

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents the concluding remarks regarding the exploration of the macrostructures in three texts published by the Arab News and the Tehran Times newspapers to examine the representation of the Iran-Saudi conflict regarding the Minna Hajj stampede of 2015 in Minna, Saudi Arabia. Based on the research findings, this chapter also attempts to provide some relevant suggestions.

5.1 Conclusions

This research is an exploration of the representation of one of the Islamic harsh cases in the media, i.e. the social and political conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia regarding the organization of Hajj. The conclusion is drawn on the basis of the three research problems formulated in Chapter 1, those are (1) how the Iran-Saudi conflict regarding the Mina Hajj Stampede of 2015 is represented in the Arab News newspaper, (2) how the Iran-Saudi conflict regarding the Mina Hajj Stampede of 2015 is represented in the Tehran Times newspaper, and (3) the ways in which the Islamic ideological competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia for taking the Islamic leadership in the Arabic world is represented in the Arab News and Tehran Times newspapers regarding Mina Hajj Stampede of 2015. The representation is explored through macrostructure analysis where each representation reflecting different interests and different agendas (Don & Lee, 2014, p. 702).

With regard to the representation of the Iran-Saudi conflict in the Arab News, it is found that there are two types of representations, namely negative representation of Iran and positive representation of Saudi

Arabia. In other words, the representation is of THEM and US. The negative representation of ‘THEM’ is in three types, namely (a) a political problem maker, (b) a battle loser, and (c) criminals and have anger towards Arabs. These three topics/themes of representations are macro-FACTS that have been formulated from sequence facts in the micro-level. Thus, the representation of the Iranian government as a ‘political problem maker’ and ‘a battle loser’ by the Arab News has been identified from the Iranian political policy attendance in the Middle East, i.e., Bahrain, Syria, and Yemen. On the contrary, the global topic/theme or macro-FACT the ‘criminals and have anger towards Arabs’ is considered as a presupposition of the historical conflicts (discourse conflict) between Saudi Arabia and Iran regarding Hajj, which started in the 1980s.

The positive representation of US is 30% in the global topics/themes in the three texts taken from the Arab News. This occurrence represents the Saudi government positively in three macro-FACTS, namely (a) ‘responsible’, (b) ‘supporter’, and (c) ‘protector’ of the Pilgrimage. The aforementioned positive representations of the Saudi government considered as a response to the Iranian negative discourse towards the Saudi Arabia and Saudi Officials regarding the Mina Hajj stampede, 2015, in Minna, Saudi Arabia.

With regard to the representation of the Iran-Saudi conflict in the Tehran Times, it is found that the representation of the Saudi Arabia government is 66.7%. This representation reflects the ideological thinking of the Iranians towards Saudi Arabia. Therefore, three macro-FACTS representations have been identified in three texts in the Tehran Times, namely the political representation, Islamic representation, and ethical representation. Firstly, the Tehran Times depicts Saudi Arabia as a country who involves in the Middle East’s problems after the Arab Spring; Saudi Arabia had not paid any attention on the Hajj organization; not responsible for the Hajj duties; unable to manage the Hajj crowd. Secondly, is the Islamic representation in which the Tehran Times depicts

the Saudi government as unable to fulfill its Islamic obligations towards the Pilgrims and the pilgrimage; showing negligence and ignorance in managing the Hajj that leads to the huge stampede; accountable for the Hajj stampede, in Minna. Finally, the ethical representation that consists of five representations, namely ‘evasive’ and ‘coward’, which imply the dishonesty between them; Saudi official (prince *Muhammed Bin Salman*) caused the stampede and brought grief to the Islamic world; and Saudi investigations are unreliable.

Regarding the ways in which the Islamic ideological competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia for taking the Islamic leadership in the Arab World, it is found that the representation is in three macro-WAYS, namely (a) the Arab Spring revolutions and uprisings in the Arab World, (b) the Iranian support and intervention in the Middle East, and (c) the Saudi support and intervention in the region’s problems.

With regard to the ideological positions of the newspapers, the study found that the two newspapers encoded a left-wing stance rather than a right-wing stance ideology in their articles. Meaning that, while the ideologies positions were broadly the case, the newspapers’ ideological stances were better characterized in terms of their associations with specific political parties, i.e., Iran and Saudi Arabia. It is also found that the two newspapers identify themselves as knowledge observers, political commentators, and all represent some of their opinions in such a way as to represent them to the reader as FACTS. Representing predictions as FACTS serves engender reader expectation that the predictions will come true, which has the added social function of pressuring politicians into sharing in the opinion expressed as to the best course of action.

It is noted in the macrostructures that, the tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East and more specifically on the Hajj is not for the religious purposes but also for showing their power and competition for the leadership over the Islamic world.

To conclude that the aforementioned global themes/topics can be added to Mottaghi's (2016) study that 'three core factors that have had the most influence on the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran, those are (1) identity differences between the Wahhabism and Shiism; (2) geo-economy of oil and petroleum and (3) geopolitical hegemony in Middle East'

5.2 Suggestions

The study presents two types of suggestions, namely implicative and theoretical. Implicatively, the study suggests the following *Ayat* regarding the discourse of Hajj. The Hajj is a spiritual pilgrimage. Meaning that, the Hajj cannot be Hajj unless a Pilgrim follows the Hajj discursive instructions mentioned in the Holly Quran. Therefore, the pilgrim may spoil his/her Hajj if he/she does one of the three things mentioned in the following *Ayat*:

{الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ
فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ
فِي الْحَجِّ} [سورة البقرة: آية 197]

Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of ihram], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj.

(Musim) haji adalah beberapa bulan yang dimaklumi, barangsiapa yang menetapkan niatnya dalam bulan itu akan mengerjakan haji, maka **tidak boleh rafats, berbuat fasik dan berbantah-bantahan** di dalam masa mengerjakan haji.

Regarding the aforementioned, this research suggests that Iran and Saudi Arabia must not connect the Hajj duties with political ties. The Shi'a-Sunni conflict and the competition for the Islamic leadership

between Iran and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East do not serve for the Muslim unity but destroy the Islamic unity.

With regard to the topic of the conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia in media, the findings of this research raise more questions for further research. To illustrate this statement, further research can concern on the Iran-Saudi ideological conflict in the Middle East, i.e., the case of Yemen. The study can use a microanalysis comparative CDA study between four newspapers, two Arabic newspapers and two European newspapers. Thus, it is expected that the results of such research may reveal how the discourse representation of the Iran-Saudi ideological conflict regarding the case of Yemen will be vary linguistically from one newspaper to another and the change in the role of media in representing the events and states. The study recommended van Dijk (2014) framework of discourse and knowledge for the further study because this approach is considered as a multidisciplinary approach that connects between two concepts, namely discourse and knowledge. Thus, the results can be more explicit, accurate, and objective. Finally, Iran and Saudi Arabia who follow *Shiite-Sunni* sects of Islam, respectively, have long been rivals in the region, but competition has intensified in recent years.

5.3 Closing

To conclude the study, the essential of discourse studies is a contribution to the study of language in use in the social and/or political context. The result of newspapers discourse studies is certainly important in the sense that the analyses expose the cognitive and social strategies used by the people both to express their negative experiences and opinions and to present themselves as kind, tolerant, nonracist citizens. The notion of macrostructures plays an important role in the cognitive model of complex information processes of discourse and explores the global meanings.