

# Functional Analysis of Clause Complex in the Language of News Websites Texts: A Comparative Study of Two Articles

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**Abstract-** This paper aims to attempt systemic functional analysis of clause complex in news texts adopting Hallidayan linguistic perspective. News language may contain lexical and grammatical ambiguities that arise because of the use of technical terms that may cause confusion among their readers. Because news texts are written, they have more complex grammars and do not use pauses, stresses, intonations and tones of speech as those in spoken language. Here lies the reason behind the difficulty of meaning that people might face and then they try to interpret it in more than one meaning. According to Leech (1981:30), “*An expression is said to be ambiguous when more than one interpretation can be assigned to it*”. Now, comes the role of clause complex to resolve the problems by analyzing the modes of meaning in those texts.

The term clause complex in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), according to systemicists such as Halliday, Matthiessen and Eggins, does not refer to a sentence; since that term can be used for both spoken and written language whereas a sentence can be only used in written language. S. Eggins (2004:255) mentioned that “*while the sentence is an orthographic unit of written language, the clause complex is a grammatical and semantic unit, and it is a unit that occurs in both spoken and written language.*” Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:436) state that “*The sentence is the highest unit of punctuation on the graphological rank scale and has evolved in the writing system to represent the clause complex as the most extensive domain of grammatical structure.... We will use the term **sentence** to refer only to this highest-ranking graphological unit of punctuation.*”

There are two systems involved in the formation of clause complexes. One is Tactic System or Interdependency and the other is Logico-Semantic relation and all of which operate within clauses. Clause complex consists of two or more interdependent clauses. They are made of paratactically or hypotactically related clauses that are connected together in systematic and meaningful ways. When we put many clauses together, the meaning is strengthened. As pointed out by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:430)

“*Semantically, the effect of combining clauses into a clause complex is one of **tighter integration in meaning**: the sequences that are realized grammatically in a clause complex are construed as being sub-sequences within the total sequence of events that make up a whole episode in a narrative*”.

Systemic Functional Linguistics is assumed to have effective tools to resolve the vagueness and difficulties in language by providing functional and systemic analyses.

Therefore, clause complexes can help us simplify the structural and grammatical meanings of the texts of news through studying the tactic and logico-semantic relations of those texts.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze two news articles using Systemic Functional Grammar and show their clause structure patterns and how the patterns construe the meaning using descriptive and analytical methods only. The two news articles are selected from two news website; namely www.Al Jazeera.net and www.Al Arabiya.net on October 24, 2015. The mode of all the scripts under consideration is written texts. Besides, the themes, lexicogrammatical system as well as metafunctions of the texts will be explored during the analysis.

Though both texts belong to the same genre (news), they exhibit a little bit different display of clause complexes. **AJE** article shows more hypotactic percentage than **ARE** article does. Both texts favour extension and enhancement in their lexicosemantic relations. Extension and enhancement are used to refer to the sequential and causal relations in the occurrence of story. Regarding types of projection, the **AJE** text uses more hypotactic projections than the **ARE** text does and conversely the **ARE** text has more parataxis than the **AJE** text as the percentage shows for them respectively: hypotaxis: **AJE** (74%) and **ARE** (63%) and parataxis: **AJE** (26%) and **ARE** ((37%). This technique is used to provide their addressees with the main sense of the event. In brief, SFL is an effective tool for uncovering the meanings that lie behind the lines of texts.

**Index Terms-** Systemic Functional Grammar, Clause Complex, News websites Texts, Logico-Semantic Relations, Tactic System

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is used to express the needs and intentions of the speakers. Language structure and language functions go hand in hand to build up the intended meaning and purpose of the communication among any society members. We use language for many purposes such as talking about events, or expressing what our feelings to others. Language is said to serve many different purposes through the linguistic structures that carry the meaning potential.

Language has metafunctions that are central to the way the grammar works in the language system. These three functions express experiential (ideational), interpersonal and textual meanings. In order to understand the full functionality of any

utterance it is necessary to consider all of these three meanings simultaneously.

The paper compares two website news articles and aims at identifying the main similarities and differences of the aforementioned three systemic principal types of meanings that will be examined later.

The articles are selected from two popular news website: <http://english.alarabiya.net/> <http://www.aljazeera.com/> and they report the same factual event of a war-conflict story involving Russian intervention in Syria. Both of the papers are addressed to the same audience and accordingly are expected to represent a similar style of a common tabloid reporting.

The analysis is comparatively done by adopting a lexicogrammatical examination and a summary of style, context and register of both texts.

The referencing used throughout my paper is as follows: **AJE**: Al-Jazeera English website, <http://www.aljazeera.com/> and **ARE**: Al-Arabiya English website, <https://english.alarabiya.net/>, § 1: paragraph one, § 2: paragraph 2 etc. The articles will be written at the appendix at the end of this paper.

II. THREE LINES OF MEANING: METAFUNCTIONS

Halliday (1994:34) draws the attention to the importance of making three distinct functions [Subject, Actor, and Theme] in the clause saying that “each one of them forms part of a different functional configuration, making a strand in the overall meaning of the clause”. The strands of meaning are as follows:

- I. *The Theme functions in the structure of the clause as a message. The Theme is the point of departure for the message.*
- II. *The Subject functions in the structure of the clause as an exchange. It deals with speech roles in exchange as giving and demanding.*
- III. *The Actor functions in the structure of the clause as representation. A clause has meaning as a representation of some process in ongoing human experience.*

**Table1. Three lines of meaning in the clause by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:83)**

| Metafunction         | Clause as      | SYSTEM       | Structure   |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------|---|
| <b>Textual</b>       | Message        | THEME        | Theme ^ Rheme   |
| <b>Interpersonal</b> | Exchange       | MOOD         | Mood [Subject + Finite] + Residue [Predicator (+ Complement) (+ Adjunct)] |
| <b>Experiential</b>  | Representation | TRANSITIVITY | process + participant(s) (+ circumstances), e.g. Process + Actor+ Goal    |

It is the structure as a whole that construes the meaning. Process + Actor +Goal is a configuration that is referred to as a structure in Systemic Functional Grammar. A clause is an entity that is composed of three elements. Each element of the clause construes a u meaning. The three lines of meaning are referred to as metafunctions.

