

Representation of Social Actor in the News Reporting of *Aljazeera Arabic* and *BBC Arabic* on Gaza War Oct 7, 2023: Theo van Leeuwen's Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract: *This article discusses the news coverage of the Gaza conflict presented in Arabic. News narratives are understood as ideological, political, non-neutral discourse practices and so on. This study is a critical discourse analysis of news from two mainstream news agencies representing the Middle East (Al-Jazeera Arabic) and the West (BBC Arabic) regarding the war that has been going on since October 7, 2023. The paradigm used in this study is socio-semantics initiated by Theo van Leeuwen. News narratives, for van Leeuwen, are a field for social actors to seize the public discourse stage. There are two main strategies called (a) exclusion and (b) inclusion that are always carried out by the editorial team in their journalistic work. The findings that can be concluded are that BBC Arabic, as a representation of Western society, tends to side with Israel and ignores Palestinian civilians. On the other hand, Al-Jazeera Arabic is more proportional (balanced) in telling the story of the events involving Palestine-Israel. Al-Jazeera Arabic is also more humanistic as seen from how they focus more on the weak side, namely the Gaza civilians who are the real victims of the war.*

Keywords: *Gaza, BBC Arabic, Al-Jazeera Arabic, Critical Discourse Analysis, Theo van Leeuwen*

Abstrak: Artikel ini membahas pemberitaan konflik Gaza yang disajikan dalam bahasa Arab. Narasi berita dipahami sebagai praktik wacana yang ideologis, politis, tidak netral dan sebagainya. Penelitian ini merupakan analisis wacana kritis (critical discourse analysis) terhadap pemberitaan yang bersumber dari dua kantor berita arus utama yang mewakili Timur Tengah (Al-Jazeera Arabic) dan Barat (BBC Arabic) seputar perang yang berlangsung sejak 7 Oktober 2023 silam. Paradigma yang diteladani dalam studi ini adalah sosio-semantik yang digagas oleh Theo van Leeuwen. Narasi berita, bagi van Leeuwen, adalah medan aktor-aktor sosial merebut panggung publik wacana. Terdapat dua strategi utama yang disebut (a) eksklusi dan (b) inklusi yang senantiasa dilakukan oleh redaksi dalam kerja jurnalisme mereka. Temuan yang bisa disimpulkan BBC Arabic, sebagai representasi masyarakat Barat cenderung berpihak ke Israel dan mengabaikan warga sipil Palestina. Sebaliknya, Al-Jazeera Arabic lebih proposional (berimbang) dalam mengisahkan peristiwa yang melibatkan Palestina-Israel tersebut. Al-Jazeera Arabic juga lebih humanis dilihat dari bagaimana mereka lebih menitikberatkan pada pihak yang lemah, yakni masyarakat sipil Gaza yang menjadi korban sesungguhnya dari perang tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Gaza, BBC Arabic, Al-Jazeera Arabic, Analisis Wacana Kritis, Theo van Leeuwen

Introduction

This study is a critical discourse analysis (CDA) examining news coverage of the Gaza conflict, which began on October 7, 2023. The focus is on war narratives regarding the Palestine-Israel conflict presented in Arabic. The news sources come from two mainstream media outlets, each representing specific socio-political interests. The study limits its scope to Gaza War narratives from newspaper coverage between October 7, 2023, and November 28, 2023. The analyzed narratives come from international newspapers that generally publish in both English and Arabic, including media from both the Middle East and the West. It is widely known that news on wartime violence in Gaza has, for decades, been a primary issue in global politics. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict narrative is often criticized by various parties due to the inevitable news bias, which is a logical consequence of discourse (and discursive practices) that are constructive, political, and non-neutral.^{1,2} This study aims to clarify the discursive confusion through linguistic features within news narratives or the depiction of specific representations of the conflict by involved social actors.

Several reasons underscore the importance of this study: approaching the end of 2023, the Israel-Palestine conflict has entered a new phase, accompanied by different dimensions from previous periods. It is not only the intense global attention to the suffering of Gaza's residents, particularly women and children, but also the widespread condemnation from various global communities directed at Netanyahu's administration. Demonstrations in cities that are the heart of Western civilization, such as London, Manchester, New York, and others, signal something that cannot be overlooked. Additionally, the stance of Western countries (especially Europe) that have reversed their position, even severing diplomatic ties with Israel, is notable.

These events (demonstrations and government political stances) are interpreted as a shift in the global discourse map, particularly among Western communities, in their view of the long-standing conflict in "the Promised Land" ongoing since 1948. The presence of social media (especially platforms like Twitter/X) has contributed to the shift in global discourse surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict. For years, the international public has relied on narratives dictated by canonical American and British media, such as *The Guardian*, *BBC*, *The Times London*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, which are often accused of Zionist affiliation and bias.³ Social media has become a new field where alternative narratives emerge, widely influencing the global perspective on the issue and the suffering of Palestinian civilians due to Israel's inhumane military actions under the pretext of fighting Hamas terrorists.

¹ Elya Munfarida, "Analisis Wacana Kritis Dalam Perspektif Norman Fairclough," *KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* 8, no. 1 (2014): 1-19, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v8i1.746>; Haryatmoko Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi, Dan Penerapannya* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2016).

² Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi, Dan Penerapannya*.

³ Mohammedwesam Amer, "Critical Discourse Analysis of War Reporting in the International Press: The Case of the Gaza War of 2008-2009," *Palgrave Communications* 3 (2017): 1-11, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-017-0015-2>.

The wartime violence in Gaza in 2023 appears to be a turning point in global community skepticism toward Israel. The spread of discourse, including video clips or textual narratives, showing Zionist military forces allegedly bombing hospitals, schools/universities, and even places of worship (mosques and churches) has severely impacted Israel's image. The high number of Palestinian fatalities, primarily women and children, further adds to the Zionist's bloody record. In short, this situation is a paradox for Zionism, which has long been supported by Western media narratives, typically published in English, about the Gaza conflict. The shift in global discourse confirms that news narratives as discourse constructions cannot be considered value-neutral.

