International Interventions,” *Political Psychology* 14, no. 1 (1993). pp. 77-98.

⁹ Huntington, *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity*. P. 25-26

follow nationalistic and ethnic ideas, learned since their childhood¹⁰. People need to have enemies and allies, and this necessity has an impact on political psychology¹¹. National self-imagery plays a crucial role in the formation of a conflict behavior even though the “enemy” is latently accepted.

For example, American national identity is driven by many factors: belief in democratic ideals, liberty, equality, freedom of speech etc. In the meantime, there is room for the image of the “external enemy:” the Soviet Union was playing this role during the Cold War. After the collapse of the USSR American politicians were looking for a new “enemy,” and “international terrorism” serves this function for the American nation nowadays. The modern American nation is united with the help of a “threatening external enemy” while identities are forged by distinction: who you are with or against.¹²

The rival of the US, the former USSR shaped its national identity within the framework of communist ideology, the power of the ruling party, and the “enemy” imaging of the US and all Western countries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russians faced the problem of national identity while many people are divided in their identity. Some people continue to share the communist ideology, others want to share a European one, some believe that identity consists of elements like Orthodoxy and Pan-Slavism, while others share the idea of territorial identity claiming that Russia is primarily a Eurasian society. Therefore Russian identity consists of different components which are constantly shifting.¹³ Still many Russians are sensitive to the issues related to the positive self-imaging and negative imaging of

¹⁰ Vamik D. Volkan, “The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: A Developmental Approach,” *Political Psychology* 6, no. 2 (1985). pp. 219-247

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Gregory Rodriguez, *What America Needs Is a Good Enemy* (Los Angeles Times, October 05, 2009 [cited December 22, 2009]; available from <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/oct/05/opinion/oe-rodriguez5?pg=2>.

¹³ Huntington, *Who Are We?: The Challenges to America's National Identity*. p. 32-33.

“enemies” trying to do harm to the nation. The government is constantly playing with the elements of identity in accordance with the political and economic situation.

It is crucial for politicians to get the domestic approval of their actions in the international arena. The population is generally pacifist and sees no reason to get involved in the international conflict, therefore the government needs to “whip up” the population, to frighten them in order to get support. In some cases, even history can be falsified; politicians can use this method to represent the situation when the nation has a necessity to attack and destroy the “enemy” in order to protect and defend themselves against “monsters.”¹⁴ Naturally, in order to achieve these goals politicians use various tools; and media is one of the most important and powerful tools in their hands.

Russian researcher I.V. Zhukov¹⁵ distinguishes techniques used in the military discourse; he points out that the language used in describing the war could be divided into two groups: portraying the WE-group and THEY-group. I assume that this division is also applicable for every conflict when several sides are involved and when every side advocates itself and portrays its actions as legitimate. Therefore governments use the idea of a positive image of the WE-group and paints THEY-group in black. These images are mainly built by legitimate, charismatic leaders and later on they are gradually becoming shared and supported by masses.

This technique was widely used during the Cold War by the USSR and the USA and is still used nowadays, for instance after the events of 9/11 the American nation was ranged against the threat of international terrorism. The American government shapes the images of “enemies of democracy”, “axis of evil” etc. while the Russian government is shaping the

¹⁴ Noam Chomsky, *Media Control : The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*, 2nd ed. ed. (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002). p.30-35.

¹⁵ I. V. Zhukov, *Война В Дискурсе Современной Прессы (War in the Discourse of Modern Press)* (Русский Язык (Russian Language), 2001 [cited November 24, 2009]; available from http://www.teneta.ru/rus/ii/iliazhukov_war.htm.

negative image of NATO as the “enemy” or presenting the entire British nation and British government as “enemies” during the Litvinenko scandal. These images are shaped by the mass media; therefore this process of construction is controllable and monitored.

1.2 Relation of the press and foreign policy

Ideally the press as an independent actor in a democratic society should play the role of a mediator between the government and its citizens by collecting, monitoring and disseminating information.¹⁶ Media bears social responsibility to inform the public about international affairs, since the public does not have direct access to the information necessary to form opinions. Therefore it is important that media not only gather accurate and thorough information but distribute it to the public. At the same time, mainstream media does not seem to question its government’s interpretation of the events, taking them for granted; as a consequence the public is not fully informed about foreign affairs.

Walter Lippmann highlights the difficulty in capturing reality in news stories by the press; he argues that “the news is not a mirror of social conditions, but the report of an aspect that has obtruded itself.”¹⁷ When the newspaper reaches the reader, it already represents the result of a selection series as to what stories shall be printed, in what order, how much space they shall occupy, what emphasis they shall have. Therefore there are no standards for the newspapers regarding what stories should be more or less important.¹⁸

The same logic may be suitable for online news outlets; when the editor decides what news should be more important and placed in order to be noticed immediately, what are the second important stories and so on. Lippmann continues claiming that the reader should have

¹⁶ Abbas Malek, *News Media and Foreign Relations : A Multifaceted Perspective / Edited by Abbas Malek*. (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing, 1996). p.226.

¹⁷ Walter Lippmann, “Newspapers,” in *Media Power in Politics*, ed. Doris A. Graber (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1994). P. 37.

¹⁸ Ibid. 40.

a feeling of personal identification with the stories he is reading. "In order that [the reader] shall enter he must find a familiar foothold in the story, and this is supplied to him by the use of stereotypes." For example, stereotypes may force the reader to develop a hostile attitude towards a group of plumbers called "combine"; if the group was called a "group of leading businessmen" their perception would be radically different.¹⁹

Maryann Cusimano Love²⁰ believes that there are two parameters which influence media coverage of foreign policy. One of them is the professionalism of reporters that may be influenced through the professional training and ethics of their peers. Reporters never provide all the news on foreign affairs; they rather cover the stories which seem to be newsworthy for them. Therefore based on their own judgments they select the stories as influenced by their cultural and personal as well as the professional knowledge. The second parameter is that media organizations represent business organizations. That implies that media owners do not seek to disseminate the truth but to get a profit.²¹ Generally media companies cover the stories that may be of interest for their audiences, which increase the profit. Conflicts, wars and disasters receive wide media coverage, at the same time not all wars are being fully covered due to the limited space and broadcasting time.²² The crisis situation when the citizens of a particular country are involved receives significant news coverage by that country. For example, the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute affected almost all EU countries. Therefore the coverage of the crisis was in the news of the sides involved. At the same time American news agencies were rather moderate in covering the story, due to the fact that they did not suffer from these events directly.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 247.

²¹ Maryann Cusimano Love, "Global Media and Foreign Policy," in *Media Power, Media Politics*, ed. Mark J. Rozell (Lanham, Md. ; London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003). P. 245

²² Ibid. p.247.

At certain times, when reporters cover a crisis they use simplistic language portraying the story from the perspective of “good guy versus bad guy”, which may lead to nationalism and ethnocentrism in reporting. Reporters are also facing the problem of tight deadlines and this may affect the story coverage. As Love puts it “[g]enerally, stories tend to focus on events that happened within the last news cycle. But the Internet [... is ...] shirking the news room from the typical 24-hour news cycle, giving reporters even shorter deadlines.”²³ Therefore reports by journalists may lack accuracy and not represent an objective description of events. Underreporting of long-term trends and a lack of a historical overview of the particular case may harm the article overall.

²³ Ibid. pp.247 – 249.

Chapter 2. Print media landscape in Russia

2.1. Journalistic practices in Russia

According to the Freedom House report, in 2010 Russia is considered one of the “world’s most repressive and most dangerous media environments.”²⁴ Authoritarian regimes like Russia tend to consolidate control over media in their countries, at the same time encouraging the spread of relatively free internet. Independent media in Russia is declining steadily due to the fact that legal protections are disregarded, journalists experience harsh consequences for providing reports on sensitive issues, journalists are attacked and these crimes go unpunished, while media ownership is widely under the governmental control.²⁵ Russia alongside with Philippines, Afganistan, Mexico, and Sri Lanka represent the countries with highest murder rates among journalists. At the same time, these attacks have a “chilling effect” on other journalists and lead to increased self-censorship. Reporters suffer from the problem of personal insecurity.²⁶

In the late 1980s, early 1990s Russian media system was vulnerable and dependent on funding from state and brand-new corporations. Therefore public interests were left in balance between business interests and government.²⁷

Jonathan Becker²⁸ considers Russia a neo-authoritarian media system, which began when Vladimir Putin came to power and broke the media autonomy. Before Putin’s era there

²⁴ *Restrictions on Press Freedom Intensifying, Press Release*, (Freedom House, April 29, 2010 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=70&release=1177>.

²⁵ Karin Deutsch Karlekar, *Press Freedom in 2009: Broad Setbacks to Global Media Freedom* (Freedom House, 2010 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://freedomhouse.org/images/File/fop/2010/OverviewEssayFOTP2010final-laid-out.pdf>. p.3.

²⁶ Karlekar, *Press Freedom in 2009: Broad Setbacks to Global Media Freedom* ([cited]).

²⁷ Yassen N. Zassoursky, "Media and the Public Interest: Balancing between the State, Business and the Public Shere," in *Russian Media Challenge*, ed. Kaarle Nordenstreng, Elena Vartanova, and Yassen N. Zassoursky (Helsinki: Kikimora, 2002). 156.