**2.1 Experiential Metafunction analysis**

As well as using language to interact with people, we clearly use it to talk about the world, either the external world – things, events, qualities, etc. – or our internal world – thoughts, beliefs, feelings, etc. Halliday introduced the clause as a multifunctional construct consisting of three metafunctional lines (textual, interpersonal and experiential). The three metafunctions contribute equally to the overall meaning of a clause as a whole. The meaning of a clause is a configuration of those three meanings.

From the experiential perspective, language comprises a set of resources for referring to entities in the world and the ways in which those entities act on or relate to each other. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:212) clarifies this point as saying “*And experientially, the clause construes a quantum of change in the flow of events as a figure, or configuration of a process, participants involved in it and any attendant circumstances.*” The experiential metafunction can be classified generally as a *process (realized by verbal group), participants (realized by*

*nominal group) and circumstances (realized by Prepositional or adverbial phrase).*

Systemic functional grammar highlights language use in context. Therefore, language **use** is highly emphasized by Halliday (1970:1) “we shall consider **language** in terms of its **use**”.

**2.1.1 Participants, processes and circumstances – comparative analysis**

**2.1.1.1 AJE § 5 and ARE § 3**

*Russia launched an air campaign in late September ostensibly against ISIL and other "terrorist" groups, but the FSA say most of the air strikes are targeting them and other moderate opposition groups.* **AJE**

**Russia (Participant/ Actor) launched (Material process) an air campaign (Participant/ Range) in late September (Circumstance of time) ostensibly (Circumstance of manner) against ISIL and other “terrorist” groups (Recipient) ...**

*‘Moscow began an aerial campaign in Syria on September 30, saying it was targeting ISIS and other "terrorists".* **ARE**

**Moscow (Participant/ Actor) began (Material Process) an aerial campaign (Participant/ Range) in Syria (Circumstance of location) September 30 (Circumstance of time) ...**

Although these two clause complexes are about the same factual event, that is, Russian intervention in Syria, they are tackled from different perspectives.

The primary difference between the clauses is the choice of lexis to describe the material processes. AlJazeera.net used the verb “launched” and AlArabiya.net adopted the verb “began”. Also, the choice of lexis between “Russia” and “Moscow” has been carefully selected.

The material process “launched” indicates that Russia conducted extensive air strikes abruptly but intentionally. It is the ‘doer’ of the action.

Material process “began” implies that Moscow was the initiator of the action on Syrian rebels and also indicates that there might be a price to pay for the action. It is the actor in this clause complex as it intentionally started the assault by beginning it. The verb “began” also might suggest that it is Moscow that started attacking Syrian rebels. The role of lexis is played here by using the word “terrorism” inside the inverted commas to question the Moscow intention of war. This indicates the negative impression of Al-Arabiya stance from the Russian roles in Syria.

**2.1.1.2 AJE § 3 and ARE § 1**

Sergey Lavrov's offer on Saturday was immediately rejected by Syrian rebel factions, which dismissed the idea they could cooperate with Russia while it supported President Bashar al-Assad. **AJE**

**Sergey Lavrov's offer (Participant/Goal/Nominalization) on Saturday (Circumstance of time) was (Finite/ Past) immediately (Circumstance of manner) rejected (Predicator/ Material Process) by Syrian rebel factions (Participant/ Actor)...**

Syria's Western-backed opposition on Saturday rejected a Russian offer to assist them against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group and dismissed Moscow's call for new elections. **ARE**

**Syria's Western-backed opposition (Participant/Actor/ Nominalization) on Saturday (Circumstance of time) rejected (Material process) a Russian offer (Participant/ Goal) ...**

In this comparative analysis, the same information is presented differently leaving different impressions on readers about the Russia's proposal to help Syria's rebel factions and their rejection to it.

**AJE** uses a material process in a passive clause to highlight the goal of the clause, that is, the offer that was rejected. The focus is on the action rather than the actor. **AJE** in its presentation limited itself to the fact that Russia offer to Syrian rebels was refused. The passive is actually used here to show what happened to the Sergey Lavrov's offer and this is called in Functional Grammar as the “**process of happening**”.

**ARE**, on the other hand, uses an active material process to highlight the “**process of doing**”, that is, the rejection of the Russian offer. The use of the expression “**Syria's western-backed opposition**” implies that not only did Russia intervene in Syrian affairs, but some western super powers were also involved. The mentioning of the words “Russia” and “western-backed opposition” indicate that Russia might face a fierce reaction by the opposition rebels loyal to the West. Al-

Arabiya.net is clearer than Al-Jazeera.net in specifying who is rejecting the Russian offer. The combination of the two verbs “rejected” and dismissed” in this situation are reflecting the Al-Arabiya negative opinion from Russia's roles in Syria.

**2.1.1.3 AJE § 2 and ARE § 7**

Russia's Foreign Minister says his country is ready to support the Free Syrian Army (FSA) with air strikes and cooperate closely with the US in fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group and other factions. **AJE**

**In this clause we have projecting and projected clauses. But this is in the form of reported and reporting.**

|                           |                |   |
|---------------------------|----------------|---|
| Russia's foreign minister | Says           | his country is ready to support the Free Syrian Army (FSA) with air strikes ... |
| Sayer                     | Verbal process |   |
| $\alpha$ : Reporting      |                | $\beta$ : Reported  |

The comments came after Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Saturday that Moscow was ready to support Syria's "patriotic opposition, including the so-called Free Syrian Army, from the air". "The main thing for us is to approach the people fully in charge of representing these or those armed groups fighting terrorism among other things," he told Rossiya 1 television station. **ARE**

|   |                |   |
|---|----------------|---|
| Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov | Said           | Saturday that Moscow was ready to support Syria's "patriotic opposition..." |
| Sayer                                   | Verbal process |   |
| $\alpha$ : Reporting                    |                | $\beta$ : Reported  |

Both of the compared clauses refer to the reported speech of the Russia foreign minister about his country's readiness to aid the Syrians against the “terrorist groups”.

