

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter encompasses the background of the research, the significance of research, research questions, aims of the research, research methodology, clarification of key terms and the organization of paper.

1.1. Background

In society, mass media play a crucial role in both capturing and shaping realities among them. It does not only encompass all forms of information that are transferred to a large group of people but also create news based on the decision of what and which news to be reported. As asserted by Chomsky (2002, p.27), there are different necessities carried by the media. It shows that the media are not neutral and objective, supported by the different facts of their background and circulation. In addition, Gitlin (1980, p.15) in "*The Whole World Is Watching*", writes that "the media created and amplified impressions of how the world work, that images and narratives were manufactured for consequential reason and purposes of their own." Regarding to the value of subjectivity owned by each media the research makes effort to dismantle the representation of Middle East War's reporting news in different media, precisely, newspapers.

Newspaper itself is a product of a text or discourse which represents the prevailing knowledge at a certain place and time (Foucault, 1996). Discourse, as argued by van Dijk (1998), is a medium which functions as a powerful tool of communication through particular social and political beliefs and practices, ideologies, subject positions, and norms. It includes ways of using, thinking of language and acting over language. Therefore, discourse provides connection between social notions of value and practice either as inputs or outputs (Carling, 2009). In this way, discourse is counted as a social cognition which leads to social action network for van Leeuwen (1993).

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A discourse exists in line with/or opposition to other discourses because each brings its own particular set of ideology. Here, van Leeuwen (2008) reflects the view by proposing concept of re-contextualization in social practices. He believes that elements of social practices can be traced in texts through the process of reconstructing followed by transforming or re-contextualizing.

Discourse as social practices can be re-contextualized through the substitution, deletion, rearrangement and/or addition of the social practice elements which construct the text in embody of specific context. The essence of those elements is the social action networks that can or cannot cause transformations (van Leeuwen, 2009, as cited in Wodak & Meyer, 2009). The categories of actions and the actor, whom they are attributed to, mostly trigger the recontextualization process to allow readers to go beyond the surface structures of text. In addition, van Leeuwen (1993, p.12) argues that “the field structure of a text or set of texts is a recontextualization of the structure of social practice, or set of interrelated social practices”.

From March to May 2011, the conflicts of long-lasting dictatorial leadership in some Middle-Eastern countries became a global political discourse which has attracted Western countries’ attention. One of the conflicting countries is Libya, of which the people fought against their leader, Moammar Khaddafi.

The Libyan civil war, also referred to the Libyan revolution (PBS Newshour, 2011), was preceded by protests in Benghazi beginning on Tuesday, 15 February 2011, which had escalated into a rebellion that spread across the country. The involved protesters were some of the citizens who sued for democracy against his tyranny within more than 30 years. According to Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, however, the reason for the de-militarization was a reaction to the Iraqi War, so that Libya would not be accused of possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) and assumed to face the same fate (Russia Today, 2011).

Regarding the harsh political and military condition thereby, the involvement of other powerful countries were inevitable. The war has invited the United States to lead another invasion, involve its coalition armies and NATO to attack Gaddafi's residence for the sake of 'saving' civilians in Libya (Obama, 2011, as cited in USA Today). All Western countries cut off diplomatic relations with Gaddafi's governance in February and March, followed by applying regulation of Libyan no-fly zone on 17 March (UN Security Council, 2011, as cited in BBC News).

It was getting severe as other Western countries (US, Britain, France and Italy) were encouraged to be involved in the war. Each party (the pros and contras) generated more deaths and insecurity for the people, which was thus, leading to the decease of the Libyan leader himself by the allegedly NTC (National Transitional Council in Libya).

The Libyan war news in 2011 is thus a good issue to be investigated with Critical Discourse Analysis. The analysis may contribute to social change as it provides media representation on news contents both at a national or global level. In relation to the contents, news may create a debatable or pro-contra assumption to the readers in terms of a particular issue.

