

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN YEMEN: STUDY OF A SOCIAL SEMIOTIC M.A.K HALLIDAY ON ALJAZEERA.NET NEWS

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ABSTRAK

Krisis pangan dan kemanusiaan di Yaman, yang disebabkan oleh perang yang berkepanjangan, telah membuat jutaan orang menderita kelaparan, penyakit, dan ketergantungan pada bantuan internasional. Anak-anak dan perempuan adalah kelompok yang paling rentan. Situasi ini diperburuk oleh kekurangan dana untuk organisasi kemanusiaan dan dampak perubahan iklim. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengidentifikasi fenomena linguistik dalam teks dengan mengumpulkan data dari buku, jurnal, internet, dan literatur tertulis lainnya. Temuan tersebut, berdasarkan teori semiotik M.A.K. Halliday, mengungkapkan bahwa artikel berita Al Jazeera berjudul "Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūl wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'līmūn limusā'adātīn ghābat 'āmayn" menyoroti tiga fokus utama (bidang wacana): penurunan bantuan PBB, kisah pengungsian Youssef Mohammed, dan penderitaan warga. Tenor wacana Youssef Mohammed, Julien Harneis, dan Fatik al-Radini mewakili lembaga internasional, didukung oleh empat mode wacana yang memperkuat konten berita secara visual.

Kata kunci: Yaman, Semiotika, Krisis, Al Jazeera, PBB

ABSTRACT

The food and humanitarian crisis in Yemen, caused by prolonged war, has left millions suffering from hunger, disease, and dependence on international aid. Children and women are the most vulnerable groups. This situation is worsened by funding shortages for humanitarian organizations and the impacts of climate change. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method to identify linguistic phenomena within the text by collecting data from books, journals, the internet, and other written literature. The findings, based on M.A.K. Halliday's semiotic theory, reveal that the Al Jazeera news article titled "Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūl wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'līmūn limusā'adātīn ghābat 'āmayn" highlights three main focuses (field of discourse): the decline in UN aid, the displacement story of Youssef Mohammed, and the suffering of citizens. The tenor of discourse by Youssef Mohammed, Julien Harneis, and Fatik al-Radini represents international institutions, supported by four modes of discourse that visually reinforce the news content.

Keywords: Yemen, Semiotics, Crisis, Al Jazeera, United Nations

Introduction

The Republic of Yemen was officially formed in 1990 through the unification of North Yemen and South Yemen. However, the unification process gave rise to various conflicts and political crises that persist to this day. Based on the chronology of events, the crisis in Yemen can be divided into two periods: before and after the Arab Spring. Even before the Arab Spring, Yemen had been facing an economic crisis since 1992. The deteriorating economic conditions have triggered political tensions between the President of North Yemen and the President of South Yemen. The conflict ended with the President of North Yemen's victory, forcing the President of South Yemen to leave the capital, Sanaa, and move to Aden in the southern region. Furthermore, in 1994, a separatist movement emerged in Yemen's northern region, known as the Al-Houthis, which sought to secede and form an independent state. In the late 1990s, the

Yemeni government was also accused of discriminating against the Zaydi community, a group of Shiites living in the north. This situation then served as the backdrop for the birth of the Houthis. The discriminatory treatment sparked a small-scale uprising by the Houthis, which intensified after the death of their leader due to the government's repressive actions in 2004. Despite facing various pressures and government resistance, the Houthis continue their struggle. In 2015, Houthi pressure caused President Hadi to step down and flee to Riyadh. The Houthis then took over the government, dissolved parliament, and formed the Revolutionary Committee. Hadi asked Saudi Arabia for help to retake power, which triggered military intervention and exacerbated the conflict. This prolonged fighting has led to the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with hundreds of thousands of deaths, famine, and disease outbreaks, so international assistance is needed to restore the rights of the Yemeni people (Auludya et al., 2022).