**AJE** in its presentation of the verbal process “says” in the present time to refer to the ongoing Russian offer to support the Free Syrian Army with airstrikes. Unlike **ARE**, **AJE** remains unbiased of the event description in this clause complex.

**ARE** adopted a different path in its picturing of the event of Russia's supposed support to Syrian militants. It uses lexis such as “patriotic opposition” satirically because Russia stance is known to be by the side of the existing regime and the Syrian regime calls all those against it as “terrorists”. The question is “*which is the patriotic opposition then?* Secondly, **ARE** uses that Russian Foreign minister used the expression “the so-called Free Syrian Army” to show that Russia underrates the Free Syrian Army military strength and hence calling it like alleged army by using the nominal group “the so-called Free Syrian Army”.

**2.1.1.4 AJE § 11 and ARE § 13**

Russia wants Egypt and Iran to play a role in bringing a solution to the conflict in Syria, which has raged on since 2011.

**AJE**

||| **Russia (Participant/Senser) wants (Mental Process: Desiderative) Egypt and Iran (Participant/ Actor) || to play (Material process) a role (Participant/ Goal) in bringing a solution to the conflict in Syria..(Circumstance) |||** [clause nexus] (Halliday, 2014:586)

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shukri have agreed to continue cooperation in order to help find a political solution to the Syria conflict, the Russian Foreign ministry said on Saturday. **ARE**

||| **Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shukri (Participant/Senser) have agreed (Mental Process: Desiderative) || to continue (Material process) cooperation (Goal).... |||**

Both of the clauses refer to mental processes. They are both hypotactic material processes with clause nexuses to express their experiential meanings.

**AJE** uses the mental process verb “want” to mark Russia’s need to get support for its stance in Syria. Additionally, the using of the material process verb “play” in the clause nexus shows that Russian regime has the incentive to change the game rules in Syria by getting more players “allies”. Also, by the mentioning of “Egypt and Iran” in this context, **AJE** overtly wants to tell readers about the type of players that Russia wants. Basically, Russia as well as the current regimes in Egypt and Iran also support Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad publicly and this may explain the Russian cooperation with them.

**ARE** in this sentence shows more neutral stance.

**2.2 Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis**

Interpersonal meaning handles speaker’s roles in exchange. Personal interaction is focused on in this case. It deals with speech roles in exchange as giving and demanding. Halliday calls this function as the ‘*language as action*’. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:30) convey that “*This kind of meaning is more active: if the ideational function of the grammar is ‘language as reflection’, this is ‘language as action’. We call it the*

*interpersonal metafunction, to suggest that it is both interactive and personal”.*

Bloor and Bloor (2004:11) also state that “*Language is used to enable us to participate in communicative acts with other people, to take on roles and to express and understand feelings, attitude and judgements. This metafunction is known as the interpersonal metafunction.*”

The news articles basically are about real events and stories and these events are reported mostly using statements that are most naturally expressed by declarative sentences. The two articles in this paper mainly use uncomplicated Finite declaratives.

Most of the declarative clauses are Finite and refer to actions took place in the past. There are few sentences in both articles in present tense. There are three sentences in present tense in **ARE** article and two in **AJE** ranging from present tense to present perfect.

The analyzed news articles report information that has happened in the reality using declarative clause complexes. As a result, the interpersonal relationship between the addresser (news website staff) and the recipient (readers) involve a **choice** by the article writers to offer information (news) only. That’s why systemic grammar focuses on the role of choice in meaning making. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:23) mention the importance of paradigmatic (choice) in the language as “*Of course, structure is an essential part of the description; but it is interpreted as the outward form taken by systemic choices, not as the defining characteristic of language. A language is resource for making meaning, and meaning resides in systemic patterns of choice.*”

**2.2.1 Analysis of Mood**

When the clause is regarded as an exchange, the general interpersonal organization is made up of two major components: Mood and Residue. It is the element Mood which goes in debate. The modal Adjuncts also add interpersonal meaning to the clauses. In SFL, Halliday and Matthiessen divide the Modal Adjuncts into Mood Adjuncts and Comment Adjuncts.

In the two articles in question, **AJE** has used two Modal Adjuncts in the article (§ 3 and § 5) respectively.

|                              |                               |               |                     |                   |                                 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Sergey Lavrov's offer</b> | <b>On Saturday</b>            | <b>Was</b>    | <b>Immediately</b>  | <b>Rejected</b>   | <b>by Syrian rebel factions</b> |
| <b>Subject</b>               | <b>Circumstantial Adjunct</b> | <b>Finite</b> | <b>Mood Adjunct</b> | <b>Predicator</b> | <b>Adjunct</b>                  |
| <b>Mood</b>                  |                               |               |                     | <b>Residue</b>    |                                 |

Mood Adjuncts allow the editors of the **AJE** news website to express the assessment of events. The assessment in the above clause negatively criticize the Russia’s interference in Syria and

its role is not welcome by the rebels who immediately rejected the Russia’s offer to help them.

|                |                 |                   |                          |                               |                        |                     |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Russia</b>  | <b>Launched</b> |                   | <b>an air campaign</b>   | <b>in late September</b>      | <b>ostensibly</b>      | <b>against ISIL</b> |
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>Finite</b>   | <b>Predicator</b> | <b>Complement Object</b> | <b>Circumstantial Adjunct</b> | <b>Comment Adjunct</b> | <b>Adjunct</b>      |
| <b>Mood</b>    |                 |                   | <b>Residue</b>           |                               |                        |                     |

In the paragraph (§5), the writer expresses his personal and subjective assessment of the event of ‘air campaign’ to show that



the Russian airstrikes seemingly target the terrorist groups while they are hitting the Free Syrian Army and other rebels groups that fight Bashar Al-Assad army.