²⁸ Jonathan Becker, "Lessons from Russia: A Neo-Authoritarian Media System," *European Journal of Communication* 19 (2004). P.147 – 149.

was pluralism of opinions in the print media and on TV. The government was particularly criticized on the sensitive issues of corruption and Chechnya. Becket argues that it is a neo-authoritarian system in Russia because generally media pluralism is tolerated, but the restrictions appear when media touches upon the key topics which are of high importance for the government, like issues of national security or elections. Under this system the autonomy of the state owned media is limited, private ownership is tolerated. At the same time government uses a variety of mechanisms to silence the critics; for example legal and quasi-legal actions may be used towards owners; criminal and civil penalties for journalists.²⁹

Governments regulate media through various restrictions, like licensing schemes and constitutional or legal provisions; for example there are the following laws in Russia: federal law N 130-FZ “On combating Terrorism” passed on July 25, 1998;³⁰ federal law N 35-FZ “Concerning the fight against terrorism”³¹ passed on 06 March 2006. This law also restricts and regulates the media coverage of terrorist activities and may enforce restrictions of media activity. In April 2000 state prosecutors made an announcement that journalists from *Novaya Gazeta* and *Kommersant* would be questioned due to the fact that they released an interview with the-then Chechen president Aslan Mashadov. According to prosecutors this violated antiterrorist laws of the country.³²

Television still remains the most influential media source in Russia; therefore it is strongly regulated by the state. In Becker’s neo-authoritarian concept television is the main

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ *Федеральный Закон От 25 Июля 1998 Г. N 130-ФЗ “О Борьбе С Терроризмом” (С Изменениями От 7 Августа 2000 Г.)* [Federal Law N 130-Fz “on Combating Terrorism” Ammended on August 7, 2010], (Законы РФ (Laws of Russian Federation), [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://femida.info/14/fzobst005.htm>.

³¹ Федеральный закон от 6 марта 2006 г. N 35-ФЗ “О противодействии терроризму,” информационно-правовой портал гарант <http://base.garant.ru/12145408.htm>, Available in Russian [Federal Law dd. March 06, 2006, N 35-FZ “Concerning the fight against terrorism,” System garant] Last access: 22.12.09.

³² *Attacks on the Press 2000: Russia*, (Committee to Protect Journalists, March 19, 2001 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://cpj.org/2001/03/attacks-on-the-press-2000-russia.php>.

target for the governmental regulations. Press is also regulated along with television for example through tax inspections and property officials. Therefore conditions for journalistic freedom of expression on Russian TV and press are deteriorating particularly when they touch upon sensitive questions.³³

2.2. Questions of media ownership in Russia

Media is highly dependent on the political views of their owners, for instance during the 1990s there was a close association between President Yeltsin and Boris Berezovsky the then owner of ORT (Public Russian Television).³⁴ Vladimir Gousinski was another influential media mogul; he owned the Most Media holding, which included the private national TV station NTV, a radio station, a newsmagazine and a television weekly.³⁵ During the presidential elections of 2000 Berezovsky supported the pro-Yeltsin candidate – Vladimir Putin, while Gousinsky's media holding was favoring their opponent from the Conservative Party.³⁶ After the elections, Gousinsky lost his power and his holding followed by the huge scandal he got a criminal record for fraud. By that time NTV was the only one independent channel in Russia; it stopped being independent after Gousinsky's trial and now there is no channel in Russia that can go against the government.³⁷

As a result, Russian media and journalists got trapped in a “no-man's land.” They are in a crossfire between the interests of the government and the owners and advertisers, while the basic freedoms of the media are violated by both parties³⁸. Therefore Russian media

³³ Becker, "Lessons from Russia: A Neo-Authoritarian Media System." P. 151.

³⁴Kaarle Nordenstreng, Elena Vartanova, and Yassen N. Zassoursky, *Russian Media Challenge* (Helsinki: Kikimora, 2002). p.162.

³⁵ Nordenstreng, Vartanova, and Zassoursky, *Russian Media Challenge*.

³⁶ Nordenstreng, Vartanova, and Zassoursky, *Russian Media Challenge*.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Nordenstreng, Vartanova, and Zassoursky, *Russian Media Challenge*.

appears to be pro-governmental in the most cases and journalists are restrained by self-censorship.

I assume that if the media owners pursue their own interests and support the government, the media source they own will automatically reflect this position and will maintain the image of the “external enemy” provided by the government. The latest gas crisis between Ukraine and Russia is the brightest example of the “enemy” imaging.

Governmental control over the media system in Russia is exacerbated by three major factors. First of all the government owns the key media channels; secondly the state is interconnected with the business sector; finally the weak legal system in the country provides little room for protection of the media.³⁹

2.3. *Kommersant, Nezavisimaya Gazeta and Izvestia: issues of print media ownership*

For the analysis of articles taken from the leading Russian newspapers, it is crucial to provide assessment of questions with their ownership. As I argued before, Russian media is strongly controlled by the state and is loyal towards the authority of the state. In 2000 Katrin Voltmer called *Izvestia* one of the quality newspapers,⁴⁰ but things changed in 2005 when the newspaper was purchased by the Gazprom Media Holding. Under the previous owner - Vladimir Potanin a metal tycoon, the newspaper was more or less independent.⁴¹ The Committee to Protect Journalists informs that in 2005 editor-in-chief of *Izvestia* Raf Shakirov “was forced to resign after government officials angered by the paper's coverage of the Beslan school siege put pressure on the daily's owner, the pro-Kremlin Prof Media.” *Izvestia* was

³⁹ Becker, "Lessons from Russia: A Neo-Authoritarian Media System." P. 152.

⁴⁰ Katrin Voltmer, "Constructing Political Reality in Russia: Izvestiya -- between Old and New Journalistic Practices," *European Journal of Communication* 15 (2000). P.469.

⁴¹ Valery Akimenko, "Известия": Еще Одна Государственная Газета? В Обзоре Российских Газет (*Izvestia: A Nothstate-Owned Newspaper? Review of Russian Newspapers*) (BBC Russian.com, June 03, 2005 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/press/newsid_4605000/4605381.stm).

known for the harsh critics of the government statements about the inaccurate number of victims.⁴² Under the rule of Gazprom Media, the newspaper became a political tabloid controlled by the state. In 2008 *Izvestia* changed its owner again, as a quality newspaper Novaya Gazeta puts it:

[T]he newspaper, that was controlled by Gazprom-Media through Gazprombank, has not come actually to another owner. The new buyer, insurance Company SOGAZ belongs to structures of Yuri Kovalchuk again, who is an old ally of Vladimir Putin's. That means, with all the apparent change of situation the newspaper is formally re-located from one pocket to the other.⁴³

Questions of ownership predetermine position of newspaper in this case. The dramatic transformation from a quality newspaper in the late 90s to a tabloid affected the style and the language of articles. I assume that many readers of this newspaper are unaware of the ownership issues and may not know that articles published in it express a governmental view on sensitive issues.

The Business oriented newspaper *Kommersant* may be considered one of the quality newspapers in Russia. It was founded in the 1980s and became a standard for independent Russian journalism. Alexei Bessudnov believes that the paper follows journalistic standards and principles of page layout.⁴⁴ The *BBC* labels *Kommersant* as a “daily, business-orientated, controlled by steel tycoon Alisher Usmanov.”⁴⁵ It is widely known in Russia that Usmanov is close to the Kremlin, he is also a CEO of Gazprom Invest Holding. Therefore there were concerns that *Kommersant* would become another newspaper controlled by the government

⁴² *Attacks on the Press 2005: Russia*, (Committee to Protect Journalists, February 16, 2006 [cited May 25, 2010]); available from <http://cpj.org/2006/02/attacks-on-the-press-2005-russia.php>.

⁴³ Natalia Rostova, *Gazprom-Media to Get Rid of "Izvestia"* (Novaya Gazeta, June 06, 2008 [cited May 25, 2010]); available from <http://en.novayagazeta.ru/data/2008/38/05.html>.

⁴⁴ Alexei Bessudnov, *Media Map* (Sage Publications, 2008 [cited May 25, 2010]); available from <http://ioc.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/37/1/183.pdf>. p.185.

⁴⁵ *Russia Country Profile*, (BBC News, April 16, 2010 [cited May 25, 2010]); available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1102275.stm#media.

after Usmanov purchased it in 2006. Alexander Bessudnov evaluated the situation in the following manner:

Despite fears that the change of ownership would affect the independence of the newspaper [...], this has not happened. Reportedly, the new owner does not interfere with editorial policy. The newspaper and other *Kommersant* publications keep a rather independent and critical approach, without taking sides openly.⁴⁶

It may be partially true, that *Kommersant* remains an independent newspaper more or less if compared to *Izvestia*. The Committee to Protect Journalists suggests that the moves of influential pro-Kremlin businessmen purchasing key media were the result of efforts “to steer media coverage in advance of the 2008 presidential election.”⁴⁷ I assume that *Kommersant* is an example of a partially independent newspaper with limited press freedom in sensitive issues like elections.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta is the third paper chosen for my analysis. Deputy Trade Minister Konstantin Remchukov bought it in August 2005;⁴⁸ he assigned himself editor-in-chief in 2007. Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky owned this newspaper before Remchukov.⁴⁹ The *BBC* called *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* an “influential privately-owned daily,”⁵⁰ while Bessudnov argues that the newspaper was an influential media before and now it “defends the values of ‘liberal conservatism,’ that it is owned by a ‘liberal businessman.’”⁵¹

In this regard these newspapers represent an interest for me due to the fact that they all seem to occupy different niches in the press spectrum, while all of them are owned by influential businessmen. I am particularly interested to see whether the question of ownership

⁴⁶ Bessudnov, *Media Map* ([cited]. p. 185.

⁴⁷ *Attacks on the Press 2006: Russia*, (Committee to Protect Journalists, February 5, 2007 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://cpj.org/2007/02/attacks-on-the-press-2006-russia.php>.

⁴⁸ *Attacks on the Press 2005: Russia*, ([cited].

⁴⁹ *The Press in Russia*, (BBC WORLD, May 16, 2008 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/4315129.stm>.