As suggested, CDA questions the usage of language and the context of its use and what subtext it produces to the text (Fairclough, 1995, as cited in Paltridge, 2000). It offers the opportunity to adopt a social perspective in the cross-cultural research of the media texts and "overtly political agenda" (Kress, 1976), which presents a critical, theoretical and descriptive accounts of texts. Therefore, van Leeuwen (2008) builds a conceptual discourse framework as the re-contextualization of social practice. It refers to a process of transformation of social practices, i.e. actions, performance modes, actors, presentation styles, times, spaces, resources, and eligibility. Consequently, recontextualization can be a powerful tool in transforming particular social or discursive (linguistic) practices and creating a new one (Busch, 2006).

Newspaper articles used are online *USA Today* and *Tripoli Post*. The former newspaper is the United States of America's most frequently read newspaper with total circulation of approximately 2,528,437 visitors (as cited in Infoplease). Though Qaddafi (1977) argued that "The press is a means of expression for society; it is not a means of expression for private individuals or corporate bodies", the war has led the media to have more discretion in either reporting news or providing opinions of the people. As a matter of fact, the latter is included as one of the top rated private media in Libya that represents the conditions in Libya, according to *newswealth.com*.

Those texts on online version of *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post*, from March to May 2011, encompass several social action networks and practices, which allow the analysis on particular hidden meanings represented linguistically. The differed representation will bring contrasted tendencies between *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post*.

Also, through the presentation on their social actors, it is thus possible to reveal their each tendency on representing the US Alliances, in relation to the issue of 2011 war in Libya.

1.2. Research Questions

The research problems are formulated in the following questions:

1. How are social actors represented through social actions on online *USA Today* and *Tripoli Post*?
2. What are social actions attributed to US Alliances on online *USA Today* and *Tripoli Post*?

1.3. Aims of Research

Fundamentally, the research was conducted to uncover the hidden intentions beyond chosen texts as framed in the research problem. Therefore, the framework of critical discourse analysis was applied thoroughly. In

relation to its approaches and strategies, the research aimed to do the following steps:

1. Conduct critical discourse analysis on texts by representing the social actions attributed to US Alliances
2. Unpack the contrasts of social actions (actions and reactions) on online *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post* referring to 2011 War in Libya
3. Reveal the tendencies of *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post* in representing US Alliances in their news reports on 2011 War in Libya

1.4. Significance of Research

The research concerns investigation on the distinctive representation of 2011 War in Libya in the media discourse. The used discourses are articles in *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post* from March to May 2011. Those articles generally delineate the involving actions of America and other Western countries in the Libyan war.

Van Leeuwen's (2008) framework of discourse by representing social actions was applied in the research. The critical discourse analysis is preceded by identifying the categorizations of social actions within texts, as the textual evidence of distinctive social constructions, embedded with dismantling the transformations of each social action. In final sequence, it analyzes the contrasts of *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post* through their social actors in representing 2011 war in Libya, as well as how the tendencies of both media in representing the US Alliances on the issue can be specified.

1.5. Research Methodology

The method employed in the research is descriptive qualitative. It is coherent with the aims of the research due to its functions in analyzing written materials or documentary analysis. Furthermore, it reveals the subtlety and complexity of cases or issues since theory is generated from the

empirical data, and consequently there is 'closeness of fit' between theory and data (Woods, 2006).

The research investigates the representations of War in Libya, conveyed by *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post*, using the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). According to Halliday (1994), there is an interconnection between word classes and their representations by engaging discourse with the social contexts. The interconnection has led van Leeuwen to conceptualize CDA based on discourse as the recontextualization of social practice. The core of social practice is a set of actions (Wodak, 2009, p.148), thus, the elements of social actions and their transformations are embedded in the research. Social actions are analyzed to investigate the relation between actual texts, discursive practices and social contexts that influence.

The further delineations of data collection and analysis are presented below.

