



“Que nadie te arrebate esta partida”: An Analysis of a Historic Mexican Women’s Manifestation Journalist’ Article

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Received: 12 June 2021 ▪ Accepted: 5 November 2021 ▪ Published Online: 17 December 2021

Abstract

Femicide events in Mexico has become a crisis along the country. The journalist’ article *Que nadie te arrebate esta partida* (2020) wrote it by the journalist Gabriela Warkentin sheds light through to the relation between femicide and three recent female stories. The present paper is based on critical discourse theory and Halliday’s (1978) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to scrutinize the journalist’ article. Besides, the present examination considers the importance of draw attention to the increasing prevalence of femicides as a national concern.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, systemic functional linguistics, femicide, transitivity.

1. Introduction

Last March 8th and 9th, 2020 massive women’s manifestations took place all over the world on the International Women’s Day. In Mexico, demonstrators flooded the streets of Mexico City, women’s march began its trek at the Revolution Monument towards Mexico City’s main square, the Zocalo.

According to official numbers, at least 80,000 women took over Mexico City on the International Women’s Day 2020. The reasons why people were participating on the march vary, men’s aggression has been core source of anger and fear for many, including the fear to be assaulted, threatened, and even raped.

The majority of the participant wore the same colors to send the same message. Something in black, as visual way to display allegiance, purple as a symbol to support feminism and green to stand up for abortion.

Among the thousands of demonstrators, protest sings are being held across the march being used to show up against femicide a crime that has risen 137% over the past five years. On average, a woman was murdered every two hours and a half in Mexico, according to numbers released by the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System (SESNSP). Besides, according to the SESNSP, at least 10 states concentrate 65% of the femicides that have been perpetrated during the first quarter 2019, State of Mexico (152), Jalisco (102) and Guanajuato (99) are at the top of the list. This study presents a critical discourse analysis (CDA) with the aim to

discuss different femicide’ stories through the lenses of Fairclough’s (2010) perspective. Conclusions are added at the end of the article.

- The newspaper’s article by the journalist Gariela Warkentin “Que nadie te arrebatte esta partida” (2020) examines femicide phenomenon elements across three different stories.
- Through CDA it became evident that the writer aim was not to hide Mexican women real life but the opposite, to disclose and shed light on the circumstances violence against women is taking place.
- The analysis illustrates the relationship between the narrative and the events that are taking place to some women in the Mexican territory.

2. Femicide and systemic functional linguistics

2.1 *Femicide in Mexico*

The first time the term femicide was used in public occurred at the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women 1976 in Brussels by Diana Russell in front of approximately 2,000 women from forty countries. The aim of the meeting was to make public a range of crimes against women in all cultures, such as: spousal abuse; crimes against lesbians; prostitution; rape; pornography; and femicide. The invention of the word femicide came from the prefix “fem” connotes female, and “icide” connotes killing. The term of femicide refers to gender-hate-base crime against girls and women done by a man.

The social meaning of the concept femicide became widely adopted in Spanish and used in Latin American countries due to Marcela Lagarde y de los Ríos, who is a Mexican feminist academic, author, and anthropologist. She took the notion of femicide suggested by Diana Russell and Jill Radford in 1992. Lagarde specifically asked for Russell’s permission to translate the term femicide to *feminicidio*. The term was used to assess the wave of murders of women and girls in Ciudad Juárez in the 1990’. According to Lagarde *feminicidio* denotes a close rapport between murder and gender adding a state scope complicity by the inaction towards the perpetrators.

Nowadays, Lagarde became a leading feminist figure in Latin America she has worked for decades to promote women’s rights, especially regarding violence against women. She also conceived the concept of “sisterhood” as a feminist word to recognize women’s unity in public demonstrations.

Lourdes Enriquez, from the UNAM’s Gender Studies Research and Study Center (CIEG), argues that the increased case of feminicide is the result of impunity:

“The problem is that nothing happens, there is total **impunity** (...) It’s true that we live in a violent time, but we can’t generalize that all these **murders** took place in public (...) In the **worldview** of those who deliver justice, if a **woman** was murdered it was because **she asked for it.**”

Having established some history about femicide, it is important to emphasize (Marcos, 1999) the need for the government to take actions against it and gender violence fight for recognizing reproductive rights of women, legal abortion, and acknowledgment for indigenous women’s rights.