⁵⁰ *Russia Country Profile*, ([cited].

⁵¹ Bessudnov, *Media Map* ([cited]. P. 187.

affects the content of the articles. As I noted before, some newspapers experience less freedom when reporting sensitive issues; the 2009 gas crisis represents this sort of issue, which was of high interest for the state. I assume that on the example of this crisis it will be possible to see the difference in portraying the events and see whether owners of the media affected the story coverage or not.

Chapter 3. The 2009 “Gas War” between Russia and Ukraine

3.1. Historical assessment: the government and business sector in Russia

After Vladimir Putin became President of the country in 2000, Russia pursued the line of aggressive energy policy. Since then Russia has become a powerful player on the international oil and gas market. Under the strict governmental control over the energy resources, the Kremlin started using its energy power for political purposes.⁵² As Humpreys at

⁵² R. G. Gidadhubli, "Russia: Oil and Politics," *Economic and Political Weekly* 38, no. 21 (2003). p.2025

al argue that after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the decay of the effective state, Russia became natural resource dependent country. In 1996 a small group of oligarchs helped Yeltsin to get reelected, and in return they were allowed to control the nation's vast natural resources.⁵³ Despite the privatization process, government and private companies are still close. For example in 2003 the then president of Lukoil company Alekperov was a former deputy of the oil industry in the Soviet Union; Roman Abramovitch was the governor of the Chukotka region in Russia and a chief of Sibneft company; the then chief of Gazprom Viktor Chernomyrdin was a former prime minister, etc.⁵⁴ Therefore the Russian government and private companies were supplementing each other.⁵⁵ Particularly government uses the oil and gas resources as a geopolitical commodity in order to influence the neighbors.

This symbiosis of state and business has led to a situation when the state is enlarging its political power via energy tools and the business sector increases its profits. Those businessmen who refused to accommodate to the rules of the game shortly found themselves in an uneasy position and were excluded from the game later on. The imprisonment of Boris Berezovsky, for example, indicated the power of the state against its opposition.⁵⁶

3.2. Ukraine and Russia: the 2009 conflict

Being one of the biggest natural gas producers in the world (with a production of 607 billion cubic meters in 2007) Russia had enormous natural gas reserves of 44.7 trillion cubic meters by the end of 2007. as gas is difficult to transport and store,⁵⁷ Russia needs partners to

⁵³ Macartan Humphreys, Jeffrey Sachs, and Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Escaping the Resource Curse, Initiative for Policy Dialogue at Columbia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). 37

⁵⁴ Gidadhubli, "Russia: Oil and Politics." p.2025

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Gidadhubli, "Russia: Oil and Politics." p.2025

⁵⁷ *Pipeline Politics? Russia and the Eu's Battle for Energy*, (EurActive, August 20, 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://www.euractiv.com/en/energy/pipeline-politics-russia-eu-battle-energy/article-177579>.

transit it. At the same time neighboring countries are also getting revenues from the transit contracts. Pipelines are of primary importance from geopolitical and economic perspectives.⁵⁸

Ukraine is considered the largest consumer of Russian gas as well as the main corridor of transit gas from Russia. Ukraine started importing gas in Soviet times and by the time the Soviet Union collapsed Ukraine found itself highly dependent on Siberian gas. At the same time Moscow was relying on Ukraine in the gas transit to Europe. The economic decline of the 90s indicated the interdependence of these countries on the gas issue particularly. Revenues from the gas export to Europe were of high importance for Russia, while Ukraine was experiencing difficulties paying for the gas and trying to replace this source of energy with alternatives.⁵⁹ All this led to various disputes between Ukraine and Russia on the issues of gas prices.

The 2009 gas dispute between the two countries was the most serious confrontation in their history. They almost arrived at an agreement in October 2008 when Yulia Timoshenko and Vladimir Putin signed a memorandum on import prices and transit tariffs. The conflict between the two sides escalated due to various factors. One of the main reasons was the inability of Ukraine to pay its debt of \$2.19 billion promptly as agreed earlier. The situation worsened because of the financial crisis and the plunge of oil prices.⁶⁰

Relations between the two countries deteriorated more in February 2008 when Russia expressed a desire to increase the gas price and bring it closer to the European level. Ukraine

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Simon Pirani, Stern, Jonathan, and Yafimava, Katja, *The Russo-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of January 2009: A Comprehensive Assessment* (Issue XVIII) (Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, Fall 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]); available from <http://energypolitics.org/18a.pdf>. p.1-6.

⁶⁰ Simon Pirani, Margarita Balmaceda, and Kirsten Westphal, *The Russian-Ukrainian Gas Conflict* (No. 53) (Institute of History, University of Basel, Basel, Switzerland, January 20, 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]); available from <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=95596>.

claimed that in this case an increase in transit gas price will compensate the burden from the high gas prices.⁶¹

Up until December 31 Ukraine was unable to pay its debt in full. Russia demanded \$2.2 billion including all the penalties; Ukraine claimed only \$1.5 billion. In its letter, Ukrainian Naftogaz claimed that if gas for Ukraine was cut off it would alter the transit gas for Europe like it happened in 2006.⁶²

As a result of a long negotiation process Gazprom cut off the gas to Ukraine on January 1, 2009, while the supply to Europe remained at the same level. Alexey Miller Gazprom CEO accused Ukraine of siphoning off Russian gas from the transit pipe.⁶³

During the 2009 crisis Gazprom tried to increase the desirable gas price for Ukraine from \$ 250 to \$418 per 1,000 cubic meters, while in 2008 the price was \$ 179.50.⁶⁴ The price was too high for Ukraine that was unable to pay more than \$235. There was also no agreement on the price for the transit gas.⁶⁵

The volumes of gas in the pipe were cut by about one fifth by January 5, 2009. Russia demanded Ukraine to replace the technical gas it had stolen. On January 7 the situation deteriorated and European supplies were shut down. The two countries started blaming each other for the conflict escalation and problems with deliveries.⁶⁶

Russia and Ukraine agreed to allow international observers to monitor the pipes on January 11, 2009. Two days later Russia tried to resume its gas supplies to Europe and

⁶¹Yuri Yegorov and Franz Wirl, "Ukrainian Gas Transit Game," *Zeitschrift für Energiewirtschaft* Volume 33, Number 2 (July 10, 2009).

⁶² Pirani, Balmaceda, and Westphal, *The Russian-Ukrainian Gas Conflict* ([cited]).

⁶³ Andrei Nesterov, *Russia-Ukraine 'Gas War' Damages Both Economies* (Worldpress.org, February 20, 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://www.worldpress.org/Europe/3307.cfm#down>).

⁶⁴ Elder Miriam, *New Year's Tradition.Behind the Russia-Ukraine Gas Conflict* (Spiegel online, January 05, 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/0,1518,599571,00.html>).

⁶⁵ *Q&A: Russia-Ukraine Gas Row*, (BBC News, January 20, 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7240462.stm>).

⁶⁶ Pirani, Balmaceda, and Westphal, *The Russian-Ukrainian Gas Conflict* ([cited]).

claimed that the pipeline did not function properly. This move led to another round of disputes between the two countries blaming each other. Russia argued that Ukraine deliberately did not open the valve so the gas could not reach its customers. Ukraine argued that Russia sent the gas to the wrong direction. Eventually gas supply to Europe resumed on January 20, when the agreement was signed with the assistance of Russian and Ukrainian prime ministers Putin and Timoshenko. Under the new contract Ukraine was not allowed to raise the price for the gas transit and the 20% discount was given to Ukraine on the Russian gas.⁶⁷

It is worth pointing out that Russia experienced some financial losses during the period when gas was cut off and its reputation as a reliable energy supplier for Europe was also damaged. In the meantime Gazprom was also able to promote its idea of developing alternative routes of Russian gas to Europe, avoiding Ukraine. Katerina Malygina⁶⁸ from the Russian Eurasian Security Network argues that after the 2009 gas crisis Russia got a chance to diversify its gas pipelines around Ukraine. First of all the actions of Gazprom were targeting to achieve the following goals: it presented Ukraine as an unreliable partner for gas transit for Europe, secondly it highlighted the financial problems of Gazprom, which led to the financial support to Ukraine from EU and IMF. According to Malygina, this public relations campaign gave Gazprom the opportunity to receive all the necessary permissions to build Nord Stream in February 2010, at the same time “[i]n 2009, South Stream also received much greater international support – now Gazprom has signed agreement for the foreign land-based pipelines with Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Greece, and Slovenia.”

⁶⁷ Nesterov, *Russia-Ukraine 'Gas War' Damages Both Economies* ([cited]).

⁶⁸ André Härtel et al., "Russian-Ukrainian Relations," in *Russian Analytical Digest* (Forschungsstelle Osteuropa Bremen, Germany: Center for Security Studies (CSS), 16 Mar 2010).

Chapter 4. Detailed analysis of media discourse

In this section I will provide a detailed discourse analysis of articles taken both from Russian newspapers and international broadcasters. I argue that the chosen news sources were expressing biased opinion towards the “enemy” in this “gas war.”

The presented chapter has two sets of data: articles taken from popular Russian newspapers and those from international broadcasters. The first layer of analysis represents the discourse analysis taken from domestic media for the internal audience, while the second one provides comparison across international broadcasters. Despite the fact that national newspapers and international broadcasters have different audiences, their positions represent a good example of “gas war” coverage. The example of *Russia Today*, an international broadcaster, supports the position of domestic media on the issue reinforcing my findings. At the same time position of the *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* represents a focus group for this study providing an opposite view and sources. I do not include any Ukrainian newspaper in my

analysis due to the fact that I am not familiar with print media landscape in Ukraine and do not speak Ukrainian.

