CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

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This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem formulation, the objectives and significance of the study, the assumptions, the scope and limitation of the study, the theoretical framework used in this study, and the definitions of key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language as a tool for thinking is used to convey ideas to the readers. To understand a text, the knowledge of grammar, morphology, semantics and phonology of a text is not necessarily enough. The readers need to understand the rhetoric intent, the coherence and the worldview that the author shows in a text (Kaplan, 1990). Mass media have become a part of human life since they play a crucial role in the society. Opinion leaders, newspapers editors have strong effect in shaping issues and on the way how people perceive the world. Newspapers are known as the primary medium of discourse on the international and national issues by presenting events happening around the world.

It is quite common for people to talk about objective and unbiased description in the newspaper, as if the language and texts can reflect pre-existing reality faithfully. As a matter of fact, people do not posses direct access to the world or reality out there (Goatly, 2000:50). A newspaper often presents the news report based on their point of view or specifically tailored to the particular audience. How the reporter frames the news can be the sole information available to his audience and, as a result, can bias the audience in favor of one party, or one solution over another. Fowler (1979) asserts that news reports are never neutral for they carry the power that the writer or speaker expresses to influence the readers or audiences. Thus, language does not merely conceptualize or represent the reality but constructs the reality.

Among the many international conflicts reported by the mass media, the writer is interested in the area of the Israel – Palestine conflict due to their controversial nature; the fact that there have been limited studies on different perspectives in news reports, and particularly, there have not been any studies on the topic of the Israel – Palestine conflict. This Israel – Palestine conflict is controversial in nature because of several reasons. Among them are: first, the conflict roots from the Biblical and Koran history, the latter mentioning Israel as the adversary of

all Moslems; secondly, the world's attitude toward this issue is divided into two hemispheres – one in favor for Israel, while the other is in favor of Palestine. In addition to those two reasons, many historical events also have both direct and indirect influences on this issue (the Crusades, World Wars, global war against terrorism, etc.).

The Israel – Palestine conflict is both simple to understand, yet deeply complex. At the heart of this conflict is a basic idea that both sides believe that they are entitled to the land (known as Israel by the Israelis and Palestine by the Palestinians. Unfortunately, both sides claim the same land; they simply call the land by different names. For religious Israelis Jewish and religious Palestinian Muslims, the belief is deeper still, for both sides believe that God (called Jehovah by the Jews and Allah by the Muslims), gave them the land, and that to give it away or to give it up to another people is an insult to God and a sin. The history of the conflict is much more complicated than the simple explanation above, but the religious and historical differences are very important to this issue. On another level, the reasons for the continual conflict are easy to understand. They have been fighting for over 60 years, and each war, each death, each act of terrorism, only deepens the hatred and the reluctance to give in to the other side.

Historically, the ancient Jews from Biblical times called their land Israel. Modern Jews, and quite a few Christians, believe that in the days of the Bible and the Torah, God gave this land to the ancient Jews (also known as Hebrews), led by biblical figures such as Abraham, Moses, David, and others. About 2,000 years ago, the Roman Empire ruled this area, and in suppressing several Jewish rebellions, the Romans destroyed the Jewish temple in the city of Jerusalem, killed large numbers of Jews, and forced many others to leave their homeland in an exodus called the *diaspora*. Some Jews remained in the area, but large numbers of Jews did not return until the 19th and 20th Century, especially after World War II and the Holocaust.

This is where the real trouble began between the Jews, who began calling themselves Israelis after their old name for their ancient homeland of Israel, and the Arab population of the area who came to be known as Palestinians, after the old Roman and Greek name for the area. In the two thousand years after most of the Jewish population was killed off by the Romans or forced to leave the land, Arabic-speaking Muslims became the dominant ethnic group. According to records of the Ottoman Empire, which ruled Palestine for several centuries, in the year 1900, the population of Palestine was 600,000, of which 94% were Arabs. While many

Arabs were willing to sell land to the incoming Jews, many other Palestinian Arabs were worried about becoming a minority in a country they considered their own.

It is interesting to notice that reports and opinions from one newspaper or magazine to another reflect different ideologies. In order to provide a specific focus for the discussion about the Israel – Palestine conflict, *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* were chosen as the source of data because of these two following reasons: *International Herald Tribune* as an international newspaper based in Paris and partially owned by two major American daily newspapers (*Washington Post* and *New York Times*) is assumed to represent the ideology of the majority of American and European people, while *ArabNews* as the largest Arab-based international daily is assumed to represent the ideology of the majority of Middle-East people.

The conceptual aspects of ideology are not simply reflected in the vocabulary of a language, but they are at work in the grammar and probably more dangerous there precisely because they are more latent (Goatly, 2000:59). The part of the grammar of the clause which is relevant to conceptualization, the representation of the world is called transitivity. Transitivity discusses how events are represented in terms of what is happening, who is responsible for particular actions, how both actions and those responsible are described. Therefore, the writer decided to use the Halliday's Approach to Transitivity because it can be used to analyze ideology and language, especially in news report.