**ARE** uses only one modal adjunct in paragraph (§5) to describe the attitude of Samir Nashar, who is member of the Syrian National Coalition, towards Russian offer.

|  |               |                           |  |
|--|---------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Samir Nashar, a member of the Syrian National Coalition, the opposition's main political body</b> | <b>Was</b>    | <b>equally dismissive</b> | <b>of an alliance between moderate rebels and Russia</b> |
| <b>Subject Nominal group Complex</b>   | <b>Finite</b> | <b>Mood Adjunct</b>       | <b>Circumstantial Adjunct</b>                            |
| <b>Mood</b>  |               | <b>Residue</b>            |  |

Except the above three examples, both articles abstained from using modality that could impose the ideology of the writers on their readers.

The interpersonal analysis of the two articles of **AJE** and **ARE** clearly shows that both passages did not impose their opinions in the information presented. Both articles are similar in interpersonal metafunction related to issues of acceptability of information, and the level of message credibility that writers share with their recipients. After analyzing the differences in interpersonal meaning of the articles, it can be summed up that both passages only project objectivity of the proposition. However, **AJE** article seems to be focusing on the offer of the Russian airstrikes to the Free Syrian Army rebels against ISIL while **ARE** article attempts to highlight the rejection of that offer of Russia by the majority of rebels.

### 2.3 Textual Metafunction Analysis

The Theme functions in the structure of the clause as a message. The Theme is the point of departure for the message. Eggins (2004:35) describes the textual meaning in the following way:

*“Third simultaneous strand of meaning that enables texts to be negotiated; textual meaning. In describing the structural configurations by which the clause is organized as a message, we will recognize that one major system is involved, that of **Theme**, with a configuration of the clause into the two functional components of a **Theme** (point of departure for the message) and a **Rheme** (new information about the point of departure).”*

Textual Meaning express the relation of language to its environment, either verbally (said or written) or non-verbally (context). They are influentially affected by the discourse mode. To analyze the textual domain of meaning in the target articles, the researcher will start from meaning from examining the functional category of Theme and then he will proceed to show how patterns of Theme development and constituents of Rheme

helped to build up the textual coherence and cohesion in both passages.

#### 2.3.1 Topical Sentence

Theme is defined by Matthiessen et al as “the point of departure of the clause as message. It sets up an orientation or local context for each clause. This local context typically relates to the method of development of the text”, (2010:222).

I will investigate the opening sentences in passages in order to infer the writer’s point of departure for the whole texts.

**AJE** (§1)

|                                 |                       |              |  |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| <b>Russian FM Sergey Lavrov</b> | <b>Says</b>           | <b>He</b>    | <b>is ready to work with the opposition forces ...</b> |
| <b>Sayer</b>                    | <b>Verbal process</b> |              |  |
| <b>Theme</b>                    | <b>Rheme</b>          | <b>Theme</b> | <b>Rheme</b>   |

**ARE** (§1)

|                           |                       |   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Syria's opposition</b> | <b>Western-backed</b> | <b>On Saturday rejected a Russian offer ...</b> |
| <b>Unmarked Theme</b>     |                       | <b>Rheme</b>                                    |

Both articles’ opening sentences adopt a different angle on presenting their messages.

**AJE** passage uses the projection (reported speech) that shows neutral quoting. The Theme is contained in the projected clause because the projected clause contains the Theme as Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:443) state that “the secondary clause is projected through the primary clause, which instates it as (a) a locution or (b) an idea.” So, we find that the **Theme** is in **projected clause** that indicates the Russian foreign minister’s readiness to work with the opposition forces. The subject and Theme are conflated.

**ARE** passage on other hand begins its article with a nominal group as subject and Theme.

Thus the **AJE** (§1) is about the support that Russia offers to rebels. Therefore, the Theme is neutral.

**ARE** (§ 1) discusses the rejection of the Russian offer. The sentence draws the attention to the rejection rather than the offer itself. It also dubs the rebels who rejected the offer as loyal to the western countries, which in fact are against Russia actions in Syria. Therefore, it is concluded that the Theme is negatively implied and somehow leaves a negative first impression of the Russian offer.

#### 2.3.2 Topical Theme

In English, the topical Theme is basically located in the last part of the Theme. Bloor and Bloor (2004:72) state that “The so-called **topical Theme** in any clause is the first constituent that is part of the meaningful structure of the clause. To put it another way, we can say that the topical Theme always represents a *Participant, Circumstance or Process.*”

The opening sentences introduce the main direction of what is to follow in the texts.

| The Themes                               | AJE article                       | ARE article                           |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Russia Offer And the opposition reaction | §1 Russian FM Sergey Lavrov       | §2 Russia                             |
|  | §2 Russia's Foreign Minister      | §4 Moscow                             |
|  | §3 Sergey Lavrov's offer          | § 9 Lavrov                            |
|  | §4 Russia                         | § 16 the Russians                     |
|  | § 6 Russia                        | § 21 Russian Foreign Minister         |
|  | § 9 Offer                         | § 12 I                                |
|  | § 11 Lavrov                       |                                       |
|  | § 12 Russia                       |                                       |
|  | §5 we                             | § 1 Syria's Western-backed opposition |
|  | § 7 Samir Nashar, a member of ... | § 3 we                                |
|  |                                   | § 15 Nashar                           |
|  |                                   | § 18 Syria                            |
|  | § 20 the country                  |                                       |

Looking at the Themes in the texts, we will find out that both articles select mostly simple Themes with **AJE** article (91.6%) and **ARE** article (95.8%). They basically adopt nominal groups as subjects.

**2.3.3 Thematic Progression**

Thematic progression is about managing the flow of discourse for creating a coherent text. The meaning is achieved by two main elements in the text; that is, coherence and cohesion. Cohesion helps to organize discourse. The term refers to the connectedness of the surface elements in the text. The cohesive resources include reference, substitution/ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. Eggins (2004:33) mentions that "The cohesive resource of reference refers to how the

**a. Types of taxis**

| Types of taxis | <Primary clause > | <Secondary clause> |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Parataxis   | 1 (initiating)    | 2 (continuing)     |
| 2. Hypotaxis   | α (dominant)      | β (dependent)      |

**b. Logico-semantic relations**

1. **Expansion: the secondary clause expands the primary one**
  - a. Elaboration (=)
  - b. Extension (+)
  - c. Enhancement (x)
2. **Projection: the primary clause projects the secondary one.**
  - a. Locution (")
  - b. Idea (')

**3.1 Clause complex analysis**

The clause complex analysis of the news texts reports will be as follows:

writer/speaker introduces participants and then keeps track of them once they are in the text."