4.1. Discourse analysis: theoretical aspects

“Language is active and discourse analysis is the analysis of what people *do* with language”⁶⁹ as functionalists put it. Therefore in order to provide a proper discourse understanding it is necessary to analyze the inter-relations between sentences and how they are connected in the text. For news reports interpretation it is needed to analyze what the writer is doing through discourse and how it is connected with the wider contexts, e.g. inter-personal, institutional or material ones.⁷⁰

Richardson provides the broad definition of discourse analysis claiming that “[t]he term “discourse” and “discourse analysis” are vigorously contested concepts whose definition, it often seems, are even beyond the scope of discourse studies itself.”⁷¹ In the meantime coherence plays an important role in the discourse: according to Brown and Yule coherence between elements of the related sentences appears when words or phrases are connected to other words or phrases. Therefore the sentences in one paragraph are connected to each other logically and are a logical continuation of each other.⁷² At the same time readers tend to impose narratives on the logically connected sentences, as well as causality, chronology of the events and settings. For example the sentence “baby cried and mum picked it” does not imply that this is baby’s mum and that the action is simultaneous, while readers may assume so.⁷³ Therefore social, historical and cultural knowledge shapes the wider

⁶⁹ John E. Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers : An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). p.21

⁷⁰ Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers : An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid. p. 22

⁷³ Ibid. p. 23

understanding of the text. People “make sense of discourse partly by making guesses – usually unconsciously – based on social knowledge.”⁷⁴

In this regard linguistic style used in articles is of high importance since it connects a reader with a journalist. The language journalists use provides an image of identities of both the journalist and the audience. For example in the case of the 2009 gas crisis journalists applied narrative to the national identities via “enemy” imaging. The style may be chatty or more formal, articles may use slang words or specialist terms. At the same time almost every news outlet has its own stylistic policies, therefore journalists are restricted by these policies. The linguistic policies are also shaped in response to some social changes and discursive circumstances. This may be followed by audience change or paper re-branding.⁷⁵

Media coverage of 2009 gas crisis represent a broad discourse used by officials and CEOs of various gas companies across the region who were involved in the process of decision-making during the crisis time, as well as the discourse of those trying to affect the decisions. At the same time journalists normally take their ideas and language from this discourse, paraphrase or quote their sources. They also contribute their own views and use their own “catchphrases” relying on a popular culture accepted in the society.⁷⁶

In this situation media serves a complex role; first of all it contributes to the process of the culture formation. As Gamson and Modigliani put it “general audience media are not the only forms for public discourse, but, since they constantly make available suggested meanings and are the most accessible in a media saturated societ[ies ...] their content can be used as the most important indicator of the general issue culture.”⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid. pp.95-97.

⁷⁶ William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach," *The American Journal of Sociology* 95, no. 1 (1989). 2

⁷⁷ Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach." p. 3.

Therefore it is important to provide the adequate analysis of “voices” presented in the text. By “voices” I mean any reference or quotation; this may be position of official or country on the issue presented via reported speech or as opinion.

As John Richardson⁷⁸ argues quotation and reported speech are particularly important for the news reporting due to the fact that they reproduce and present opinions of other people. Quotes in the news may contain parts of press release, voices from people involved in the event, background information, or evaluation opinions. Reported speech may be incorporated in the text in various ways: through the *direct quotation*, which is normally straightforward and record what people said and wrote on the particular issue. In the meantime “the readers’ interpretation of the quotation and the source responsible inevitably framed by the reporting clause that the reporter chooses to employ.” Another way to use reported speech is through *strategic quotation*, when voices of other people placed in quotation marks indicating its questionable nature, or *indirect quotation* when a journalist provides an outline of general ideas but not actual quotes from the people.⁷⁹

4.2. Analysis of articles taken from Russian newspapers

4.2.1. Case selection

For the analysis of Russian newspapers I have chosen three general interest national daily newspapers with high circulation: *Izvestia*, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, and *Kommersant*.

- According to the Atlas of Central Press published on the web site of Media Atlas, *Izvestia* [in Russian: news or reports] was established in 1917 as the first official soviet print medium. Nowadays it is a leading national daily with a circulation of 234 500 published every day of the week except Sunday. In 2005 The New York Times chose *Izvestia* as its partner for publishing the special edition called “The New York Times in *Izvestia*” in Russian.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers : An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. P.23

⁷⁹ Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers : An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*.

⁸⁰ *Izvestia*, (Media Atlas, 21.08.2009 [cited May 10, 2010); available from <http://www.mediaatlas.ru/editions/?a=view&id=2477>.

- *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* [Independent Newspaper] is one of the high-circulation daily newspapers in Russia which addresses the issues of social, political, and cultural life of the country and from abroad; established in 1990,⁸¹ with a circulation of 40 000 published five days a week.⁸² *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* is an interesting example because its name means Independent Newspaper in Russian, this may also mislead readers and provoke expectations that the newspaper provides independent assessment of events.
 - The commerce oriented daily newspaper *Kommersant* [the businessman] is one of the most influential periodicals, which represents an in-depth analysis of political, business, and financial news. In 2009 its circulation was 120 000.⁸³
- All these newspapers have a free online access to their articles and archives; therefore

their audience is bigger than the circulation number. *Izvestia* is a more tabloid type news source popular with the general audience; *Kommersant* is widely read by the business community of the country, together with *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* they may be considered as quality newspapers.

I chose these three papers because they represent different types of reporting and they are all owned by businessmen or corporation close to the Kremlin. I am interested in seeing how ownership issues are related to the newspaper's tone and language about the gas dispute.

The method of article analysis will be almost identical to the analysis I used for international broadcasters in the previous section. I choose the articles published on the following dates: January 13, and January 20 due to the same reasons I described before. I eliminated the articles published on January 3, due to the fact that not every newspaper released any material on this day because newspapers were on an official seven day holiday leave at that time.

Discourse analysis of the chosen articles will be based on the same three core themes as previously with the inclusion of voices' analysis:

- a. "Suffering Europe;"

⁸¹ Taken from the official site of *Nezavisimaya gazeta* [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.ng.ru/about/>

⁸² *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, (Media Atlas, 13.09.2008 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.mediaatlas.ru/editions/?a=view&id=2525>.

⁸³ *Kommersant*, (Media Atlas, 14.11.2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.mediaatlas.ru/editions/?a=view&id=3167>.

- b. Image of Russia;
- c. Image of Ukraine.

In the three newspapers monitored, a total number of 45 news stories related to the gas crisis were published on January 13 and January 20. The following list shows the number of relevant articles each newspaper reported:

- *Izvestia*: 18 (January 13); 19 (January 20);
- *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*: 6 (January 13), 5 (January 20);
- *Kommersant*: 4 (January 13), 2 (January 20).

Izvestia appears to have the biggest number of news stories published at these dates. This may be explained due to the fact that all these articles were published on the official web site during the day, while *Kommersant* and *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* did not update their web pages during the day.

For the detailed analysis I chose two articles from each newspaper based on their location in the newspaper:

- *Izvestia*: Ukraine will start the transit of Russian gas after Gazprom will make a request dd. January 13, 2009;⁸⁴ Gazprom will not forgive Naftogaz for the losses dd. January 20, 2009;⁸⁵
- *Nezavisimaya gazeta*: Moscow Set the Goals in the Gas War dd. January 13, 2009 (fourth page);⁸⁶ Gas Wars Weaken Integration Sentiments in the CIS dd. January 20, 2009 (Editorial; second page);⁸⁷
- *Kommersant*: Moscow and Kiev lit a pipe of peace dd. January 13, 2009 (front page);⁸⁸ The Beauty of Bargaining is its Payment dd. January 20, 2009 (front page).⁸⁹

⁸⁴ *Украина Начнет Транзит Российского Газа После Заявки "Газпрома"* (Ukraine Will Start the Transit of Russian Gas after Gazprom Will Make a Request), (*Izvestia*, January 13, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/20/news195508/index.html>).

⁸⁵ *"Газпром" Не Намерен Прощать "Нафтогазу" Понесенные Убытки* (Gazprom Will Not Forgive Naftogaz for the Losses), (*Izvestia*, January 20, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/20/news196147/index.html>).

⁸⁶ Sergey Kulikov, *Москва Обозначила Цели В Газовой Войне* [Moscow Set the Goals in the Gas War] (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 13, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from http://www.ng.ru/economics/2009-01-13/1_goals.html).

⁸⁷ *Газовые Войны Ослабляют Интеграционные Настроения В СНГ* [Gas Wars Weaken Integration Sentiments in the Cis] Editorial, (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 20, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from http://www.ng.ru/editorial/2009-01-20/2_red.html).

⁸⁸ Natalia Grib and Oleg Gavrish, *Москва И Киев Раскурили Трубу Мира* (Moscow and Kiev Lit a Pipe of Peace) (*Kommersant*, January 13, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1101861>).

4.2.2. Newspapers not included in the analysis

I did not include in the analysis *Novaya Gazeta* [New Newspaper], which is known for its oppositional views, investigative journalism, and active anti-Kremlin position, because it is not a daily newspaper.

Other famous newspapers are *Argumenty i Fakty* [Arguments and Facts] weekly with a circulation of 2 750 000 as of February 2008 and *Komsomolskaya Pravda* weekly and daily.⁹⁰ Despite the fact that these newspapers have the biggest circulation in Russia and abroad I did not include them in my analysis due to the fact that these are more a tabloid type news sources.

Vedomosti [Statements] is a daily business newspaper published in cooperation with Wall Street Journal and the Financial Times, therefore the newspaper represents the Russian articles together with materials provided by both news sources.⁹¹ I did not include this newspaper in my analysis due to the fact that it is published in conjunction with these international news sources. As I am interested in how the Russian press portrayed the events, *Vedomosti* provides the international view on the issue.