With regard to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a discursive cluster, critical discourse analysis (CDA) is used as a scientific method because this approach has a clear political pretension (Kress, 1990). The methodological agenda of this paradigm becomes highly relevant for examining war coverage narratives. CDA tends to advocate for change, as stated by Fairclough⁴ that "*the existing social reality in which discourse is related in particular ways to other social elements such as power relations, ideologies, economic and political strategies and policies*".^{5,6} The concept of CDA serves as an analogy for the research motive in analyzing war narratives in the form of news reports by a press institution. However, it is essential to clarify that this research does not aim to blame any party; its substantial goal is to reveal the factors influencing the reporting of the Gaza War from October 7, 2023, as the conflict's onset, to November 28, as the end date of the Hamas-Israel ceasefire.

Considering some CDA models, this study draws on van Leeuwen's socio-semantic paradigm.⁷ The conceptual framework offered by van Leeuwen provides a set of principles and concepts through representational mechanisms. KhosraviNik mention the terminology 'socio-semantics' as "*certainly lays the ground for an explanatory framework for Critical Discourse Analysis studies*".⁸ The socio-semantic method enables the examination of constructive language schemes in the context of "*reveals specific attitudes, ideologies and worldviews which are encoded through language*".^{9,10} Meanwhile, narratives in news coverage of the conflict over the land

⁴ Norman Fairclough, "What Is CDA? Language and Power Twenty-Five Years On," 2014, https://www.academia.edu/8429277/What_is_CDA_Language_and_Power_twenty-five_years_on.

⁵ Amer, "Critical Discourse Analysis of War Reporting in the International Press: The Case of the Gaza War of 2008–2009"; Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi, Dan Penerapannya*.

⁶ Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi, Dan Penerapannya*.

⁷ Theo Van Leeuwen, "The Representation of Social Actors," in *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: Routledge, 1996), 32–70.

⁸ Majid KhosraviNik, "British Newspapers and the Representation of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Immigrants between 1996 and 2006" (Lancaster, 2008), <https://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/7909/>.

⁹ Vasiliki Adampa, "Reporting of a Violent Crime in Three Newspaper Articles: The Representation of the Female Victim and the Male Perpetrator and Their Actions: A Critical News Analysis" (United Kingdom, 1999), <http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/pubs/clsl/wpapers.htm>.

¹⁰ Pauzan Pauzan, "A Text Analysis of Discourse Semantics of Social Context or Lexicogrammar (An Analysis on Text in Context of Meaning Beyond the Clause)," *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics* 27 (2016): 1–12.

claimed by both Palestinians and Israelis accuse Western media, especially American and British press, of being the main culprit by committing framing crimes related to the conflicting interests of both sides in Gaza. The Zionist side claims that Western media coverage is biased due to the narrative focus highlighting Palestinian civilian casualties. On the other hand, the Palestinian side and its supporters argue that Western media portrays Palestinian attacks as the starting point of the cycle of violence, which is then met with Israel's wartime violence in response.¹¹

Literature Review

A number of studies have been conducted in the past decade regarding media coverage of the Palestine-Israel conflict, including those using the CDA method, such as Hashish et al.,¹² Heni & Chandra,¹³ Ahmed et al.,¹⁴ Suwarno & Sahayu,¹⁵ Amer,¹⁶ Allen,¹⁷ Almeida,¹⁸ Barkho,¹⁹ and other, or non-CDA such as Kaposi,²⁰ Ozohu-Suleiman,²¹ Gavriely-Nuri,²² Cordesman & Moravitz,²³ and others. However, this

¹¹ Anthony H Cordesman and Jennifer Moravitz, *The Israeli-Palestinian War: Escalating to Nowhere. In: Cooperation with the Center for Strategic and International Studies* (Washington, DC: Praeger Security International, 2005).

¹² Yousef Y Abu Hashish, Ahmed A Ismail, and Husam A Abusaada, "BBC Coverage of the Aggression on Gaza 2021: Critical Discourse Analysis of Arabic and English Versions," *Komunikator* 15, no. 1 (2023): 55–67, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18196/Jim.18508>.

¹³ Adnania Nugra Heni and Oktiva Herry Chandra, "The Representation of Palestinian-Israeli Conflict in Online News Articles: A Critical Discourse Analysis," *Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan, Kesastraan, Dan Budaya* 12, no. 1 (2022): 134–47, <https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/lensa/article/view/9464>.

¹⁴ Mubdir Shihab Ahmed, Teiseer Mohammed Abed, and Karama Hassan Hussain, "Israeli-Palestinian Struggle: A Critical Discourse Analysis," *International Journal of Health Sciences* 6, no. S8 (2022): 3676–88, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS8.12928>.

¹⁵ Suwarno Suwarno and Wening Sahayu, "Palestine and Israel Representation in the National and International News Media: A Critical Discourse Study," *HUMANIORA* 32, no. 3 (2020): 217–25, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.52911>.

¹⁶ Amer, "Critical Discourse Analysis of War Reporting in the International Press: The Case of the Gaza War of 2008–2009."

¹⁷ Peter Allen, "A CDA Approach to Analysing BBC TV's Newsnight Reports on the Israel-Palestine Conflict" (University of Leicester, 2013), https://www.academia.edu/4729925/A_CDA_Approach_to_Analysing_BBC_TV's_Newsnight_Reports_on_the_Israel_Palestine_Conflict.

¹⁸ Eugenie P Almeida, "Palestinian and Israeli Voices in Five Years of U.S. Newspaper Discourse," *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011): 1586–1605.

¹⁹ Leon Barkho, "The BBC's Discursive Strategy and Practices Vis-à-Vis the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," *Journalism Studies* 9, no. 2 (2008): 278–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700701848337>.

²⁰ Dávid Kaposi, *Violence and Understanding in Gaza. The British Broadsheets' Coverage of the War* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

²¹ Yakubu Ozohu-Suleiman, "War Journalism on Israel/Palestine: Does Contra-Flow Really Make a Difference?," *Media, War & Conflict* 7, no. 1 (2014): 85–103, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635213516697>.

²² Dalia Gavriely-Nuri, *The Normalization of War in Israeli Discourse, 1967-2008* (United States: Lexington Books, 2012).