3. Methodological considerations

This section presents the methodology that was used to carried out the analysis of the journalist' article named *Que nadie te arrebate esta partida* (2020) wrote it by Gabriela Warkentin a Mexican writer, researcher, academic, translator, screenwriter and producer. This newspaper article was released on March 10th, 2020, a day after the commemoration of the international women's day. This paper was carried out using the transitivity system which refers to the ideational function analysis which Haratyan (2011) describes as "analytic tool utilized in CDA, dealing with "who or what does what to whom or what?" (p. 261). Thus, the reader can appreciate the way the author perceives a particular event. Transitivity analysis also explains the reason of certain linguistic features in the text are chosen. Besides, the role of the process and participants, and the circumstances in the data can be visualized.

SFL is considered as a root of CDA that relies on the linguistic study. Young and Harrison (2004: 1) propose some commonalities between SFL and CDA. They share a view of language as a social construct. First, considering the language function in society and how society has shaped language. Then, sharing dialectical perspectives of the language where specific discursive event influence the context and vice versa. Third, both SFL and CDA consider a paramount emphasis to both cultural and historical characteristics of meaning.

Fairclough, (1995) considers three dimensional frameworks in the Critical Discourse Analysis CDA aiming to separate forms of analysis between each other analysis of: spoken or written language text, discourse practice, and discursive events as instances of socio-cultural practice. This paper focuses on the analysis of the written language text and the data to be analyze are three women' stories from the previous newspaper article mentioned.

There are three main aspects of what Halliday calls "transitivity process" namely: the actor or participants in the process including the doer of the process and the done-to who receives the final action here there are participants such as people, things, or abstract concepts. Then, the process itself, which is represented by verbs and verbal group. Finally, in relation with the circumstances associated with the process, these are adverbial groups or prepositional phrases, specifying the place (where), the moment (when), and the way (how) something occurred.

Through the ideational function, the writer can voice events, its own experience, and the reactions to the same experiences. The ideational function can be categorized in material, mental, relational, behavioral, extensional, and verbal.

Material process refers to visible actions and answers the questions What did x do? Or What happened? The doer and the receiver are known. The mental process scholars, including Halliday, have agreed that Mental processes can be classified into three classes: Cognition (processes of thinking, knowing, understanding), Affection (Processes of liking, fathering), and Perception (Verbs of seeing and hearing) (Emilia, 2014: 153). This process has two participants the senser (human or conscious participants), and the phenomenon (an embedded clause that express what is thought, wanted, liked, disliked, or perceived). Regarding the verbal process, it is the process of saying (Halliday, 1994 and Emilia, 2014) (saying, asking, stating, arguing). There are four participants during this process: a sayer (in charge of the verbal process), a receiver (to whom saying is directed), a verbiage (the content), and a target (entity targeted by the process of saying). The relational process, which is also known as the process of being, when the attribute is the identifier. Behavioral process refers to psychological behavior. Could be consider as a hybrid process between material and mental. Lastly, existential processes, denotes existence but no identifier.

Respecting to circumstances, are expressed through two types of adverbials such as adverbial phrase, and adverbs. As types of circumstances extend (duration), location (time and

place), manner (means, quality and comparison), cause (reason), contingency (condition a concession), role (guise and product), matter and angle.

Giving that the study focuses on the material processes encountered in a newspaper article, it is worth discussing some details related to this type of process. One of the first considerations is that material processes. The elements of the material process may include an actor (the doer), a goal (affected participant), and a beneficiary (client and recipient) and range. The extracts taken from the newspaper article as well as the results of the analysis are presented in the following section.

4. Results and discussion

The analysis was conducted through transitivity identification. Below you can find extracts of the three women stories. In order to ease the analysis, the transitivity identification test is needed to conduct. Below is the table of the transitivity identification analysis.