Rossiiskaya Gazeta [Russian Newspaper] is a national newspaper which is published by the Russian government. It provides official statements and documents of the government.⁹² Therefore this newspaper is not suitable for my study.

Despite the fact that *Moskovsky Komsomolets* [Moscow Komsomolets] has the biggest circulation in Russia and abroad – about 1 215 00 as of 2007⁹³ I assume that this newspaper is

⁸⁹ Andrey Kolesnikov, *Торж Платежом Красен (Beauty of a Bargaining Is Its Payment)* (Kommersant, January 20, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1105708>.

⁹⁰ *The Press in Russia*, ([cited]).

⁹¹ *The Press in Russia*, ([cited]).

⁹² Information taken from the official web site of Rossiiskaya Gazeta : <http://www.rg.ru/about.html>

⁹³ *The Press in Russia*, ([cited]).

a sort of a tabloid with emphasis on entertainment news, PR publications and with a lot of space dedicated to advertising. Therefore I did not include it into my analysis.

Daily newspaper *Trud* [Labour] in 2008 has changed its goal and started placing a bigger emphasis on entertainment⁹⁴ and job related news.

4.2.3. Analysis

V. Peshkov⁹⁵ in his article “Content analysis of Moscow metropolis press about the Azerbaijani community”⁹⁶ argues that the perception of ethnic issues in Russia is influenced by publication titles. Article titles may deliver negative images and messages to the audience; therefore they may predetermine a negative attitude in the society, even if the actual text of the article does not match its title. I assume that this assumption is also suitable for articles about the 2009 gas crisis published in Russian newspapers. Biased negative attitude towards Ukraine as an “enemy” was partially influenced by various aspects and article titles contributed to this process as well. Negative perception of Ukrainian politics during the 2009 gas crisis may be achieved even if people read only the titles not the whole text. For example, the following titles may produce negative evaluation of events:

- Ukraine got a grip of additional 140 billion square meters of Russian gas;⁹⁷
- Kiev style robbery: Ukraine is stealing Russian gas once again;⁹⁸
- Playing the pipe: Ukraine openly steals Russian gas;⁹⁹

⁹⁴ *The Press in Russia*, ([cited]).

⁹⁵ Peshkov V.M. is a PhD fellow at Institute of Sociology at the Russian Academy of Sciences

⁹⁶ V.M. Peshkov, *Контент-Анализ Прессы Московского Мегалополиса Об Азербайджанской Общине* (Content Analysis of Moscow Metropolis Press About Azerbaijani Community) (Демоскоп Weekly (Demoscop Weekly), November 22 - December 5, 2004

№ 179 - 180 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2004/0179/analit04.php#01>.

⁹⁷ *Украина Прибрала К Рукам Еще 140 Млн. Кубометров Российского Газа* (Ukraine Got a Grip of Additional 140 Billion Square Meters of Russian Gas), (Izvestia.ru, January 13, 2010 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/news195595>.

⁹⁸ Pavel Arabov, *Ограбление По-Киевск: Украина Снова Ворует Российский Газ* (Kiev Style Robbery: Ukraine Is Stealing Russian Gas Once Again) (Izvestia.ru, January 04, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.izvestia.ru/ukraina/article3124149/>.

⁹⁹ *Игра На Трубе: Украина В Открытую Ворует Российский Газ* (Playing the Pipe: Ukraine Openly Steals Russian Gas), (Izvestia.ru, January 03, 2009 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/20/news195261/index.html>.

At the same time it is worth noting that *Izvestia* was rich in these headlines, unlike *Kommersant* or *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, which did not choose provocative titles. The fact that *Izvestia* is owned by the Gazprom – Media group, which is directly ruled by Gazprom Energy Company may explain this bias.

One of the journalists Pavel Arabov from *Izvestia* claimed in a private conversation with me that articles about the gas crisis were central and of high importance by that time; therefore the titles represent the result of coordination between author and editor. He assumes that these titles were appropriate and they highlight the editorial line. “Bright titles were designed in order to attract attention of the reader, the style of which should not be highly objective unlike the style of the article itself.”¹⁰⁰ One of his article titles informs the reader that “[President] Yushchenko arranged Holodomor for Ukraine.”¹⁰¹ In 1932 - 1933 the famine called “Holodomor” killed millions of people in Ukraine. The article title compares famine with the “gas war.” “Holodomor” in Russian is “голодомор,” while “голод” means “hunger”; the author of the article changed one letter in the word “holodomor” to “холодомор” switching the meaning of the word, because “холод” means “cold” in Russian. Therefore readers compared the historical event to this gas dispute, while Ukrainian president was accused in starting it all.

a. “Suffering Europe”

The messages of “suffering Europe” are almost ignored in the articles of Russian newspapers. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* puts the theme of frozen Europe together with accusations towards Ukraine:

- “Gazprom accused Ukraine of stealing [...] which made Europe nervous freezing from a sudden frost;”

¹⁰⁰ Maria Egupova, May 2010. Private conversation with Pavel Arabov

¹⁰¹ Pavel Arabov and Sokolovskaya Yanina, *Ющенко Устроил Украине Холодомор [Yuschenko Arranged Holodomor for Ukraine]* (*Izvestia.ru*, January 12, 2009 [cited May 25, 2010]; available from <http://www.izvestia.ru/ukraina/article3124223/>).

- Further in the article it is claimed that “Moscow makes a big effort in order to explain its goals in the gas war for Europeans and Ukrainians,”

This claim does not address the issue that Europe was left without heating, but tries to point out the fact that Russia had some valid reasons to cut off the gas.

Kommersant provides the scarce evidence of any consequences for Europeans. In the two articles chosen there is only one reference regarding this issue, which is presented via the voice of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who wishes to “express sympathy with all consumers who found themselves in a difficult position, while [Russia] should not be blamed for it.”

Russian articles talk about preliminary losses for the country in general rather than frozen Europe. *Izvestia* employs the voice of Russian President appealing to the “government to calculate the losses. The losses that the country incurred due to the obstacles on the way of transit gas to Europe caused by Ukraine.” Therefore by this strategy the theme of the “enemy” is supported by articles.

b. Position of newspapers towards Russia

Articles from *Kommersant* and *Izvestia* portray the Russian position as reliable, trustworthy, and decisive, as *Izvestia* puts it:

- “Gazprom is willing to maximize efforts in order to “pump the gas” on Tuesday;”
- Alexander Medvedev from Gazprom talks about the “right to claim compensation for losses.”

Kommersant puts the rhetoric of power in the following way:

- “Gazprom threatens to cut off transit gas again if Ukraine continues to siphon off the gas for technological needs;”
- “financial claims must become another bargaining tool with Ukraine.”

Izvestia continues the line of financial claims in the following manner: “Russian holding [Gazprom] is not planning to refuse from submitting the questions to arbitration against Ukraine which cut off the supplies of “blue oil” to Europe by a compulsory decision;”

Russian actions appear to be powerful and rather radical, with Putin's favorable and generous position towards Ukraine, how *Kommersant* puts it: "in remuneration for Ms Timoshenko Vladimir Putin claimed that he does not insist on the additional schemes of control and monitoring over Ukrainian territory." All this rhetoric resembles the power relations between the Imperial Country – Russia - and its subordinate – Ukraine, which appears to be guilty and not in favor any longer.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta represents the opposite position and contributes to the plurality of voices and views. The newspaper questions the actions of the Russian government, provides a thorough analysis of it, and arrives at several conclusions. Here are the examples taken from one article dd. January 13, 2009:

- The heat of the current struggle [...] seemed unexpected due to the fact that parties agreed on the gas prices by the end of the previous year [2008];
- Gazprom accused Ukraine in stealing [...] and blocked the gate valve [...]. This situation did not occur even in 2006 when Ukraine siphoned off way more gas [...];
- Prime Minister emphasized ambitious goals which Russia pursues in this gas conflict not only with Ukraine but with Europe overall. These goals go beyond the scope of economy and have rather geopolitical character;
- Several analysts believe that attack on Kyiv pursues political goals. Particularly it may be the response to Ukraine for its support of Tbilisi in the conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia.

At the same time, *Kommersant* and *Izvestia* do not question the actions of Gazprom and Russian government; they do not express any doubts in reasonability of these actions towards Ukraine. Particularly there is no information about the 2006 gas conflict, when Ukraine allegedly stole more gas than in 2009.

Second article by *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* addresses the issues of a long term perspective, particularly it tries to evaluate the impact of this crisis on the relations between CIS countries. For example it is said that "[t]he gas conflict between Russia and Ukraine struck a blow for the prospects of integration in the CIS." The article predicts the most likely disappearance of CIS without the renewed strategy and tactics of the integration processes, at

the same time it is said: “we need the CIS, rather for economic reasons than for political ones. If the economy is bad, it will go hard with politicians.” This passage uses the method of identification, claiming that “we need the CIS,” that it is of the interest of entire nation and country.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta is the only newspaper trying to provide critical evaluation of the crisis events as well as calculate the long-term consequences of the harsh politics of Gazprom for the entire country.

c. Position of newspapers towards Ukraine: sarcasm, mockery, and criticism

Articles from *Izvestia* and *Kommersant* widely use metaphors as a framing device;¹⁰² the tone of articles and frames is highly sarcastic, the presented facts are exaggerated. The following quotes taken from article in *Kommersant* dd. January 20 provide its readers with the negative evaluation of Ukrainian actions after the contract between two countries was finally signed:

- “However, the name Viktor Yushchenko was not even mentioned, seemingly he does not exist either as a negotiator or as a person for Mr. Putin (in particular since intelligence reached the Russian Prime Minister concerning an order of Yushchenko’s to deliver Ukrainian weapons to South Ossetia);”
- “It was easy to understand the enthusiasm of Ms Timoshenko, but it was impossible to believe it. When Ukrainian politicians adopt emotional rhetoric and speak of “ten years of tranquility” there is sure to be trouble by the week's end.”

