

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

In the current era of rapid progress in news media, everyone can easily access the latest news to gain information. As the primary source of information, news media has the power to shape our understanding of the world by creating narratives that can become a tool for controlling the flow of information, especially public opinion. However, readers frequently encounter disinformation, much of which stems from media bias (Rodrigo-Ginés et al., 2024). This underscores how news media influence public understanding of current issues, sometimes manipulating perceptions through biased narratives. Furthermore, these narratives created do not only reflect the facts that occur in the field but rather through information bias or diction propaganda processes which have their own purpose, so that they can benefit or harm a particular group about an issue that aligns with their own beliefs. To comprehend the information presented in the media, it is crucial to understand how social events are reported and to recognize the potential for bias in news reporting.

One of the issues that is widely known all over the world and with high attention is the Israel-Palestine conflict. This conflict has lasted for about a century and is currently in its seventy-fifth year of occupation in Palestine (Shahzad et al., 2023). It provides a wealth of information and is arguably the most vehemently debated. This means that it has not been resolved without any resistance to attacks launched by Israel. Until the most serious escalation point, Hamas (Islamic

Community Resistance Movement) carried out "Operation Tufan Al-Aqsa" which was a surprise Hamas attack on Israel on October 7 breached the Gaza-Israel border wall and penetrated the Gaza Strip, bordering nearby settlements and Israeli military bases. This marks the first significant breach of Israeli territory by Hamas since the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the largest-scale attack on Israel since the 1973 Yom Kippur War (Republika, 2023). In response, this escalation has a snowball effect by generating bigger attention worldwide and giving rise to various public reactions, including demonstrations, boycotts, and humanitarian aid.

Therefore, the news media has different views regarding the facts found, where the same issue can be reported in different ways with their respective purposes. One of the ways to uncover their point of view on the news reported is by using critical discourse analysis (CDA). Through critical discourse analysis, how the texts are composed can be observed to see how they influence the reader, and the reader must be aware of the hidden information conveyed by the maker (Cahyaningsih & Pranoto, 2021). Therefore, it is intended to dismantle the biased representation of the information.

Regarding the sensitivities in making media biased, the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera*, prominent representatives of Western and Middle Eastern media, respectively, are key sources for analyzing media bias, which might have different views. This study analyzed the coverage of Hamas attack, which only focus on textual analysis of Richardson's (2007) tools to analyze the lexicalization of the text, referential strategies used to name actors, and predication strategies employed to describe the event taken in portraying Hamas's surprise attack on

Israel. The news topics were chosen as this issue became a big issue which also triggered other protests in several countries until now, thus influencing public opinion.

Although there is a multitude of studies that investigated online newspapers in general and those related to the Israel-Palestine conflict in particular, there is no similar studies have been conducted critical discourse analysis on the official remarks released in Hamas Surprise Attack on Israel to the best of the researcher's knowledge. Therefore, this study filled that gap by examining the coverage of this issue by highlighting the textual features.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the explanation of the research background, the research questions focus on how news coverage of Hamas's surprise attack on Israel is represented, those are:

1. How are the actors framed in the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* coverage the Hamas's Surprise Attack on Israel?
2. How are the events framed in the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* coverage the Hamas's Surprise Attack on Israel?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research on Hamas's Surprise Attacks on Israel of the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* news articles are:

1. To analyze the framing of actors in the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* news articles on Hamas's Surprise Attack on Israel.

2. To analyze the framing of events in the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* news articles on Hamas's Surprise Attack on Israel.

1.4 Research Limitations

This research focused specifically on comparing four news articles, consisting of two articles from the *New York Times* article entitled “*The Attack on Israel Demands Unity and Resolved*” and “*One Year Later*” and two articles from the *Al Jazeera* article entitled “*What Happened in Israel? A Breakdown of How Hamas Attack Unfolded*” and “*One Year of Israel’s war on Gaza: Key Moments since October 7*”. The two articles were published on October 9, 2023, and another two on October 7, 2024. These times were chosen because the articles published on October 9, 2023, were the first articles published by each website as an immediate response reporting Hamas’s attack and alongside the articles published on October 7, 2024, one year later, the subsequent attack to examine the evolution of the media narratives. The researchers downloaded the articles on the official websites of the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera*. The analysis of this study had limitations in seeking to find out the textual analysis of Richardson’s (2007) which is a tool from critical discourse analysis by Fairclough (1995) to examine the lexicalization of word choice, reference to actors involved in the event, and predication used to describe the event taken in portraying Hamas's surprise attack on Israel.

1.5 Research Significances

The significances of this research are:

1. Theoretical Significance

As a result of the research on critical discourse analysis, this study contributes as a learning resource or one of the references for other researchers who are interested in understanding critical discourse analysis in news and the application of Fairclough's theory and Richardson's analytical tools.

2. Practical Significance

This research aims to help readers understand that media can shape and change their point of view toward the facts of the event. Critical discourse analysis also has a significant role in improving critical thinking, and critical literacy skills, as well as awareness of critical language in reading text, especially news text. Significantly, to raise readers' awareness of how news is represented, uncovering biases, one-sided narratives, and hidden meanings through the actors and events presented, especially in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict regarding the Hamas Surprise Attack on Israel in the *New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* news articles. Additionally, it is crucial to act as citizens with good critical language awareness when reading news texts. The researcher hopes the findings in this research can contribute to the study of all language users.

1.6 Key Terms of the Research

CDA : An analytical approach that examines how language use reflects and influences socio-political contexts, such as cultural differences, ideologies, and power structures (Amaireh, 2024).

Lexicalization : The choice of specific words or phrases to convey societal values or ideological positions (Haspelmath, 2024).

Referential strategy : This strategy identifies individuals or groups of people based on social categories (Ahmed, 2020).

Predicational strategy : This strategy refers to assigning qualities to the events that describe social reality negatively or positively (Ramanathan et al., 2020).