²³ Cordesman and Moravitz, *The Israeli-Palestinian War: Escalating to Nowhere. In: Cooperation with the Center for Strategic and International Studies*.

study differs from previous studies on the Israel-Palestine conflict. The distinctions are evident in several aspects, including: (1) this research focuses on newspapers from international media typically published in both English and Arabic, using van Leeuwen's socio-semantic conceptual framework, particularly the core concepts and representational categories. News presented in a specific language is treated as its own version; (2) most previous studies have concentrated on American or British media, which are usually presented in English and accused of being major Zionist supporters (Ozohu-Suleiman, 2014). Conversely, this study employs van Leeuwen's CDA approach, focusing on the representation of social actors in news coverage presented in Arabic; and (3) this research does not limit its analysis to linguistic features, discursive strategies, and representational categories alone. Instead, specific depictions and patterns of representation in media coverage form a fundamental part of the research analysis.^{24,25}

Over the past decade, numerous studies have examined the Israel-Palestine conflict, including critical discourse analyses on the war in Gaza. Laelasari (2023), for instance, in *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Israel and Palestine Conflict Reported In Aljazeera and USA Today's News Articles* analyzed the news narratives of Al-Jazeera and USA Today regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict that took place between May 10-21, 2022. The study aimed to explore how both news sites constructed texts about the ceasefire between Israel and Palestine, as well as the social cognition and social context in *Al-Jazeera* and *USA Today's* coverage of the ceasefire. Using van Dijk's CDA theory, the researcher concluded that each news website had a different style in presenting the Israel-Palestine ceasefire, as shown in differences in headlines, news narrative structure, social cognition in news schema, and social context related to power practices and discourse influenced by access. The findings indicated differing stances between the news agencies on the conflict, with Al-Jazeera appearing more neutral in covering the ceasefire, while USA Today implicitly emphasized loyalty to one party (the Israel).

Hashish et al. in *BBC Coverage of the Aggression on Gaza 2021: Critical Discourse Analysis of Arabic and English Versions*, examined trends in BBC's reporting on the Gaza Strip aggression in 2021.²⁶ This study compared the Arabic and English versions of BBC news to assess the balance and bias in reporting across the two languages. The comparison was conducted at the Headline level, Multimedia level, Event Narrative level, and Source level. CDA methods were used to reveal the ideological foundations of both versions, highlighting editorial policy trends toward Palestine and Israel.

Arqoub & Ozad in *Israeli Media Gatekeeper during Gaza War 2014 Coverage: Case of Study of Yeditho ahronotho Newspaper*, focuses on the third Gaza war in 2014, a 51-day conflict between Palestinian resistance groups (Hamas) and the

²⁴ Almeida, "Palestinian and Israeli Voices in Five Years of U.S. Newspaper Discourse."

²⁵ Kaposi, *Violence and Understanding in Gaza. The British Broadsheets' Coverage of the War.*

²⁶ Abu Hashish, Ismail, and Abusaada, "BBC Coverage of the Aggression on Gaza 2021: Critical Discourse Analysis of Arabic and English Versions."

Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) that began on July 7, 2014.²⁷ This research examines the media gatekeeping of the 2014 Gaza War. The Hebrew-language online newspaper, Yedioth Ahronoth, serves as the case study. This study applies gatekeeping theory using a quantitative methodology and content analysis as data collection techniques. The main findings include Yedioth Ahronoth's use of engaging framing in presenting information, where the newspaper emphasizes Israeli issues and perspectives, disregards Palestinian news sources, and relies instead on Israeli sources. This includes portraying Israel as a war victim and downplaying Palestinian losses.

Amer in *Critical discourse analysis of war reporting in the international press: the case of the Gaza war of 2008–2009*, analyzes the representation of political social actors in media coverage of the 2008–2009 Gaza War from four international newspapers: *The Guardian*, *The Times London*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*.²⁸ Using van Leeuwen's CDA method, the study identifies substantial similarities in representational patterns across the four newspapers. Specifically, they highlight Israel's role in achieving a ceasefire, with Israeli actors largely assigned active roles, while Palestinians are portrayed as rejecting a ceasefire, with Hamas members as primary representatives. This representation suggests that the Gaza War coverage was influenced by the newspapers' political orientations and their liberal and conservative ideologies.

Joharta in *The Transitivity-Passivization Interface In Two Online Newspapers About The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, examines media bias in the third Gaza war of 2014 by comparing *Antara News* and the *New York Post*.²⁹ This study uses critical discourse analysis to draw a comparison between the two newspapers (Indonesian and American) in delivering their reporting intentions. Through transitivity and passivization analysis, it is found that both newspapers emphasized different points regarding the conflict, even while referencing the same events. These differences are evident in verb choices, information sources, and word constructions within the reports. Implicitly, the narratives of both news outlets reflect constructive framing, showcasing each newspaper's stance on the issues reported.

Sabido in *Palestine in the British press: A Postcolonial Critical Discourse Analysis*, examines the representation of the Israel-Palestine conflict by the British press, including *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *the Daily Herald* or *The Sun*, and *the Daily Mirror*.³⁰ The study is based on the premise that media representation in Britain should be analyzed in connection with Britain's role as a postcolonial power. Focusing on Britain's colonial and postcolonial relationship with this conflict, the research draws on findings from Postcolonial Critical Discourse Analysis of four British national newspapers at different historical points in the conflict. Findings

²⁷ Omar Abu Arqoub and Bahireefe Ozad, "Israeli Media Gatekeeper during Gaza War 2014 Coverage: Case of Study of Yedioth Ahronotho Newspaper," *Media Watch* 10, no. 1 (2019): 22–40, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15655/mw_2019_v10i1_49.

²⁸ Amer, "Critical Discourse Analysis of War Reporting in the International Press: The Case of the Gaza War of 2008–2009."

²⁹ Edwin Bagus Joharta, "The Transitivity-Passivization Interface in Two Online Newspapers About The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" (Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, 2016).

³⁰ Ruth Sanz Sabido, "Palestine in the British Press: A Postcolonial Critical Discourse Analysis," *Journal of Arab and Muslim Media Research* 8, no. 3 (2015): 1–36, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1386/jammr.8.3.199_1.

indicate that the categorization of Palestinians, Israelis, Jews, Zionists, and Arabs as agents of political violence evolved over time, as actions and agents of violence were perceived differently depending on the dominant political discourse of each period. This contextualization of the conflict provides insights into how the British press constructed various ideological positions regarding the conflict and the extent to which Britain's influence remained visible in its later coverage.