These passages provide a negative assessment of Ukrainian politicians and the fact that they should not be considered serious, reliable partners.

Izvestia expresses doubts about the conditions upon which Ukraine wanted to sign the contract with Gazprom. Particularly the paper claims that “the day before Ukraine [...] made unfounded demands;” “this condition contradicts the norms of gas business.” *Izvestia* supports the sarcastic tone towards Ukraine by calling it *Nezalezhnaya*, this word means *independent*

¹⁰² Gamson and Modigliani, “Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach.”

in Ukrainian. When Russian politicians and journalists use it, the word changes its connotation and meaning, indicating the negative evaluation of Ukraine, disrespecting its independence and indicating the reliance on Russia.

Izvestia also provides a cause and effect evaluation of events:

Two countries could not solve the gas dispute since the end of December last year [2008]. Russia accused Ukraine of stealing Russian gas. Kyiv refuted these accusations claiming that it does not owe anything to Moscow. Gazprom stopped the flow transit gas via Ukraine in full on January 07 due to the fact that Ukrainian side cut off the transit pipes.

Despite the fact that this passage describes the crisis in the following manner: “Russia accused” – “Ukraine refuted” it still provides a negative evaluation of the “enemy” actions and leads the reader to conclude that Gazprom has a valid reason to cut off the gas.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta does not criticize Ukraine directly but includes some voices of Russian officials not in favor of Ukraine: “Gazprom accused Ukraine of stealing;” Putin suggested that Europe should make Ukraine understand that it should “behave in a normal civilized manner.” Articles also use the counter position of reasonable Russian and unreasonable Ukrainian behavior:

- regarding the leasing of Ukrainian system of gas-transport “Putin reminded that the offer was proposed to Ukraine several years ago,” “[b]ut the system of gas-transport became a fetish there [in Ukraine]; it is considered as a national patrimony, which sort of fell from heaven and cannot go private.”

Therefore the idea of mockery and sarcasm is apparent in the articles of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, while these articles also indirectly contribute to the “enemy” imaging.

At the same time, the “opinion” section of *Izvestia* uses sarcastic comparisons of Ukrainian policy highlighting its unreliability. Vladimir Sokolov publishes articles in the “opinion” section on a daily basis in the following manner:

- It will be easier to understand the nature of New Year’s gas dispute if you substitute gas for oil or grain and pipe for railways.

Even though it is an opinion section it goes in line with the editorial position and most likely expresses the newspaper's position in a more harsh way.

I assume that in general *Izvestia* and *Kommersant* express an open hostility towards Ukraine, while *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* provides more balanced position when describing the crisis events. The attitude of *Izvestia* and *Kommersant* is directly connected to the issues of ownership. All three newspapers analyzed are owned by influential businessmen or companies close to the Kremlin and exert different levels of ownership influence. *Izvestia* is openly pro-governmental; *Kommersant* experiences some restraints when dealing with sensitive issues; *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* covers this crisis from different angles, therefore I believe that it represents a more independent position compared to the others.

4.3. Analysis of articles taken from the BBC, Deutsche Welle and Russia Today

4.3.1. Case selection

For the comparative analysis of the Western and Russian position I have chosen three general international broadcasters: the *BBC*, *Deutsche Welle* World and *Russia Today*. These news outlets are international broadcasters and provide articles on their web sites in English for the international audience, which is relevant for my research because I can see how the international broadcasters represent the national news for the world audience.

As expected there is difference in portraying Russia by Western and Russian broadcasters: *the BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* both are critical of Russia and represents various voices in the articles. *Russia Today* supports the rhetoric expressed on the domestic level and brings it for the international audience. It provides a harsh negative evaluation of Ukraine, portraying it as an “enemy” in this “war.” What is interesting about the comparative discourse among broadcasters is the language the articles use and what argumentation and “voices” they present.

Russia Today represents Russian view on domestic and foreign affairs for the international audience. The channel is often criticized for its pro-governmental position despite the fact that it is an autonomous non-profit channel. The BBC and Deutsche Welle are examples of independent journalistic practices. Despite the fact that Deutsche Welle is funded by the German government it has a strong practice of independent journalism. Professor Alexander Altunyan from International University in Moscow claims that *Russia Today* represents a medium with minimum traditions of independent reporting.¹⁰³ I included these different news sources in the one group because technically they belong to one common group of international broadcasters.

In order to support my idea of “enemy” imaging by international broadcasters and trace this process I choose the articles published on the following dates: January 3, when the chosen media outlets started reporting about the crisis; January 13, in the middle of the crisis after the European Commission had signed a contract with Russia on transit of gas; January 20 when gas supplies restarted and the dispute was officially over.

4.3.2. Analysis

The discourse analysis of articles chosen will be based on three core themes as well as on analysis of voices represented in the texts. First of all the “enemy” imaging is based on the counter-position of “good” and “bad” and in order to trace that I will analyze three main themes presented in texts:

- a. “Suffering Europe;”
- b. Image of Russia;
- c. Image of Ukraine.

Due to the fact that all articles present a lot of expert opinions, quotation and references from various sources, I will include the fourth section of “voices” analysis.

¹⁰³ Egupova Maria, May 2010. Private conversation with Alexander Altunyan

For the detailed analysis I chose three articles from each broadcaster:

- *The BBC*: Ukraine warns EU of gas “problem” dd. January 03, 2009;¹⁰⁴ Russian gas flow disappoints EU dd. January 13, 2009;¹⁰⁵ Russia opens gas taps to Europe dd. January 20, 2009;¹⁰⁶
- *Deutsche Welle*: EU suffers gas shortfall amid Russia-Ukraine row dd. January 03, 2009;¹⁰⁷ Ukraine blocks Russian gas from getting to Europe dd. January 13, 2009;¹⁰⁸ Russian natural gas reaching Europe again dd. January 20, 2009;¹⁰⁹
- *Russia Today*: Ukraine steals European gas dd. January 03, 2009;¹¹⁰ Ukraine split by gas row dd. January 13, 2009;¹¹¹ Gas dispute over dd. January 20, 2009.¹¹²

a. “Suffering Europe” - as a main theme in the European news

The first common theme for the European broadcasters concentrates on the idea of “suffering Europe;” the idea of consequences for European citizens after the gas shortage. This framing addresses emotional messages to the international audiences underlying the sufferings of law abiding European citizens. The rhetoric became harsher as the crisis was progressing. For example, at the beginning of the gas crisis *the BBC* article of January 3 reported that “on Friday, Poland reportedly recorded a [gas flow] drop of 6%, and Hungary a drop of almost a quarter.”¹¹³

¹⁰⁴ *Ukraine Warns Eu of Gas 'Problem'*, (BBC News, January 03, 2009 [cited May 04, 2010]; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7809450.stm>).

¹⁰⁵ *Russian Gas Flow Disappoints Eu*, (BBC NEWS, January 13, 2009 [cited May 05, 2010]; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7827636.stm>).

¹⁰⁶ *Russia Opens Gas Taps to Europe*, (BBC NEWS, January 20, 2010 [cited May 05, 2010]; available from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7839053.stm>).

¹⁰⁷ *Eu Suffers Gas Shortfall Amid Russia-Ukraine Row*, (Deutsche Welle World, January 03, 2009 [cited May 04, 2010]; available from <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,3917096,00.html>).

¹⁰⁸ *Ukraine Blocks Russian Gas from Getting to Europe*, (Deutsche Welle World, January 13, 2009 [cited May 08, 2010]; available from <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,3940510,00.html>).

¹⁰⁹ *Russian Natural Gas Reaching Europe Again*, (Deutsche Welle World, January 20, 2010 [cited May 04, 2010]; available from <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,3961968,00.html>).

¹¹⁰ *Ukraine Steals European Gas*, (Russia Today, January 03, 2009 [cited May 08, 2010]; available from http://rt.com/Top_News/2009-01-03/Ukraine_steals_European_gas.html).

¹¹¹ *Ukraine Split by Gas Row*, (Russia Today, January 13, 2009 [cited May 08, 2010]; available from http://rt.com/Top_News/2009-01-13/Ukraine_split_by_gas_row.html).

¹¹² *Gas Dispute Over*, (Russia Today, January 20, 2009 [cited May 08, 2010]; available from http://rt.com/Top_News/2009-01-20/Gas_dispute_over.html).

¹¹³ *Ukraine Warns Eu of Gas 'Problem'*, ([cited]).

At the same time, the article “*EU suffers gas shortfalls amid Russia-Ukraine row*”¹¹⁴ taken from *Deutsche Welle* and published on the same date addresses the issue of “suffering Europe” from the very beginning, starting with the title. This article presents the voice of Vaclav Bartuska - the Czech Republic's energy envoy; who claims that “[p]ipeline pressure is down in the main pipes leading from Ukraine into EU members Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.” Therefore I may assume that both media outlets were using the same sources, due to the fact that the information is almost identical, however *Deutsche Welle* presented this information via the “voice” of a public official making this claim even more reliable and trustworthy for the audience.

The later dramatization of the situation is noticeable in articles published on January 13, 2010 – right in the middle of the gas dispute, when gas was already cut in full and Europe was left with a limited gas supply. *Deutsche Welle* represents the “voice” of some unnamed experts:

Experts say it could take up to three days for gas pumped from Siberia to reach Europe, where thousands of people have been left without heat in one of the coldest winters the continent has seen in a decade [emphasis by author].