4.1 Extract one. *Le enterró un cuchillo en la cara*

Hasta que él se molestó. Así que le **enterró** un cuchillo en la cara. De paso la amenazó con **quitarle** la casa [...]. La mujer se fue al hospital, [y] le **desinfectaron** la herida.

Juntas y cantando y abrazadas y gritando, jóvenes y no tanto [...] que porque **desaparecieron** a mi hermana, que porque **mataron** s mi tía [...] y siguen gritando y patean paredes y le **pintarrajean** los testículos de bronce al caballo de explanada [...] Es 8 de marzo, es la Ciudad de México [...] somos miles de mujeres las que **tomamos** las calles. Miles y miles mujeres que **agarran a patadas** la narrativa dominante.

Simple clause: Así que le enterró un cuchillo en la cara.				
Participant: Actor	Process	Goal	Participant: Beneficiary	Circumstance
El (elipsis)	Enterró: Material	Un cuchillo	A ella (pronombre reflexivo “le”)	Place: En la cara

Complex clause. De paso la amenazó con quitarle la casa... y con desaparecer a la niña.				
Participant: Actor	Process	Goal	Participant: Beneficiary	Circumstance
El (elipsis)	Desaparecer (as kidnap): Material	A la niña	---	---

4.2 Extract two. *La roció con gasolina*

El tipo la **roció** con gasolina, de paso **empapó** acceso a edificios luego se encerró en casa con el hijo y un tanque de gas preparado para la ocasión.

9 de marzo, paro nacional de mujeres [...] las que **limpian** las casas [...] qué pasa si un día me **asesinan**, si no llego a casa porque me **desaparecieron**.

Simple clause: El tipo la roció con gasolina				
Participant: Actor	Process	Goal	Participant: Beneficiary	Circumstance
El	Roció: Material	Con gasolina	A ella (pronombre reflexivo "la")	---

Complex clause. De paso empapó accesos a edificios, luego se encerró en casa...				
Participant: Actor	Process	Goal	Participant: Beneficiary	Circumstance
El (elipsis)	Empapó: Material	Con gasolina	---	Accesos a edificios

4.3 Extract three. No sé ni como mirarla

Un día, alguien le llama por teléfono para pedirle cita laboral, llega a la hora acordada y le vacía encima ácido que le derrite por fuera y la carcome por dentro.

8 de marzo, 9 de marzo, 2020. Quedara en la historia de México. El día en que gritamos y tomamos las calles.

Simple clause: Le vacía encima ácido				
Participant: Actor	Process	Goal	Participant: Beneficiary	Circumstance
El	Vacía: Material	ácido	A ella (pronombre reflexivo "la")	Place: Por fuera

The previous extracts reflect that the newspaper's article sheds a light on the actions that have been perpetrated by males against women during particular circumstances where the doer (male figure), takes advantages with premeditation causing paramount damage to women such as physical and emotional damage.

The verbs are written in the past tense, this tense functions as an indicator of the strong relationship between the actor and the receiver (women). Besides, draws a particular emphasis of previous situations that happened not a long time and the way violence has been conducted in recent time.

Concerning on the number of stories the writer provides in a piece of newspaper's article, it is an outstanding finding three stories shaped with the same characteristics, which explains that the purpose of the ideational function to communicate new information unknown to the reader.

The uses of material speech, highlights that the writer discourse focusses on visible actions verbs, which suggest the accurate of the women's movement. Finally, an interesting finding related to the use of the pronoun he, the writer refers to men how have attacked women, detaching herself from men.

Lastly, the results from the analysis suggest that the discourse reflects the reality of Mexican women, demonstrating a everyday femicide acts.

5. Conclusion

This paper purpose was to paramount the importance of raising awareness of the history of femicide in Mexico and how last year women’s march unifies a large number of population, men and women, with the same aim.

Through CDA the writer allows to visualize clearly how women in Mexico are living a current violence situation regarding femicide and highlights social reflection on the topic and the relevance to maintain the theme in our everyday speech.

Acknowledgements

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

The author declares no competing interests.

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