From the studies mentioned above, it can be concluded that no research has yet focused on the Gaza war based on bilingual newspaper reporting (Arabic-English) sourced from two different news agencies—one from the Middle East and the other from the West. Most studies have examined news narratives primarily from British or American media, which are predominantly in English and cater to a global readership. This study, however, is focused on news written in two different language versions, something not yet explored. By analyzing news sourced from newspapers published in two language versions from different regions, this research aims to uncover differences in representation within international news coverage.

Theoretical Review

Discourse is always a form of social practice.^{31,32,33} In discursive practice, language is considered fundamental because linguistic features provide a set of symbolic systems that highlight cultural aspects (including news narratives) within social reality, especially influenced by domination and exploitation maintained through culture and ideology.^{34,35} Language becomes a battleground in discursive practice. Thus, structuring language means recognizing the role of ideology in social practice. By nature, language represents aspects of the world to establish, maintain, or alter relationships of power or exploitation.

Theo Van Leeuwen developed a theory he called socio-semantics, a discourse analysis model primarily intended for critical readings of narrative constructions in media news texts. Van Leeuwen's theoretical paradigm aims to detect the presence of social actors (an individual or group) whose existence is often marginalized in news narratives.³⁶

News text narratives serve as a field of public discourse. For van Leeuwen, news narratives are sources of power imbalances, as a dominant group often controls the interpretation and meaning of events. Meanwhile, at the same time, other groups,

³¹ Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Discourse as Social Interaction: Discourse Studies A Multidisciplinary Introduction* (London: SAGE, 1997), 258–84.

³² Munfarida, "Analisis Wacana Kritis Dalam Perspektif Norman Fairclough."

³³ Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi, Dan Penerapannya*.

³⁴ Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor, and Simeon J Yates, *Discourse Theory and Practice* (London: Sage Publication Ltd, 2001).

³⁵ Haryatmoko, *Critical Discourse Analysis (Analisis Wacana Kritis): Landasan Teori, Metodologi, Dan Penerapannya*.

³⁶ Mu'thia Mubasyira, Yumna Rasyid, and Miftahulkhairah Anwar, "Application of Theo Van Leeuwen's Critical Discourse Analysis in Liputan6.Com News on the Dissolution of BSNP," *IJLECR: International Journal of Language Education and Cultural Review* 7, no. 2 (2021): 162–69, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21009/IJLECR.072.15>.

typically positioned as antagonistic counterparts in the discourse, find themselves in a disadvantaged position. Ironically, these latter groups are gradually placed as objects of meaning by the more powerful group. The marginalized are compelled to accept *nrino in pandum* often portrayed unfavorably beyond reason. *Liyan* (*others*) often appears as groups such as laborers, farmers, fishermen, illegal migrants, women, and others. On global issues, this "Other" extends to the Third World, people of color, Islam, Muslims, terrorists, jihadists, and most notably, the Palestinian people—a nation without a clear path to resolution in the ongoing Palestine-Israel conflict, which reignited after October 7, 2023. This paper specifically positions the Palestinian people as the unfortunate marginalized group.

The socio-semantic paradigm formulated by van Leeuwen aims to detect the positioning of social actors within news text narratives. Van Leeuwen introduces two critical discourse analysis models known as representing *Social Actors* and *Social Action*. Leeuwen views that the term 'representation' is pointed at how individual, group, perception, and or opinion are presented on the news.^{37,38} For van Leeuwen, news is a narrative of events that relies on representation. Representation itself becomes a complex field of social reality that must be presented through linguistic constructions. Mass media involves parties such as producers and readers, where the use of words, sentences, and grammatical aspects holds specific meanings when received by readers. These elements, from the media producer's perspective, are referred to as discourse strategies. Social actor representation is closely related to how an individual or group (as an actor, agent, or object of action) is represented in news narratives. Structurally, news narratives inherently position one party in a lower role, while another is placed in a superior one.

In this grammatical and structural imbalance, van Leeuwen offers two narrative text reading strategies: (1) exclusion and (2) inclusion. In the socio-semantic conceptual framework, van Leeuwen sees that the representation of events presented in news narratives always involves (inclusive) or excludes (exclusive) social actors to align with the interests and objectives of powerful stakeholders, such as financiers or media owners, represented by the writer or editor. The inclusion and exclusion of social actors are closely related to the target audience for discourse production. Exclusion can be understood as the masking, neglect, or even erasure of actors as part of the narrative in a social action event. This strategy is implemented through various linguistic mechanisms available within the language system. Conversely, inclusion means positioning, highlighting, or focusing on an individual or group of social actors at the center of the event (as the main highlight) through a text narrative presented explicitly.³⁹

³⁷ Barzan Faizin, "The Representation of Social Actors in Political Editorial Reports of an On-Line Indonesian National Newspapers," *KHAZANAH HUKUM* 4, no. 3 (2022): 230-42, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15575/kh.v4i3.20813>.

³⁸ Wida Wahyuni, Jufri Jufri, and Azis Azis, "Analisis Representasi Aktor Perempuan Dalam Berita Media Daring: Pendekatan Eksklusif Berdasarkan Model Theo van Leeuwen," *Jurnal ONOMA: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra* 10, no. 2 (2024): 1593-1605, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v10i2.3517>.

³⁹ Faizin, "The Representation of Social Actors in Political Editorial Reports of an On-Line Indonesian National Newspapers."

Discussion

As previously mentioned, this study focuses on uncovering how two actors in the Gaza conflict, the IDF (Israel) and Hamas (Palestine), are represented in the reporting by two prominent Arabic news sites, Al-Jazeera Arabic and BBC Arabic. The representation of these two actors is analyzed by examining various discourse strategies employed by the two news sites, broadly classified into two main categories: exclusion strategies and inclusion strategies.

This research analyzes 12 news articles, selected evenly from both news sites, based on six themes: (1) Hamas attacks on Israel, (2) Israeli attacks on Gaza, and (3) the impact of the Israel-Hamas war. The following section outlines the range of discourse strategies used by these two news sites and explains how Israel and Hamas, as the two main parties in the Gaza conflict, are represented either by concealing (exclusion) or highlighting (inclusion) them. The presentation of the analysis follows the thematic sequence mentioned above.