This sentence does not provide the reader with any particular information on the number of people left without heating, or what experts provided this information. In the meantime this passage addresses the emotional message to the reader claiming that EU citizens were left without heating during the coldest winter over the last decade. This sentence is connected to the previous one representing Putin’s and Gazprom’s voices reporting that “Ukraine was responsible for the blockage.” At the same time, the passage claims that it is the fault of Russia that gas still has not reached Europe because it was “pumped into the wrong pipeline”, that “Gazprom may have intentionally misrouted the gas.” Therefore readers

¹¹⁴ *Eu Suffers Gas Shortfall Amid Russia-Ukraine Row*, ([cited).

connect the message about the misrouted gas by Russia and Europeans “left without heat” together and form the opinion that Russia is guilty of doing this intentionally. These claims and sentences combined together in one article provide the basis for the enemy construction towards Russia leaving Europe without heating.

Both *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* provided some statistical data regarding the Russian gas supplies to Europe. Both news sources highlighted the fact that one fourth of European gas consumption *relies* on Russian gas supplies, while 80 percent of Russian gas arrives in Europe via Ukraine. *The BBC* also claimed that “more than 15 countries across Central Europe have been hit by the shutdown of Russian supplies.” Therefore both articles raised the bigger issue: the alarming dependence of Europe on an unstable gas supplier – Russia. This was all logically connected to the theme of “suffering Europe,” that ordinary Europeans are facing the consequences of the unpredictability of the Russian-Ukrainian gas policy.

The language of the articles did not become less dramatic on January 20, when Europe started receiving gas again. For example, the article by *Deutsche Welle* claims that a gas supplies shutdown led to a shuttering of EU factories and EU citizens were left shivering. This theme was repeated again by the following supportive sentence:

- “Bulgaria, which is almost entirely dependent on Russian energy, found itself without enough gas to heat households properly during the winter. Hundreds of firms in the country had to cut back on production.”
- *The BBC* also continues to support the suffering theme claiming that “[p]eople have struggled to heat homes and schools,” as well as “[m]illions of Europeans have been without heat since the failure to renew the old contract, which expired on 1 January.”

Indication of millions of people who were hit by the gas dispute aims to get the emotional response from audiences, particularly European ones. Therefore, I may conclude that despite the fact that these broadcasters represent different countries, they represent a common view on the issue. Emotional messages about suffering European citizens and businesses across Europe are one of the main themes in the discourse of chosen articles.

These messages are reinforced by the “enemy” imaging blaming Russia for unfair play and unreliability.

In this regard it is worth providing the comparative analysis of articles taken from *Russia Today*. The Russian broadcaster presents the same crisis from a different perspective: there is a limited amount of images portraying suffering Europe. In the meantime the article “Ukraine steals European gas” on January 03, 2010 presents the voice of Gazprom’s deputy CEO Aleksandr Medvedev, who argues that the Balkans suffer from actions of Ukraine and Balkan states “need to use the Energy Charter signed by Ukraine to protect themselves.” The article claims that due to the fact that Europe consumes 80 per cent of Russian gas which flows via Ukraine “it is watching the conflict closely,” but does not mention the fact that Europe was left without heating due to the gas flow shortages. At the same time, the article blames Ukraine for “blackmailing both Russia and Europe.” Another article published on January 20 presents the quote by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin apologizing and expressing regrets “to all those who suffered from the gas crisis” while he believes that Russia should not be blamed for starting this dispute. Therefore the main message of these statements suggests that Ukraine should be blamed for the unreasonable policy causing the undersupply of gas in Europe. Unlike the articles in *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle*, the articles taken from *Russia Today* do not contain any emotional messages regarding frozen Europeans; on the contrary they blame the Ukrainian government for stealing the gas and causing trouble for whole of Europe.

b. Position of the BBC and Deutsche Welle towards Russia; “enemy” imaging

Both broadcasters maintain an “enemy” images of Russia particularly by negative evaluation of the government’ actions during the 2009 gas crisis, and the vocabulary of the articles could indicate this. Particularly Russian politics is described as rather *unreliable and*

extremist and put in comparison to Ukrainian actions. For instance, *the BBC* provides the following expressions:

- “Ukraine has warned that there could be serious problems with gas supplies [...] if its dispute with Russia is not settled soon;”
- “the pressure in [the] pipelines fell after Russian gas *giant* Gazprom cut off Ukraine's supply;”
- “Russian gas flow disappoints EU;”
- with the “voice” of Ukrainian president Russia is called to “stop the blackmail” and work out an agreement” as if it was playing an illegal game.

The main message of the article dated January 20 is that the EU's energy commissioner should have “no grounds to support Russia's claims that Ukraine had been stealing gas on its way to Europe - one of Russia's justifications for cutting supplies,” the article also presents the opinion of Andris Piebalgs that there is “no evidence that Ukraine took gas without permission.” This information rejects claims of the Russian government that Ukraine was stealing the gas and makes those claims unreliable, therefore turning Russia into an unreliable partner.

Deutsche Welle presents Russia in a very similar manner, particularly highlighting that the gas dispute is not a new phenomenon but this sort of disputes are repeated every year. Particularly in the article dated January 3 it is said that in a “near-identical row” Gazprom caused “sudden shortages” across Europe due to “allegedly unpaid bills,” therefore the article questions the reliability and reasonability of Gazprom's/Russian gas policy which leads to the same reader reaction. At the same time, the indicated reason for this dispute is the “increasingly tense relations [...] between Moscow and Kiev's pro-Western government.” The reasoning is that the move to cut off the gas was a political decision in the first place and has nothing to do with the *unpaid bills*.

The *unreliable and extremist* attitude towards Russia presented in the articles is supported by another strategy: addressing the historical point of the dispute, particularly the “repeat performance” (*Deutsche Welle*, January 03, 2009) claiming that the “near-identical

row” happened three years ago. Historical examples are designed to indicate the repeated unreasonable behavior of Gazprom and Russia. *The BBC* also includes concerns regarding the future uncertainty: “[...] the fine-print remains unknown – leading to fears that the row could flare up again in the future [...].” Thus the articles deliver emotional messages, and since their audiences tend to react on these messages in the manner presented in the text, they become more receptive to this sort of information.¹¹⁵

c. Position of articles towards Ukraine

The attitude of Western broadcasters towards Ukraine is more tolerant compared to their evaluation of Russian policy, while neither broadcaster denies Ukrainian involvement into the scandal. Particularly on January 03, *Deutsche Welle* informs that “[...] Russia and Ukraine have both conducted intense diplomatic campaigns to present the other side as a troublemaker in the dispute;” this claim is followed by another one: “both sides’ reputations have already been tarnished in the row.”

The BBC article dd. January 03 concentrates on the counter-position of the Russian claims versus the Ukrainian response to them. For example:

- Gazprom says it can no longer count on Ukraine as a transit route to EU countries and is seeking alternatives. [...] The firm has since accused Ukraine of stealing gas. [...] On Friday, Ukraine’s state gas company, Naftogaz, denied illegally siphoning Russian gas, saying it was diverting gas from its own reserves to try to maintain export supplies;

These sentences are scattered in the text but readers put them logically together and conclude that claims of Gazprom are unreasonable and ill-founded, while Ukraine deny these accusations and even more voluntarily maintains export supplies on their own. That creates a noble image of Ukraine in this dispute.

The BBC articles dated January 13 continue the line of counter-position:

¹¹⁵ Elisabeth Le, "Information Sources as a Persuasive Strategy in Editorials: Le Monde and the New York Times," *Written Communication* 20 (2003). P.479

- Russia cut gas supplies to Ukraine [...] saying it would pump only enough for customers further down the pipeline. But then Moscow *accused* Ukraine of *siphoning off gas* intended for third countries. Ukraine *denied the claim*, but the flow of Russian gas ceased completely on 7 January [...]. (emphasis by author, taken from BBC article)

Deutsche Welle claims that “[t]he new price [...] could be a huge burden on Ukraine’s already fragile economy. Gazprom has also warned that if Ukraine falls behind in its payments, the energy giant will raise the price [...]” Therefore it is apparent that Gazprom is a “giant” while Ukraine is little with a fragile economic situation, which can be worsened by the actions of Gazprom.

The position of *Russia Today* represents a different view on Ukrainian policy. Particularly the broadcaster blames Ukraine for siphoning off Russian gas, with the term “siphoning off” repeated three times in the article dated January 03, 2009. *Russia Today* describes Ukraine in the following manner: “Ukraine’s authorities don’t care about their company, but are simply playing political games;” “Ukraine has cynically announced it’s siphoning off gas from the export pipe;” “Ukraine is avoiding negotiations;” “Ukraine threatened to confiscate Russian gas passing through the country;” “Gazprom called Ukraine’s reaction “blackmail,” these statements highlight the scandalousness of Ukrainian policy. At the same, the time articles address different sub-messages aiming to create a negative image of Ukraine for readers: first of all they describe the internal political situation in Ukraine and claim that “[w]ith presidential elections looming, the gas dispute is adding fuel” to the differences between Ukrainian president and prime minister; that “it turned out to be a fragile peace;” while “[t]he gas saga is adding fuel to a burning political pot.” The other topic is the idea that “the two prime ministers have also agreed to get rid of a murky middleman company, RosUkrEnergo,” and this is described as one of the “main successes of the talks.”

d. Analysis of “voices” presented in the text

Elisabeth Le argues that mentioning the various external sources of information in the news media could create a reader’s illusion that different perspectives were presented in the news piece. This gives the possibility to journalists and news outlets to “give an objective basis to their subjective position,” thus helping to achieve a persuasive effect.¹¹⁶ At the same time external sources of information may be presented via various forms of reported speech or quotations.

This section provides the analysis of “voices” presented in the articles of *the BBC*, *Deutsche Welle World* and *Russia Today*. All the articles are rich in quotations; therefore analysis of “voices” is vital for this research.