Usually, the Theme choice produces a coherent and cohesive text. Both texts use also textual Themes, as Conjunctions (e.g. 'but', 'while', 'also', 'and', 'when' and 'after',) to connect their clauses.

Eggins (2010:324) mentions three methods of Theme development of text. They are (i) Theme reiteration, (ii) the zig-zag pattern and (iii) the multiple-Rheme pattern.

Because texts with the same genre basically share similar patterns of thematic progression, both news article favour the pattern of **Theme reiteration** that is the Theme is repeated several times over several clauses. "One basic way to keep a text focused (i.e. cohesive) is to simply reiterate an element," (Eggins,2004:324). This type of Thematic Progression patterns is used in short factual events. Both news texts prefer such a Thematic pattern to project a clear and strong topical focus.

**III. CLAUSE COMPLEX**

The term, clause complex, refers to the grammatical and semantic unit formed when two or more clauses are linked by tactic and logico-semantic relations. "This integrating of a series of events into a subsequence is a feature of narratives in general, including not only fictional stories but also narrative passages in biographical recounts, news reports and other kinds of text where past experience is construed in terms of a time-line," (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014:430). The analysis will also include the embedded projections because they add to the meaning of the texts. In support of this, Halliday and Matthiessen state that the use of such constructions "is important in the creation of discourse; one of the central uses of nominal groups with embedded projections is in the representation of arguments, as in newspaper reports and scientific discourse." (2014: 534)

The system of clause complex that was proposed by Halliday can be depicted as follows:

**AL-Jazeera.net Text: Russia offers Free Syrian Army air strikes against ISIL**

- 1 (a) α ||| Russian FM Sergey Lavrov says
- (b) "β α || he is ready
- (c) xβ || to work with the opposition forces and the US against the armed group. |||
- 2 (a) α ||| Russia's Foreign Minister says
- (b) "β α || his country is ready
- (c) xβ 1 || to support the Free Syrian Army (FSA) with air strikes
- (d) +2 || and cooperate closely with the US in fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group and other factions. |||

3 (a)  $\alpha$  ||| Sergey Lavrov's offer on Saturday was immediately rejected by Syrian rebel factions,  
(b) =  $\beta$   $\alpha$  || which dismissed the idea  
(c) ' $\beta$   $\alpha$  || they could cooperate with Russia  
(d) + $\beta$  || while it supported President Bashar al-Assad. |||

(4) (a) 1 ||| "Russia is bombing the Free Syrian Army  
(b) +2  $\alpha$  || and now it wants  
(c) ' $\beta$   $\alpha$  || to cooperate with us,  
(d) + $\beta$  || while it remains committed to Assad? |||

5 (a) "1 ||| "We don't understand Russia at all,"  
(b) 2 || said Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Saoud, a spokesman for the Division..., according to the AFP news agency. |||

6 (a) 1 ||| Russia launched an air campaign in late September ostensibly against ISIL and other "terrorist" groups,  
(b) +2  $\alpha$  || but the FSA say  
(c) " $\beta$  || most of the air strikes are targeting them and other moderate opposition groups. |||

7 (a) 1 ||| Samir Nashar, a member of the Syrian National Coalition, the opposition's main political body, said  
(b) "2 || "80 percent" of strikes had hit the FSA. |||

8 (a) "1 ||| "Instead of talking about their willingness to support the Free Syrian Army, they should stop bombing it,"  
(b) 2 || he said. |||

9 (a)  $\alpha$  ||| The offer of air strikes in support of the FSA came  
(b) x  $\beta$  || as Lavrov and US Secretary of State John Kerry spoke on about organizing talks between the Syrian government and the opposition. |||

10 (a)  $\alpha$  ||| In a telephone conversation held at the request of the US side, the Russian foreign ministry said on its website  
(b) " $\beta$   $\alpha$  || that the two men had also discussed tapping the potential of other countries in the region  
(c) x $\beta$  || to push the political process forward. |||

11 (a)  $\alpha$  ||| Lavrov also spoke to his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif about the need  
(b) ' $\beta$  x $\beta$  || to strengthen their cooperation in order  
(c)  $\alpha$  || to bring stability and security to the Middle East. |||

12 (a)  $\alpha$  ||| Russia wants Egypt and Iran  
(b) ' $\beta$   $\alpha$  || to play a role in bringing a solution to the conflict in Syria,  
(c) = $\beta$  || which has raged on since 2011. |||

AL-Arabyia.net Text: Syrian rebels reject Russian help against ISIS

1 (a)  $\alpha$  ||| Syria's Western-backed opposition on Saturday rejected a Russian offer  
(b) ' $\beta$  1 || to assist them against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group  
(c) +2 || and dismissed Moscow's call for new elections. |||

2 (a) 1 ||| "Russia is bombing the Free Syrian Army  
(b) +2  $\alpha$  || and now it wants  
(c) ' $\beta$   $\alpha$  || to cooperate with us,  
(d) + $\beta$  || while it remains committed to Assad? |||

3 (a) "1 ||| We don't understand Russia at all!"  
(b) 2 || said Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Saoud, a spokesman for the Division 13 rebel group. |||

4(a)  $\alpha$  ||| Moscow began an aerial campaign in Syria on September 30, saying  
(b) " $\beta$  || it was targeting ISIS and other "terrorists". |||

5.(a)  $\alpha$  ||| But moderate and Islamist rebels say  
(b) " $\beta$  1 || they have been the target of Moscow's strikes,  
(c) +2  $\alpha$  || and that the campaign is intended  
(d) x $\beta$   $\alpha$  || to prop up President Bashar al-Assad's regime  
(e) + $\beta$  || rather than eradicate ISIS. |||

6 (a) simplex Samir Nashar, a member of the Syrian National Coalition, the opposition's main political body, was equally dismissive of an alliance between moderate rebels and Russia.