(a) News Analysis of *Al-Jazeera* concerning Hamas's Attack on Israel

For the purpose of analysis, the news selected for review on the topic of the Hamas attack on Israel is titled as follows:

كيف نجحت حماس في تضليل إسرائيل وتغيير قواعد الاشتباك؟

"How did Hamas manage to deceive Israel and shift the battlefield?"

The news about the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, uses several discourse strategies in representing the two conflicting actors, Israel and Hamas, as described below:

1. Narrative Exclusion

Van Leeuwen's model of critical discourse analysis indeed tends to show how parties and actors (individuals or groups) are intertwined within news texts. Exclusion is understood as a textual strategy involving the removal of actors through various linguistic mechanisms.⁴⁰ The exclusion process emphasizes social actors, whether individuals or groups, who are 'considered unimportant' or 'protected parties' in a news text, based on the discursive agenda of a mass media outlet, which naturally has its own ideology or objectives.⁴¹ This exclusion process has two main subcategories: suppression and backgrounding. Exclusion serves as a means of omitting certain parties in a text to shift the reader's attention away from them to something else, as seen in the following two data from news content.

اختيار تاريخ العملية له دلالة رمزية لدى العمق العربي والإسلامي لارتباطه بانتصار

أكتوبر المجيد

The selection of this operation's date holds symbolic significance for the Arab and Islamic world, as it is associated with the remarkable victory in the October War.

⁴⁰ Theo Van Leeuwen, *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁴¹ Aris Badara, *Analisis Wacana: Teori, Metode, Dan Penerapannya Pada Wacana Media* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2014).

The two previous news indicate that an exclusion strategy is evident in the form of suppression-nominalization, a news strategy that deliberately omits the actor by using nouns instead of verbs. In the data above, this can be seen in the use of the word اختيار, which is a noun meaning ‘selection’ or ‘choice.’ The actor being concealed here is Hamas. The focus of the news then shifts to the timing of the Hamas attack on Israel (October 7, 2023), evoking a similar event on October 6, 1973, rather than on the Hamas forces themselves.

2. Narrative Inclusion

When an individual or a group of people appears in the narrative of a news event, the news writer or editor intentionally positions them (social actors) in a specific way. These social actors are highlighted (framed) on the main stage in relation to a particular action.⁴² Therefore, when readers engage with (read/analyze) a news text, it is crucial to identify who the ‘agent’/‘actor’ is, what the ‘purpose’ is, and whether there are grammatical roles in the news text that are congruent with the social action. The argument is that news writers or editors frequently reallocate participants in the text, giving some participants the role of ‘agent’ (i.e., instigator), the party responsible for performing an action, or, alternatively, positioning them as recipients of the action. This manipulation of positioning is intended to achieve a specific goal by emphasizing one participant more than another.⁴³

Inclusion is a linguistic construction used to present social actors narratively in a news text.⁴⁴ To examine the linguistic features and discursive practices implied in the narrative text of news, an analysis of social actor representation using inclusion strategies is necessary to ensure that the presence of an individual or group as social actors is intentionally displayed or presented and/or positioned in a particular way in the news narrative as the basis of discourse. In other words, inclusion is a textual strategy closely related to the presence of entities that exist within the news narrative.⁴⁵

The strategy of inclusion can be realized through the use of words, sentences that contain information, or narrative sentence arrangements presented in a textual construction.⁴⁶ In this context, van Leeuwen creates a complex and rigid dichotomous category system, such as the category pairs of activation-passivation, personalization-impersonalization, determination-indetermination, genericization-specification, abstraction-objectivation, and so on. However, this study limits itself to five

⁴² Faizin, “The Representation of Social Actors in Political Editorial Reports of an On-Line Indonesian National Newspapers.”

⁴³ Van Leeuwen, *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*.

⁴⁴ Eriyanto Eriyanto, *Analisis Wacana: Pengantar Analisis Teks Media* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2001).

⁴⁵ Ratih Sapdiani, Alfian Purnama, and Teti Sobari, “Domination of the Inclusion of Theo van Leeuwen in Tribun Jabar Newspaper ‘Sekarang Rumah Saya Harus Tak Bau Pesing Lagi,’” *JLER: Journal of Language Education Research* 2, no. 3 (2019): 35–47, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22460/jler.v2i3.p35-47>.

⁴⁶ Putri Ayu Wulandari, Zamzani Zamzani, and Else Liliani, “Critical Discourse Analysis of Theo Van Leeuwen Inclusion Video Podcast on the Gritte Agatha Youtube Channel,” *IJETZ: International Journal of Education and Teaching Zone* 2, no. 2 (2023): 341–48, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.57092/ijetz.v2i2.130>.

dichotomous category pairs, divided into (1) role allocation and (2) substitution, as will be explained below. The selection of these categories is based on relevance and their applicability in examining how social actors are represented in the narrative text of news reports.⁴⁷ In short, the inclusion strategy is a news strategy that uses linguistic constructions to present or highlight certain actors or figures. Since they are presented and highlighted in such a way, they become the core of the news and the focus of the readers' attention. Inclusion itself has many forms, five of which are assimilation, individualization, activation and passivation, and functionalization.

Assimilation presents actors as participants or a group of people by referring to their community or social group of origin. Assimilation (the binary of individualization) is a strict category within the specification category of social actor representation. The specification of social actors can be categorized into individual or personal representation, called individualization. Conversely, assimilation portrays social actors as participants or a group. The main emphasis in the assimilation strategy remains on the social actor as a single entity or individual, rather than as a community or institution. However, communities, groups, nations, and so forth will receive both direct and indirect impacts from the actions of social actors.

Essentially, assimilation is a narrative strategy for presenting social actors in a non-specific way. The actors are merely shown by their community or social group of origin.^{48,49} The more general the linguistic features used in portraying the subject of the news (social actors), the greater the likelihood of narrative ambiguity. This assimilation strategy contrasts with the rules and principles of journalism, which ideally narrate information concisely and clearly.⁵⁰ Therefore, the assimilation strategy concerning social actors can shape opinions in readers' minds, leading to generalization and identification. In short, groups or communities of social actors will be affected by the actions.