Based on these background considerations, the writer decided to conduct the study of ideology reflected in *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* on the reports of Israel-Palestine conflict based on the Halliday's Approach to Transitivity. This study aims to identify and explain how ideology is constructed and presented through language use in *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* on the news of Israel – Palestine conflict. Emphasis is placed on the construction of ideological discourse using representational processes of transitivity thus revealing the close relation between language and ideology.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

In line with the background of the study, the research questions to be answered by this study are formulated as follows:

- How are the Transitivity Processes constructed in *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* on the news of Israel – Palestine conflict?

- What are the ideologies of *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* on the news of Israel – Palestine conflict as viewed through Halliday's Approach to Transitivity?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

From the above problem statements, this study intended:

- To describe the constructions of Transitivity Processes of *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* on the news of Israel – Palestine conflict.

- To describe the ideologies of *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* on the news of Israel – Palestine conflict as viewed through Halliday's Approach to Transitivity.

1.4 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of this study is able to be used in assisting teachers and learner of English to understand more about the nature of English verbs (in what transitivity processes they are, what participants they pick). Moreover by understanding them, it is expected they would be able to employ the use of these English verbs more accurately.

This study is expected to contribute to the discourse study of English used in news reports, and in addition to that, through the awareness and understanding of the ideological contents in the news reports, it is hoped that newspaper readers in Indonesia can be more critical in reading / listening to news reports in English, especially the ones concerning conflicts.

Furthermore, this study is expected to benefit EFL learners in understanding reading texts, particularly news reports, critically.

1.5 Assumptions

The study is conducted on the assumption that *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* report the news of Israel – Palestine conflict based on their respective ideologies. It is also assumed that *International Herald Tribune* and *ArabNews* are aware of the journalism code of ethics and the key concepts of journalism as proposed by *The Society of Professional Journalists*.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

Due to the limited time and resources, the writer only analyzed 11 (eleven) articles, 7 (seven) articles from *International Herald Tribune* and 4 (four) articles *ArabNews*, within the period of 20 – 23 May 2007. These eleven articles report Israel – Palestine conflict that takes place within that period and cover two topics, *Israeli Woman* and *Palestinian Leaders*. In addition to that, the interpretation is limited to a specific viewpoint, which does not include many other possible theories that might account for the transitivity profile in question (e.g.: culture).

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Halliday (1970:145-150) in his Approach to Transitivity states that language is used to represent a speaker's experience of the world. The expression of that experience involves the configuration of particular meaning components or semantic roles to communicate about happenings (termed Processes), persons, objects, entities involved in those happenings (Participants), and different aspects of those happenings (Circumstances). Further, these components are made manifest via particular lexicogrammar choices, with Processes most usually realized in English by verbal groups (verb phrases), Participants by nominal groups (noun phrases), and Circumstances by adverbials. See the following table:

Table 1.1

Typical function of group and phrase classes

Element	Typical realization
Process	Verbal group
Participant	Nominal group
Circumstance	Adverbial group or prepositional phrase

In relation to the above, it may also be useful to view the elements of the clause not only in terms of groups and phrases, but also in terms of the S-P-C-A structure, as illustrated below:

Table 1.2

Illustration of Subject-Predicator-Complement-Adjunct structure

The student	reads	the book	carefully	in the library.	(sentence/clause)
participant	*process*	*participant*	*circumstance*	*Circumstance*	(transitivity)
nominal group	verbal group	nominal group	adverbial group	prepositional phrase	(class)
Subject	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct	Adjunct	(clause structure)

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The table below outlines the six transitivity processes along with their participants; the round brackets indicate that the second participant is optional.

Table 1.3

The Six processes in Halliday's Approach to Transitivity

Process	Meanings	Participants	Example
Material	actions, events	Actor, Affected, Beneficiary	Jane (act) handed Dick (ben) a waffle (aff)
Mental	perception, emotion, thought	Experiencer, Experience	John (exr) hates cats (exp)
Relational	states, relationship	Token, Value	Tim (tok) is happy (val)
Verbal	speaking, writing, communicating	Sayer, Receiver, Verbiage	Susan (say) told me (rec) that she would be late (ver)
Behavioral	behaving	Behaver, Behavior	The boss (bve) glared at Jim (bvo)
Existential	existence	Existent	There is a rat (exi) in the drawer

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation, the writer would like to define the key terms used in this thesis. These key terms are ideology, transitivity, news report and conflict.

- Ideological perspective: a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view (Hodge, 1993:6)

- Transitivity: part of the grammar in the form of a clause which is relevant to conceptualization and representation of the world (Goatly, 2000:59)

- News report: (1) any new information or information on current events which is presented by print, broadcast, Internet, or word of mouth to a third party or mass audience; (2) the reporting of current information on television and radio, and in newspapers and magazines (*Wikipedia*, 2007)

- Conflict: a prolonged armed struggle (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2005)