7 (a) "1 + $\beta$  ||| "Instead of talking about their willingness to support the Free Syrian Army,  
(b)  $\alpha$  || they should stop bombing it,  
(c) 2 || " he told AFP. |||

8. (a) simplex "Eighty percent of the Russian strikes are targeting the FSA."

9(a)  $\alpha$  ||| The comments came  
(b) x $\beta$   $\alpha$  || after Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Saturday  
(c) " $\beta$   $\alpha$  || that Moscow was ready  
(d) x $\beta$  || to support Syria's "patriotic opposition, including the so-called Free Syrian Army, from the air". |||

10 (a) 1 |||"The main thing for us is to approach the people fully in charge of representing these or those armed groups fighting

- (b) “2 || he told Rossiya 1 television station. |||
- 11 (a) “ $\alpha$  ||| Lavrov also told the station  
(b)  $\beta$  || that he hoped to see political progress in Syria and a move toward new elections. |||
- 12 (a) “1  $\alpha$  ||| "I am convinced  
(b) “ $\beta$  1 || that most serious politicians have learned their lessons  
(c) +2 || and with regards to Syria a correct understanding of the situation is developing,"  
(d) 2 || he said. |||
- 13(a)  $\alpha$  ||| "This gives us hope  
(b) “ $\beta$   $\alpha$  || that the political process will move forward in the foreseeable future, by using outside players,  
(c)  $x\beta$  || to have all Syrians sit at the negotiating table." |||
- 14(a) “1 ||| "Of course, it's necessary to prepare for both parliamentary and presidential polls,"  
(b) 2 || he added. |||
- 15(a)  $\alpha$  ||| Nashar said  
(b) “ $\beta$  1 || the proposal of new elections now was absurd  
(c) +2  $\alpha$  || and accused Moscow of trying  
(d) + $\beta$  || "to circumvent the demands of the Syrian people for Assad's departure". |||
- 16 (a) “1  $\alpha$  ||| "The Russians are ignoring the real facts on the ground, with millions  
(b)  $x\beta$   $\alpha$  || who have been displaced inside and outside Syria,  
(c)  $x\beta$  || where cities are destroyed every day,"  
(d) 2 || he said. |||
- 17(a) clause simplex "What elections are they talking about holding under such circumstances?"
- 18(a)  $\alpha$  ||| Syria last held presidential elections in June 2014,  
(b)  $x\beta$  || with Assad re-elected for a seven-year term with 88.7 percent of the vote. |||
- 19 (a) 1 ||| The election was dismissed by the opposition  
(b) +2 || and condemned internationally. |||
- 20(a) 1 ||| The country last held parliamentary elections in May 2012,  
(b) +2  $\alpha$  || and it is in theory due  
(c)  $x\beta$  || to hold its next legislative vote in 2016. |||

- 21(a) “ $\beta$   $\alpha$  ||| Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shukri have agreed  
(b)  $x\beta$  || to continue cooperation in order  
(c)  $xy$  || to help find a political solution to the Syria conflict,  
(d)  $\alpha$  || the Russian Foreign ministry said on Saturday. |||
- 22(a)  $\alpha$  ||| In a separate telephone conversation later on Saturday, Lavrov and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif agreed  
(b)  $x\beta$  || to strengthen their cooperation  
(c)  $xy$  || to bring stability and security to the Middle East. |||
- 23 (a) “ $\beta$  1 ||| The telephone conversation was at Moscow's request  
(b) +2 || and followed Lavrov's talks with the United States, Saudi Arabia and Turkey about Syria in Vienna on Friday,  
(c)  $\alpha$  || the ministry said in a statement on its website. |||

**Taxis in both articles**

| Taxis     |            | AJE Text | ARE Text |
|-----------|------------|----------|----------|
| Hypotaxis | Projection | 8 (47%)  | 11 (42%) |
|           | Expansion  | 9 (53%)  | 15 (58%) |
|           | Total      | 17 (74%) | 26 (63%) |
| Parataxis | Projection | 3 (50%)  | 6 (40%)  |
|           | Expansion  | 3 (50%)  | 9 (60%)  |
|           | Total      | 6 (26%)  | 15 (37%) |

**Logico-semantic relations**

| Logico-semantic relations | Sub-categories | AJR Text  | ARE Text   |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Projection                | Locution       | 7 (63.6%) | 14 (82.3%) |
|                           | Idea           | 4 (36.3%) | 3 (17.6%)  |
|                           | Total          | 11 (48%)  | 17 (41%)   |
| Expansion                 | Elaboration    | 2 (16.6%) | 0          |
|                           | Extension      | 5 (41.6%) | 12 (50%)   |
|                           | Enhancement    | 5 (41.6%) | 12 (50%)   |
|                           | Total          | 12 (52%)  | 24 (59%)   |

**Basic Clause Complex analysis of AJE and ARE News Texts**

| Clause complexes         |          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|
|                          | AJR Text | ARE Text |
| No. of words in text     | 354      | 551      |
| No. of sentences in text | 12       | 23       |
| No. of ranking clauses   | 35       | 61       |
| No. of clause            | 0        | 3 (13%)  |



|  |           |            |
|--|-----------|------------|
| <b>simplexes</b>                             |           |            |
| <b>No. of clause complexes</b>               | 12 (100%) | 20 (86.95) |
| <b>No. of clause complexes of 2 clauses</b>  | 4 (33%)   | 7 (35%)    |
| <b>No. of clause complexes of 3 clauses</b>  | 5 (42%)   | 6 (30%)    |
| <b>No. of clause complexes of 4 clauses</b>  | 3 (25%)   | 6 (30%)    |
| <b>No. of clause complexes &gt;4 clauses</b> | 0         | 1 (5%)     |

The tables display the results of clause complex analysis for both texts. This last table shows a difference in the proportion of words to sentences (by dividing number of words by the number of sentences): **29.5 AJE** news article and **23.9 in ARE** news article. **ARE** text uses a larger number of words to communicate more with readers and make the event more telling.

The table of Taxis displays relations of interdependency in both texts. As the table shows, the number of tactic relations are more than the number of sentences. This happens due to the layering and nesting.