Van Leeuwen states that assimilation is classified as either aggregation or collectivization.⁵¹ Aggregation quantifies groups of participants, treating them as statistics. Meanwhile, collectivization does not specify the number of actors, meaning there are no social actor statistics. In news about the Hamas attack on Israel, the assimilation strategy is evident in four news data, as follows:

فاجأت كتابت الشهيد عز الدين القسام، الذراع العسكرية لحركة المقاومة الإسلامية (حماس)،
الاحتلال الإسرائيلي بعملية عسكرية

⁴⁷ Achmad Arinal Qowim and Agwin Degaf, "Kanjuruhan Tragedy in the New York Times: A Critical Discourse Analysis," *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 13, no. 3 (2024): 468–76, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v13i3.66957>.

⁴⁸ Van Leeuwen, *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*.

⁴⁹ Eriyanto Eriyanto, *Analisis Isi: Pengantar Metodologi Untuk Penelitian Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial Lainnya* (Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group, 2011).

⁵⁰ Nanik Yuliana, Adi Syaiful Muchtar, and Moh Atikurrahman, "Kuasi Narasi, Kuasa Gramatika: Strategi Inklusi Van Leeuwen Dalam Pemberitaan Mahasiswa Tolak Kenaikan Harga BBM: Narrative Quality, Gramatic Power: Van Leeuwen's Inclusion Strategy in Student Reporting Rejecting The Increase of Fuel Price," *TOTOBUANG: Jurnal Ilmiah Kebahasaan Dan Kesastraan* 11, no. 1 (2023): 29–42, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26499/totobuang.v11i1.427>.

⁵¹ Van Leeuwen, "The Representation of Social Actors."

Brigade Syahid Izzuddin Al-Qassam, The military wing of the Islamic resistance movement (Hamas) surprised the Israeli occupation with a military operation

It is evident that Al-Jazeera Arabic uses the assimilation strategy to present the actor Hamas through various entities. There are three words or phrases used, all of which lead readers to associate Hamas as the actor of the attack. In data (1), the phrase *كتائب الشهيد عز الدين القسام* (Brigade Syahid Izzuddin Al-Qassam) is used.

Individualization a discourse strategy that presents social actors individually or one by one. In a news report, this strategy is evident in the following sentences:

عملية عسكرية أطلق عليها قائد أركان المقاومة محمد الضيف اسم "طوفان الأقصى

... A military operation named 'Al-Aqsa Storm' by the Head of the Resistance Division, Muhammad al-Daif.

Al-Jazeera Arabic represents Hamas as an actor by featuring key figures within this armed group, such as Muhammad Ad Daif, who is the Head of Hamas' Resistance Division, as shown in the news data above.

Utterance Autonomisation is another form of objectivation where social actors are presented based on the utterances (statements or speech) of specific parties. This applies, for instance, in a 'report' or 'survey.' As in the example below, utterances are often given a sort of impersonal authority and frequently show connectivity to high-status statements and official spokespersons.

This discourse strategy presents actors through their speech or statements. Al-Jazeera Arabic uses this strategy to present Hamas figures who are interviewed, as shown in the news data below:

وقال قاسم للجزيرة نت إن توقيت العملية مرتبط بـ"التكتيكات العسكرية للمقاومة في سياق الرد الطبيعي على جرائم الاحتلال بحق الأقصى والمسرى، فلم يعد مقبولا السكوت عن المشاهد اليومية لإجرام الاحتلال وقطعان المستوطنين في القدس وباحات المسجد الأقصى المبارك."

Qassem told Al-Jazeera Net that the timing of the operation is linked to "the resistance's military tactics in the context of a natural response to the occupation's crimes against Al-Aqsa and Al-Masra, as it is no longer acceptable to remain silent in the face of the daily crimes by the occupation and settler groups in Jerusalem and the courtyards of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque."

The previous news indicates that Hamas is presented through the statements or speech of one of their key figures, Hazem Qassem. Al-Jazeera Arabic employs this strategy using the phrase: *وقال قاسم للجزيرة نت* (Qassem said to Aljazeera.net - data 1).

Instrumentalisation is a discourse strategy that represents social actors by referring to the instruments or tools they use in carrying out activities. Instrumentalization is a form of objectivation where social actors are depicted with references pointing to the instruments or tools they use to perform their activities. Al-Jazeera Arabic uses this to feature important figures within Hamas, as shown in the following news data:

ظهر محمد الضيف في تسجيل صوتي للإعلان عن عملية "طوفان الأقصى"، كاشفاً أن المقاومة نجحت في الدقائق الأولى من إطلاق حوالي 5 آلاف صاروخ نحو مواقع ومطارات وتحصينات للاحتلال الإسرائيلي.

Mohammed Deif appeared in an audio recording to announce the "Al-Aqsa Flood" operation, revealing that the resistance successfully launched around 5,000 rockets within the first few minutes toward sites, airports, and strongholds of the Israeli occupation.

Based on the news above, Al-Jazeera Arabic highlights the actor Hamas through one of its figures, Muhamed Ad Dhoef, by mentioning the audio recording medium he used to convey his views.

Functionalization is a discourse strategy in news reporting that focuses on representing specific social actors by referring to their jobs or activities. This category of functionalization refers to the activities, occupations, and roles of social actors, such as 'interviewer,' 'waiter,' 'correspondent,' 'guardian,' 'payee'; secondly, through nouns derived from other nouns indicating a place or tool closely associated with an activity, for example, 'pianist,' 'mountaineer'; thirdly, by combining nouns indicating a place or tool associated with an activity with very general categorizations such as 'man,' 'woman,' 'person,' 'people' (sometimes functionalized like 'assistant'), as in 'cameraman,' 'chairman'.

In the analyzed news report, Al-Jazeera Arabic uses this strategy to present Israeli actors through its commentators, as seen in the following news data:

وقال إنه يتفق مع مراقبين إسرائيليين شبهوها بمصيبتهم في "حرب أكتوبر" 1973 من حيث التوقيت وعنصر المفاجأة

He said that he agreed with Israeli analysts who compared this situation to the disaster they experienced in the "October War" of 1973, particularly in terms of timing and the element of surprise.

It is evident here that Al-Jazeera Arabic represents Israeli actors by featuring Israeli commentators who view the impact of the Hamas attacks in October 2023 as comparable to what they experienced during the Hamas attacks in October 1973. Referring to the discourse strategies presented above, the following table maps how Al-Jazeera Arabic frames the IDF (Israel) and Hamas (Palestine) as social actors in the Gaza war that began on October 7, 2023.