1.5.1. Data Collections

The news reports of war in Libya from *USA Today* and *The Tripoli Post*, from March to May 2011, were used as the primary sources. Three articles of each were analyzed and sorted to uncover the tendencies beyond the news representations entitled:

- *President Obama tells Libya's Gaddafi to step down (USA Today)*
- *NATO hits Libyan ships to protect rebel-held port (USA Today)*
- *Obama cites 'responsibility' of U.S. in Libya intervention (USA Today)*
- *NATO: 'No Apologies' For 'Friendly Fire' that Killed Rebels (The Tripoli Post)*
- *US Military Denies Shooting on Civilians (The Tripoli Post)*
- *Barack Obama: 'Al Qathafi Must Step Down; Leave Libya to the Libyan People' (The Tripoli Post)*

1.5.2. Data Analysis

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In analyzing the content of the data, the research applied the analytical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) through representing social actions offered by van Leeuwen (2008, p.68) in his *Discourse and Practice*. His framework has been backgrounded by the preceding transitivity analysis in Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), proposed by Halliday (1994). It focuses on observing language through representation of social actions used in a discourse. The use of social actions itself is inevitably influenced by the social and cultural contexts attributed to the actions.

Analysis on the core of social practices, namely actions, according to Wodak (2009, p.148) provides a more thorough representation of meaning. Three series of step are at least engaged in analyzing the social actions in the discourse. The first step deals with the categorizations of social actions. The main categories include actions and reactions, classified as material, semiotic, behavioural, non behavioural, cognitive and so forth. It is further followed by dealing with the transformations of those social actions, activated and deactivated, agentialized and de-agentialized, concretized and abstracted, as well as single and overdetermined. Eventually, the relation between actual texts, discursive practices and social contexts is investigated. Those series lead to the different interpretation among texts.

1.6. Clarification of Key Terms

Several particular related terms are required to be presented in obvious clarification. Hence, it will lead to in-depth comprehension on the raised problematic issues. Below are some clarified terms in brief statements:

1. Representation is the production of the meaning of concepts in human's mind through language. Hence, it constructs the meaning beyond speech, writing or images as an aspect of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts (Hall, 1997).

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2. Discourse encompasses ways of using language, of thinking and of acting in order to identify a socially meaningful identity (a social network). It functions as a powerful tool to analyze social and political beliefs and practices, ideologies, subject positions, and norms (Carling, 2009).
3. Social Action is a set of actions, which can be represented through various linguistic codes. It can be conducted through different attitudes to the represented social actions (Mazid, 2001).
4. The United States has formal diplomatic relations with most nations. In this paper, the US has several common goals and interests with NATO. Therefore, the social actions referring to President Obama, the US Defense and State Department, Nato and the US Spokesmen constitute the term 'US Alliances'.
5. Tendencies include a representation of a social construct or phenomenon which contributes to assign an identity and the establishment of knowledge. (Fairclough, 2003).

1.7. Organization of Paper

Five chapters are included within the research paper. Each chapter covers several subtopics which favours and completes the major discussions.

The first chapter is **Introduction**. It delineates the background of the research, overview of literature, research questions, limitation of research, aims of research, methodology in conducting the research, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

The second chapter encompasses **Theoretical Framework**. It provides the theories and conceptual frameworks that are applied to support the accomplishment of research problems.

The third chapter presents **Research Methodology**. This chapter discusses the series of procedural step taken in conducting the research. It also presents the supporting tools of analysis completed with the reasons of choosing the procedure.

The fourth chapter depicts the major discussions of the research. It is namely, **Finding and Discussion** of the research. The result of the research and solve of research problems are put forward in the fourth chapter. Furthermore, the discussion and interpretation of the data findings are elucidated within.

Eventually, the last chapter presents the result and conclusion of the research. It consists of **Conclusions and Suggestions**. It also considers several suggestions for further research.