Most of the paratactic relations in the **ARE** Text are composed of extensions. This indicates that **ARE** uses many extensions to refer to the succession of events (clause 1, 2, 5, 12, 15, 19, 20 and 23) to make the readers feel conscious of what happened. In **AJE** article, all the paratactic expansions are also extensions (clauses 2,4,6) to indicate how the actions are made up in the text.

Both texts used different proportions of taxis and lexico-semantic relations. Al-Jazeera.net text exhibits around (74%) of hypotaxis and (26%) of parataxis whereas Al-Aarabyia.net article displays about (63%) for hypotaxis and (37%) for parataxis. However, compared to its size, **AJE** text employs more hypotaxis (74%) than **ARE** text which shows only (63%) of its clauses. Both texts prefer using hypotactic relations than paratactic ones so as to provide their readers with the central theme of the event. My interpretation of the **AJE** text with regards to its use of more hypotaxis than **ARE** Text is that it has fewer number of sentences than **ARE** text and it tries to bring the reader closely to the main sense without much more details. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014: 520) mention the functions of tactic relations as saying “*But the idealized function of the paratactic structure is to represent the wording; whereas with hypotaxis the idealized function is to represent the sense, or gist.*” Hypotaxis requires the reader to pay more attention to comprehend the text meaning than parataxis. Eggins (2004:338) explains that “*Hypotaxis is generally more common in written text because dependency relations require more care by the writer to construct and more effort by readers to interpret than parataxis. The hierarchic organization of information demanded by hypotaxis also offers the writer a resource for offering readers a more closely controlled logic between events.*”

Regarding the subcategories of projections and expansions, both texts behave similarly with slight differences. Projections in

both articles tend to use locutions more than idea as the percentage (**AJE TEXT** :63.6% and **ARE TEXT** :82.3%) shows respectively. This tendency is used to tell the readers exactly who says what to whom to the readers (quoting) and to explain what others say (reporting). Expansion also adopts a similar style. Enhancement and extension are the clear preferences in expansion highlighting the sequential and causal relations in the occurrence of story.

#### IV. REGISTER ANALYSIS: FIELD, MODE AND TENOR

The elements of context (field, tenor and mode) determine the choice of register which indicates the degrees of formality in language use. “Bye and large, characteristics of the field predict experiential meanings, those of the tenor predict interpersonal meanings, and those of the mode predict textual meanings” Halliday (1985). Matthiessen *ibid* mention the register as “*A variety of language determined by a particular set of values of the context; it is determined by what the speaker is doing socially. The principle controlling variables are field [of discourse] (type of social action), tenor [of relationship between speaker and listener] (role relationships), and mode (symbolic organization).*”

The three variables of register will be mentioned briefly.

Field refers to the subject matter or topic of discourse. It answers the question: “What is happening?”. Matthiessen et al (2010:95) have stated that “*Field is concerned with what’s going on in context; “what’s going on” covers the activity and the domain of experience. The activity is the social and/ or semiotic process that the interactants in the context are engaged in. The domain of experience is the field of discourse that they range over—the subject matter, or “topic”.*”

Tenor refers to the participants in a speech situation and the social relation existing between the addresser and the addressee including relations such as formality (Formal/Informal), or power (commander /soldier), Affect (degree of like, dislike or neutrality). Matthiessen (2010:217) mentions that “Tenor systems in context resonate with **interpersonal** systems in language”.

Mode is the symbolic organization of the text, and it refers to the channel of communication “The mode of discourse is realized by the textual function of language, which organizes our experiential and interpersonal meanings into a linear and coherent whole,” (Butt et al, 2003: 39).

| Register     | AJE Article  | ARE Article  |
|--------------|--|--|
| <b>Field</b> | The article is about the Russian willingness to offer help to Syrian rebels to fight ISIL  | The article is about the rejection of the Russian offer to Syrian rebels to fight ISIS.  |
| <b>Tenor</b> | This website news article addresses different range of people concerned about Syria war and those people are usually English-speaking. The | The ARE article also addresses the same concerned people. Writers do not take an authoritative stance only informing readers about the event. Information is |

|             |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|
|             | vocabulary used here are formal and mainly political terms. The interpersonal views are not imposed in the article.  | provided in a relatively objective manner. |
| <b>Mode</b> | As clauses show, both articles are written texts that use only declarative sentences to provide information. Lexicogrammatical choices do not impose any views on the reader. Tenor and field are linked to achieve the texture. |  |

## V. NOMINALIZATION AND AMBIGUITY

Halliday considers that there are two kinds of expressions: congruent, also called non-metaphorical; and incongruent, or metaphorical. Generally, it is considered that people, places and things are realized by nouns; actions by verbs; circumstances are realized by prepositional phrases and adverbs, and so on. This relationship is normal. The way we use the language differs and the meaning may be realized differently. This different realization constitutes the grammatical metaphor.

Halliday (1985: 321) states that “The selection of metaphor is itself a meaningful choice, and the particular metaphor selected adds further semantic features”. Metaphor is one of the most interesting phenomena in this language system. In order to get the real meaning of the metaphors, we need to put them in their proper contexts. Halliday (1994: 340) provides an easy and simple concept of metaphor as “**a word is used for something resembling that which it usually refers to**”.

Consider the following examples:

### ARE text

- I am convinced that most serious politicians have **learned their lessons...**
- ...by **using outside players**, to have all Syrians sit at the negotiating table.

### AJE text

- .... the two men had also discussed **tapping the potential** of other countries in the region to **push the political process** forward.
- Russia wants Egypt and Iran **to play a role** in bringing a solution to the conflict in Syria....

In these examples, metaphors are “**learned their lessons...**”, “**using outside players...**”, “**tapping the potential...**”, and “**to play a role...**”. they are all transferred from concrete to abstract senses.

**Grammatical metaphor** means a substitution of one grammatical class, or one grammatical structure by another. For example, *Moscow call* instead of *Moscow called*. This means that the metaphorical bearer is not a word but a normal utterance of an expression.