Table 1: The frequency of exclusion and inclusion discourse in Al-Jazeera's news about the Hamas attack on Israel

Actor	Nominalization	Assimilation	Individualization	Utterance	Instrumentalization	Functionalization
Israel	1	1	-	-	-	1
Hamas	1	4	4	2	1	-
Total	13,33%	33,33	26,67	13,33	6,67	6,67

The table above maps the strategies used by Al-Jazeera Arabic in presenting Israel and Hamas as the two main actors of the Gaza war in the news about the Hamas attack on Israel. There are six discourse strategies used, five of which

(nominalization, assimilation, individualization, utterance autonomization, instrumentalization, and functionalization) are inclusion strategies deliberately designed to present and highlight these two actors. Only one strategy, nominalization, is categorized as an exclusion strategy that intentionally omits these actors.

The table also shows that Al-Jazeera Arabic predominantly portrays Hamas as the main actor of the attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. Al-Jazeera Arabic does this by using linguistic structures that refer to Hamas as an armed group (assimilation), featuring key figures in Hamas' leadership structure (individualization), referring to and quoting their opinions (utterance autonomization), mentioning the media they use in their discourse (instrumentalization), and specifying their activities and social functions (functionalization). Meanwhile, Israel, as the other actor in the conflict, is presented by Al-Jazeera Arabic mainly in terms of the psychological trauma caused by the October 7, 2023, attack, highlighted through the perspectives of Israeli commentators.

(b) Analysis of News *BBC Arabic* concerning Hamas's Attack on Israel

The news selected for discussion in the topic of Hamas attacks on Israel:

هجوم حماس المباغت حطم استراتيجيات إسرائيل الخاطئة - صحف إسرائيلية

Hamas's sudden attack disrupted Israel's flawed strategy – Israeli Media

In the news about the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023, BBC Arabic chooses to use several discourse strategies in representing the two conflicting actors, Israel and Hamas, as described below:

1. Narrative Exclusion

Exclusion as a form of removal or exception of certain parties within the text, with the aim of diverting the reader's attention away from them, was used by BBC Arabic in framing Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. This exclusion takes various forms, as will be elaborated in the following section. Nominalization as a form of social actor omission within discourse structure was utilized by BBC Arabic in framing Hamas's attack on Israel, as evident in the following news as follows:

أن أحد الخيارات الممكنة للقضاء على حماس هو شَنّ عملية برية ضخمة ومعقدة

One possible option for dismantling Hamas is to launch a large-scale and complex ground operation

In the news data above, the narrative highlights the reporting related to the measures taken by Israel in response to the Hamas attack. In this context, BBC Arabic chooses sentences with nominal structures that do not mention the actor, which is Israel. Although in the Indonesian translation these words become verbs, their original form in Arabic is a noun that does not include a subject or actor. The impact of this discourse strategy is that Israel is not presented as the actor in the following actions: eliminating Hamas, large-scale military operations, relocating Gaza residents to Egypt and Gulf countries, considering all vehicles to be carrying Hamas fighters, and the pressure to eliminate Hamas.

Passivization as a form of exclusion strategy to remove certain social actors within a discourse was used by BBC Arabic in reporting on the Hamas attack on Israel, as evident in the following news as follows:

لن يُسمح بدخول أي مساعدات من أي نوع إلى غزة.

No aid will be allowed to enter Gaza

It is known that the party controlling the entry and exit routes to and from the Gaza Strip is Israel. No one is allowed to enter or leave without their permission. However, with the use of passive verb structures in the news, Israel does not appear as the actor behind the ban on the entry of any aid into the Gaza region.

1. Narrative Inclusion

Inclusion as a reporting strategy that features or highlights certain actors in the news was used by BBC Arabic to position Israel and Hamas in the discourse on the Gaza war. In this strategy, all parties are presented and highlighted in such a way that they become the core of the news and the focus of the reader's attention. Inclusion itself has many forms, five of which are assimilation, individualization, activation and passivization, and functionalization, as shown in several news data that will be elaborated on in the following section.

Assimilation in BBC Arabic reporting is one form of inclusion strategy to present Israel and Hamas as actors in the Gaza war by referring to their community and social group origins, as shown in the following news, as follows:

والآن وبعد هذه الحرب من الضروري على الحكومة الإسرائيلية أن تحدد استراتيجياتها وتفهم جميع الخيارات.

And now, after this war, it is important for the Israeli government to establish their strategy and understand all the available options.

In the above news, BBC Arabic, in terms of actions that need to be taken in response to the Hamas attack, portrays Israel by referring to social groups or entities within it that must take action, namely the Israeli Government (2) and the Israel Defense Forces (2).

Individualization is also an inclusion strategy used by BBC Arabic in reporting related to the Hamas attack on the territory claimed as Israel. In the discourse on Israel responding to the Hamas attack, BBC Arabic also uses the strategy of individualization by featuring Israel through its prominent figures.

"ومقال للرئيس السابق لمجلس الأمن القومي الإسرائيلي جيورا آيلاند، بعنوان "حان الوقت لاقتلاع حماس"

An article by former Israeli National Security Council Chairman, Giora Eiland, titled "Time to Uproot Hamas"

Giora Eiland is an experienced and influential figure in Israel. BBC Arabic features him by mentioning his name and position to emphasize the urgency of measures to eliminate Hamas.

Genericisation as a discourse strategy presents social actors in a simple (generic) or general manner, not specifically by mentioning names, positions, or group entities as in assimilation and individualization. In van Leeuwen's model of discourse analysis, genericisation (also specification) is a representation by a news writer or editor relying on generic (i.e., general) or specific references when depicting an individual or group of social actors. Generic references here involve mentioning social actors in a generalized manner (generalisation). Meanwhile, specific references refer to an identifiable person or group of people.⁵² Social actors here are real individuals from reality. This generic strategy is evident in the following BBC Arabic news as follows:

لا يمكن لإسرائيل أن تكتفي بأي هدف آخر غير القضاء على حركة حماس العسكرية الحاكمة في قطاع غزة، وتحقيق أي شيء أقل من ذلك سيكون بمثابة فشل إسرائيلي.

Israel cannot be satisfied with any goal other than destroying Hamas' military power in the Gaza Strip. Achieving anything less than that would be considered a failure for Israel.