It is worth noting that *the BBC* unlike the rest of the sources provides the “voices” from each side in a balanced manner, while this does not imply that the broadcaster does not favor European position in this issue. It is not surprising that *the BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* are critical of the Russian actions what interests me is how the presented “voices” reflect this rhetoric.

In the article dd. on January 20 *Deutsche Welle* presented the “voice” of Bulgarian Economy and Energy Minister Peter Dmitrov, his voice gives a powerful example of a metaphor, framing the readers’ evaluation of events. For example:

- He argued that “the impact [of the dispute] very much resembles that of a terrorist attack.”
- Readers are expected to connect this expression with the previous sentences: “Bulgaria, which is almost dependent on Russian energy, found itself without enough gas [...] Hundreds of firms in the country had to cut back on production.”

Therefore, readers compare the statement that firms were forced “to cut back on production” with a terrorist attack caused by dependence on Russian energy, particularly the

¹¹⁶ Le, “Information Sources as a Persuasive Strategy in Editorials: Le Monde and the New York Times.” P.479

fact that the Russian government cut off gas. This is an example of an exaggeration used in order to reach a rhetorical effect for the audiences. This case tries to meet the readers' thirst for sensationalism.¹¹⁷

Expert judgments, quotes and opinions represent another factor influencing perception. These kinds of voices incorporated in the text typically appear as valid and vivid presentation of news, at the same time they possess certain credibility strengthening the impact of information and form a negative perception of the issue.¹¹⁸ For example, articles in *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* dd. January 20 provide the voice of EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in a following manner:

- Jose Manuel Barroso said the Europe could not allow a repeat of the gas stand-off. "We have to stop simply talking about energy security in Europe, and start doing something about it." (*the BBC*, dd. January 20)
- [...] Barroso said on Tuesday he was disappointed with Russia and Ukraine over their handling of the gas dispute but said Brussels would not turn its back on them. "I was very disappointed in these days about the way the leadership in these two countries negotiated," Barroso told reporters in Brussels. (*Deutsche Welle*, dd. January 20)

The following sentences taken from the articles chosen also represent the voices and their negative assessment of the crisis events, particularly the voices of EU and Ukrainian officials:

- "Energy relations between the EU and its neighbors should be based on reliability and predictability. Existing commitments to supply and transit have to be honored under all circumstances." (this is the voice of the "EU presidency" taken from the article in *Deutsche Welle*, dd. January 03, 2009);
- Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko called on Russia to "stop the blackmail" and work out an agreement (*BBC*, January 13);
- However, Bohdan Sokolovsky, energy adviser to Ukrainian president Viktor Yushchenko [...] criticized the deal, saying it favored Russia and would impose hardship on Ukraine. (*BBC*, January 20)

¹¹⁷ Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers : An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. 65

¹¹⁸ V.M. Peshkov, *Контент-Анализ Прессы Московского Мегаполиса Об Азербайджанской Общине* (*Content Analysis of Moscow Metropolis Press About Azerbaijani Community*) (*Демоскоп Weekly* (*Demoscop Weekly*), November 22 - December 5, 2004; № 179 - 180 [cited May 10, 2010]; available from <http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2004/0179/analit04.php#01>).

The messages to “stop the blackmail” and suspicion that current relations are not based on reliability and predictability are aiming to get an emotional reaction from the audience. Therefore this is designed to achieve the optimal self-representation of EU with its “dissatisfaction” and to provide a negative evaluation of the “enemy” policy. These methods facilitate the creation of well-reasoned conclusions and assessments, while making this assessment socially acceptable.¹¹⁹

At the same time, *Russia Today* mainly presents voices of the Russian officials, and under representing the Ukrainian or European view on this story. It is a sort of invisible opposition to Ukraine when *Russia Today* provides the one-sided perspective as the only one worth describing. For example, in the article dd. January 03, 2009 presented the voice of Gazprom deputy CEO Aleksandr Medvedev: “It’s not Russia but Ukraine which is blackmailing both Russia and Europe. It seems that Ukraine’s authorities don’t care about their country, but are simply playing political games.” At the same time the voice of Russian Prime Minister Putin provides readers with the following assessment:

I hope transit supplies [...] will be fully resumed in the nearest future. [...] We now expect our Ukrainian partners to act accordingly. Once again, I want to express regrets to all those who suffered from the gas crisis – which we consider was not started by the Russian side.

This message aims to invoke a feeling of sympathy from the reader.

Both Russian and Western broadcasters use a common language regarding the “enemy” within the texts; they use such words as “blackmail” towards each other and portray the policy of their governments in a favorable way, justifying their actions and position.

The following table provides analysis of “voices” taken from international broadcasters. The “voices” may be divided in several categories by their origins: representing the position of Russian, Ukrainian or European authorities, as well as the “voices” of experts,

¹¹⁹ Peshkov, *Контент-Анализ Прессы Московского Метрополиса Об Азербайджанской Общине* (*Content Analysis of Moscow Metropolis Press About Azerbaijani Community*) ([cited]).

or ordinary people - population. By “other” I mean the “voices” that do not fall into any category and cannot be labeled. For example on January 20, 2009 *Deutsche Welle* provides “voices” of top manager from gas group OMW and the “Turkey’s energy ministry.” These sorts of “voices” regarded to the category of “other” in my table, because the top manager is not an expert but represents the business and turkey official represents the other side in this story, neither European, nor Russian or Ukrainian.

I counted every “voice” mentioned in the text: if the same person was quoted several times I gave one point every time its “voice” was referred to. The column Number of words indicates the size of article; therefore it is possible to see the proportion of “voices” presented and the word count. *The BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* have relatively equal number of words, while articles from *Russia Today* are sometimes longer.

Table 1. Analysis of “voices” presented in the BBC, Deutsche Welle and Russia Today

Broadcaster	Authorities			Experts	Other	Population	Number of words
	European	Russian / Gazprom	Ukrainian				
<i>The BBC</i>							
January 03	7	6	4	1	0	0	556
January 13	5	5	4	1	0	0	494
January 20	6	6	3	1	0	0	696
<i>Deutsche Welle</i>							
January 03	10	0	0	2	0	0	619
January 13	3	3	4	2	0	0	482
January 20	6	4	1	0	2	0	624
<i>Russia Today</i>							
January 03	0	9	3	0	1	0	883
January 13	0	0	6	2	0	0	436
January 20	0	3	1	1	0	0	906

The BBC uses sources in a balanced manner: Russia, Ukraine and Europe presented more or less in equal proportions, even though the slight priority is given to the European officials; every article provides the “voice” of expert. With all these “voices” readers may

conclude that the broadcaster reports in an objective manner, giving floor to every side in this story to express their opinions. This effect may be achieved despite the fact that the main message of article addresses the issue of “suffering Europe” because of Russian actions.

Position of *Deutsche Welle* is less balanced, for example, the first article over represents the European “voices” and the last one under represents Ukrainian side in this story. In the meantime the broadcaster provides more alternative sources than *the BBC*: two for each news story.

Russia Today clearly ignores the European “voices” in their texts, while the Russian and Ukrainian sides are not presented in equal proportions. Some articles give priority to the Russian side: nine Russian “voices” and only three Ukrainian on January 03; zero Russian “voices,” six Ukrainian on January 13; and three Russian, one Ukrainian on January 20. “Voices” of experts and other sources are also presented.

The most important finding is that Western as well as Russian broadcasters do not provide any “voice” of ordinary citizens – population. This seems to be very inconsistent since the main message of *the BBC* and *Deutsche Welle* is “suffering Europe.” In this regard articles deliver their message while not providing any evidence from “frozen Europeans” or telling personal stories of how people survive under these conditions. I assume that this is an example of under reporting the story, while the emotional response from the audience could be stronger if the “voices” of population were apparent. In this regard position of *Russia Today* is not surprising, because the articles eliminated the issue of “suffering Europe.”

Conclusion

This thesis provides comparative analysis of the discourse presented in articles of Russian newspapers as well as international broadcasters: the BBC, Deutsche Welle and Russia Today. I evaluate the images of “external enemy” produced by different media sources in the 2009 gas crisis between Ukraine and Russia. My thesis explores the field of news media in Russia, analyzing the up-to-date trends and describing the current media landscape in the country. Being a Russian speaker, I conducted a detailed discourse analysis which revealed the common features of the Russian press.

The major claim of my thesis is that during the 2009 gas crisis Russian and Western media created images of “external enemies” for their audiences. Typically I have found that media use subjective tone when describing the events, demonize the counter-party and maintain the images of the “external enemy.”

Additional findings are the following: in the case of Russian newspapers Ukraine was presented as an “enemy,” as it is apparent from the language used. For example, Russian *Izvestia* and *Kommersant* express an open hostility towards Ukraine. I assume that this attitude is directly connected to the issues of ownership. All three newspapers analyzed are owned by influential businessmen or companies close to the Kremlin and exert different levels of ownership influence. *Izvestia* is openly pro-governmental; *Kommersant* experiences

some restraints when dealing with sensitive issues; *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* covers this crisis from different angles, therefore it is assumed that it represents a more independent position compared to the others.

At the same time, it is not surprising that *Russia Today* occupies a pro-governmental position, which only reinforces my findings on the domestic level. The BBC and Deutsche Welle portray Russia as an “enemy” blaming the country for the consequences of “suffering Europe.”

I assume that my empirical findings prove my hypothesis about “enemy” imaging created and maintained by news media. The detailed discourse analysis based on 15 articles provides evidence of “external enemy” images, apparent in the language and “voices” in the articles. I believe that this case study has provided a good evaluation of different attitudes in Russian and Western news media on the topic of the 2009 gas crisis.

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