Halliday (1985) divides the grammatical metaphors into two types: the first is the *ideational* type, that reflects the *field*, and the other is the *interpersonal* one, that reflects the *tenor*. Grammatical metaphor can cause lexical density and syntactic ambiguity as can be noticed from the sentences above.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This paper compares two news articles from news websites: **AL-Jazeera.net** and **AL-Arabyia.net**. The two news articles are about the same event related to Russian intervention in Syria and how it is perceived by the Syrian rebels.

The articles are addressed to the same type of readership. Hence, both articles display the same technique in reporting and use the same written mode. Most of the declarative clauses are Finite and refer to actions took place in the past.

As can be seen in the analysis, both articles are written texts that use basically declarative sentences to provide information. Coherence and cohesion are achieved by a linkage of elements of both field and tenor.

Analysis of clause complex of both articles show that they exhibit different proportions of taxis and lexico-semantic relations. Al-Jazeera.net text exhibits around (74%) of hypotaxis and (26%) of parataxis whereas Al-Aarabyia.net article displays about (63%) for hypotaxis and (37%) for parataxis. Hypotactic relations have been used more than paratactic ones in both articles so as to provide the readers with the central theme of the event since hypotaxis helps the writer to make events logically connected. Eggs (2004:338) state that “*Hypotaxis is generally more common in written text because dependency relations require more care by the writer to construct and more effort by readers to interpret than parataxis. The hierarchic organization of information demanded by hypotaxis also offers the writer a resource for offering readers a more closely controlled logic between events.*”

Finally, Systemic Functional Grammar can be used as an effective tool to study and compare news texts.

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#### Appendix 1

- [1] ALJAZEERA.NET TEXT by www.Al Jazeera.net on October 24, 2015
- [2] Russia offers Free Syrian Army air strikes against ISIL
- [3] Russian FM Sergey Lavrov says he is ready to work with the opposition forces and the US against the armed group. Russia's Foreign Minister says his country is ready to support the Free Syrian Army (FSA) with air strikes and cooperate closely with the US in fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group and other factions.
- [4] Are Russia and the US escalating the war in Syria?
- [5] Sergey Lavrov's offer on Saturday was immediately rejected by Syrian rebel factions, which dismissed the idea they could cooperate with Russia while it supported President Bashar al-Assad.
- [6] "Russia is bombing the Free Syrian Army and now it wants to cooperate with us while it remains committed to Assad? We don't understand Russia at all," said Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Saoud, a spokesman for the Division 13 rebel group, according to the AFP news agency.
- [7] Russia launched an air campaign in late September ostensibly against ISIL and other "terrorist" groups, but the FSA say most of the air strikes are targeting them and other moderate opposition groups.
- [8] Samir Nashar, a member of the Syrian National Coalition, the opposition's main political body, said "80 percent" of strikes had hit the FSA.
- [9] "Instead of talking about their willingness to support the Free Syrian Army, they should stop bombing it," he said.

- [10] Russian-brokered talks
- [11] The offer of air strikes in support of the FSA came as Lavrov and US Secretary of State John Kerry spoke on about organising talks between the Syrian government and the opposition.
- [12] In a telephone conversation held at the request of the US side, the Russian foreign ministry said on its website that the two men had also discussed tapping the potential of other countries in the region to push the political process forward.
- [13] Lavrov also spoke to his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif about the need to strengthen their cooperation in order to bring stability and security to the Middle East.
- [14] Russia wants Egypt and Iran to play a role in bringing a solution to the conflict in Syria, which has raged on since 2011.

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#### ALARABYIA.NET TEXT By

www.Al Arabiya.net on October 24, 2015

#### Syrian rebels reject Russian help against ISIS

Syria's Western-backed opposition on Saturday rejected a Russian offer to assist them against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group and dismissed Moscow's call for new elections. "Russia is bombing the Free Syrian Army and now it wants to cooperate with us, while it remains committed to Assad? We don't understand Russia at all!" said Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Saoud, a spokesman for the Division 13 rebel group.

Moscow began an aerial campaign in Syria on September 30, saying it was targeting ISIS and other "terrorists".

But moderate and Islamist rebels say they have been the target of Moscow's strikes, and that the campaign is intended to prop up President Bashar al-Assad's regime rather than eradicate ISIS. Samir Nashar, a member of the Syrian National Coalition, the opposition's main political body, was equally dismissive of an alliance between moderate rebels and Russia. "Instead of talking about their willingness to support the Free Syrian Army, they should stop bombing it," he told AFP. "Eighty percent of the Russian strikes are targeting the FSA."

The comments came after Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Saturday that Moscow was ready to support Syria's "patriotic opposition, including the so-called Free Syrian Army, from the air". "The main thing for us is to approach the people fully in charge of representing these or those armed groups fighting terrorism among other things," he told Rossiya 1 television station. Lavrov also told the station that he hoped to see political progress in Syria and a move toward new elections. "I am convinced that most serious politicians have learned their lessons and with regards to Syria a correct understanding of the situation is developing," he said. "This gives us hope that the political process will move forward in the foreseeable future, by using outside players, to have all Syrians sit at the negotiating table." "Of course, it's necessary to prepare for both parliamentary and presidential polls," he added. Nashar said the proposal of new elections now was absurd and accused Moscow of trying "to circumvent the demands of the Syrian people for Assad's departure".

"The Russians are ignoring the real facts on the ground, with millions who have been displaced inside and outside Syria, where cities are destroyed every day," he said. "What elections are they talking about holding under such circumstances?" Syria last held presidential elections in June 2014, with Assad re-elected for a seven-year term with 88.7 percent of the vote. The election was dismissed by the opposition and condemned internationally. The country last held parliamentary elections in May 2012, and it is in theory due to hold its next legislative vote in 2016.

#### Cooperation with Egypt and Iran

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shukri have agreed to continue cooperation in order to help find a political solution to the Syria conflict, the Russian Foreign ministry said on Saturday. In a separate telephone conversation later on Saturday, Lavrov and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif agreed to strengthen their cooperation to bring stability and security to the Middle East.

The telephone conversation was at Moscow's request and followed Lavrov's talks with the United States, Saudi Arabia and Turkey about Syria in Vienna on Friday, the ministry said in a statement on its website.