In the previous news, BBC Arabic presents the two main actors of the Gaza war, namely Israel and Hamas, in a generic or general manner. Both Israel and Hamas are represented in a generic or general way without being embellished with words referring to any specific entity of either side. Referring to the reporting discourse strategies outlined above, the following table maps how BBC Arabic frames Israel and Hamas as actors in the Gaza war in its coverage of the Hamas attack on Israel.

Table 2: The frequency of exclusion and inclusion discourse in BBC Arabic's news about the Hamas attack on Israel

Actor	Nominalization	Assimilation	Individualization	Generication	Passivization
Israel	5	2	1	6	1
Hamas	-	-	-	5	-
Total	25 %	10 %	5 %	55 %	5 %

The table above maps the strategies used by BBC Arabic in presenting Israel and Hamas as the two main actors in the Gaza war in the news about the Hamas attack on Israel. Five discourse strategies were used, two of which, nominalization and passivization, are exclusion strategies that deliberately do not present or highlight these two actors in the news. Meanwhile, the other three strategies, individualization, genericisation, and passivization, fall into inclusion strategies that deliberately feature these two actors in the reporting.

The previous table also shows that in the discourse on the planned countermeasures for the Hamas attack, BBC Arabic presents Israel with a generic inclusion discourse strategy, where Israel is represented in a general manner without details of various elements and entities within it. Similarly, Hamas, in the position of being the object of Israel's countermeasures, is portrayed by BBC Arabic in a generic

⁵² Theo Van Leeuwen, "The Representation of Social Actors," in *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis* (London: Routledge, 1996), 32-70..

and general way without details of the internal structure or hierarchy. However, when the discourse involves the details of actions that Israel will take in response to the Hamas attack, such as aid blockades to Gaza, evacuation of Gaza residents to Egypt and Gulf countries, and the assumption that all vehicles are carrying Hamas fighters, BBC Arabic uses an exclusion discourse strategy where Israel is deliberately hidden and not presented as the actor. These actions are narrated using linguistic structures that lack an actor, such as nouns or passive verbs.

Conclusion

The media becomes a battleground for power struggles. Through language, a news story engages in discourse practices as a manifestation of the contest for dominance and power. Organizing language means recognizing the role of ideology through social practice. By nature, language represents aspects of the world to establish, maintain, or change power relationships or exploitation. Narrating events into news becomes a discourse practice using linguistic features to achieve dominance and power. News narratives by news agencies on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict are often criticized by various parties due to the inevitable bias as a logical consequence of constructive, political, and non-neutral discourse (and discourse practices). From the data analysis (Gaza war on October 7, 2023) presented in the previous section (Chapter IV), it is evident that there is a significant difference between Arabic-language media that, on one hand, represents Middle Eastern society (Al-Jazeera Arabic) and media that represents Western interests (BBC Arabic). By utilizing the socio-semantic categories proposed by van Leeuwen to observe, map, and interpret the roles of social actors in news narratives, it is clear that BBC Arabic presents a 'biased' narrative in reporting the relationship between the IDF (Israel) and Hamas (Palestine). This is not the case with Al-Jazeera Arabic, which is more balanced in its portrayal of the relationship between the conflicting parties.

In the category of exclusion strategies, BBC Arabic positions Israel as a passive party while simultaneously positioning Hamas as a provocateur or terrorist. In the minds of BBC Arabic's editors, the catastrophe that befell Gaza residents stemmed from the Hamas attack on Israeli territory and citizens on October 7, 2023. This bias is evident in BBC Arabic's news narratives. When the news narrative pertains to Israeli attacks on Gaza, BBC Arabic tends to use exclusionary grammatical formations. Conversely, if the news involves Hamas's actions, BBC Arabic will frame Israel using specific constructions, through an inclusion pattern in the news narrative. On the other hand, when discussing Gaza, the Palestinian people, and so on, BBC Arabic does not provide a platform for Israel's opponents.

Al-Jazeera Arabic holds a contrasting vision compared to the Western-oriented news agencies mentioned earlier. Al-Jazeera Arabic, in narrating events related to Gaza—such as the city's destruction, the suffering of local residents, and so forth—is more able to give space to the Palestinian side. Through an exclusion pattern, Al-Jazeera Arabic's news narratives focus more on Hamas's resistance, the suffering of local civilians, and so forth. Regarding the IDF and the Israeli government, Al-Jazeera Arabic does not hesitate to refer to them as 'occupiers,' among other terms. Al-Jazeera Arabic also does not hesitate to refer to those killed as 'martyrs' and depict Palestine as the passive party. Additionally, Al-Jazeera Arabic is

not blind to providing a platform for the Israeli side, thus making it feel that this Middle Eastern news agency offers a fairly balanced narrative of the Gaza conflict that began on October 7, 2023.

The endless conflict between Palestine and Israel is akin to a tangled thread. Today's news narratives about Gaza are more or less the same. Through van Leeuwen's socio-semantic paradigm on social actors, the discursive ambiguity through linguistic features in news narratives or specific representations of the conflict involving social actors can be revealed. Representing social actors and representing social actions are dilemmas of social reality that must be presented in linguistic construction. The mass media involves parties such as producers and readers, and the use of words, sentences, and grammatical aspects holds particular meanings when received by readers.

It is no surprise that representation through news narratives reflects the face of a news agency: what their political ideology is, what agenda they are pursuing, who the patrons or parties behind the media are, and so on, can be inferred. This means that the information distributed is not merely to inform the world—but to try to direct the world. Where should this tendency be aimed? All of these are tasks for critical discourse studies to investigate and prove biases that are not aligned with the common good.

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(P-ISSN [2528-0333](#); E-ISSN: [2528-0341](#))

Website: <http://journal.iain-manado.ac.id/index.php/AJP/index>

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Gramatika: Strategi Inklusi Van Leeuwen Dalam Pemberitaan Mahasiswa Tolak Kenaikan Harga BBM: Narrative Quality, Gramatic Power: Van Leeuwen's Inclusion Strategy in Student Reporting Rejecting The Increase of Fuel Price." *TOTOBUANG: Jurnal Ilmiah Kebahasaan Dan Kesastraan* 11, no. 1 (2023): 29-42.
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