Yemen, composed of North Yemen and South Yemen, was a peaceful country; in fact, it was known as Arabia Felix (Happy/Fortunate Arabia). However, since 1994, that title is no longer closely associated with Yemen, as the country is now in the vortex of a million conflicts on various sides. In 1994, a civil war conflict struck Yemen, pitting the Yemeni government against followers of the socialist party in the southern region of Yemen. This conflict was triggered by the desire to secede and re-establish the state of South Yemen. The war, known as the 'Summer War of '94', ended after the Yemeni government successfully took control of the situation. After the situation in South Yemen subsided, Yemen was once again rocked by the rebellion of the Al-Houthi group in the northern region, in Sa'adah Province, which directly borders Saudi Arabia. The Al-Houthi group has existed since 1994, but it began a full-scale resistance in 2004 (Asriyana et al., 2024).

Data from various international humanitarian organizations reveal the enormous level of destruction in Yemen. About 20 million people, nearly 80% of the total population, are in need of immediate humanitarian assistance, while more than 10 million children are at risk of starvation, and about 2 million others are suffering from acute malnutrition. This situation increases vulnerability to various diseases and poses a serious threat to the future of Yemen's young generation. On the other hand, the economic blockade worsens the situation by hindering the import of food and basic necessities, driving prices higher and leaving supplies low. Most of the communities that depend on agriculture also struggle to meet basic needs, and the hunger crisis is exacerbated by political instability and limited access to areas isolated by conflict. Before the outbreak of war, Yemen was already heavily dependent on imports to meet its basic food needs. However, due to the economic blockade and disrupted supply lines, food imports have become difficult, driving prices higher and stocks lower, leaving people increasingly vulnerable to hunger. This condition also triggers an increase in cases of malnutrition and malnutrition, especially among children, which has a negative impact on health, increases the risk of disease, and inhibits their growth and development. In addition, prolonged conflict has damaged health infrastructure, rendering many medical facilities dysfunctional and limiting medicine supplies, leaving people struggling to access basic health services, including nutritional care and proper medication (Syauqi & Saufi, 2023).

The IPC's latest report reveals that acute malnutrition rates in Yemen are still very high, especially in children under the age of five. About 2.2 million children are acutely

malnourished, including more than half a million who suffer from severe acute malnutrition that is life-threatening. In addition, around 1.3 million pregnant and lactating women also face similar conditions. The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, David Gressly, affirmed that the IPC's analysis shows a deterioration in food security in the country and emphasized the importance of immediate action through an integrated humanitarian response that includes food assistance, nutrition, clean water, health services, and basic protection. He also added that while peace is the key to stopping the crisis, concrete steps can be taken now by lifting trade and investment restrictions on non-sanctioned commodities to lower food prices, restore the economy, and restore people's dignity through employment opportunities and independence from humanitarian aid (FAO et al., 2022).

The ongoing armed conflict in Yemen has given rise to one of the world's biggest humanitarian crises. Thousands of civilians have been killed and injured as a result of fighting between the conflicting parties. Based on data from *The Yemen Data Project*, since 2015, more than 17,500 civilians have been killed or injured, with about a quarter of the airstrikes being on women and children. Currently, more than 20 million people are experiencing food insecurity, and about 10 million of them are on the brink of starvation. According to *Amnesty International*, more than 22 million Yemenis are in dire need of international humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs. UN Secretary-General António Guterres in April 2018 asserted that the ongoing economic blockade, airstrikes, and bombings were exacerbating the suffering of the people. As a result of the destruction of the economy and health services, millions of people are affected by infectious diseases such as diarrhea and cholera, while nearly half of Yemen's children aged six months to five years suffer from severe malnutrition, and some experience disabilities as a result of the prolonged crisis (Fudhali, 2022).

This study uses M.A.K. Halliday's analysis of social semiotics to examine how the Al Jazeera news portal constructs reality and shapes certain points of view in its news presentation. Social semiotic analysis is a method for understanding how language functions in social contexts, including conversations, written texts, and digital media. This theory, developed by Halliday, emphasizes that language is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of social structures and cultural values. Within the framework of Halliday's social semiotics, there are several important stages in analysis, namely text identification, linguistic analysis, social context analysis, and interpretation of meaning. The text identification stage involves selecting news texts relevant to the research objectives. Furthermore, linguistic analysis focuses on language structure and semiotic elements such as connotation, word choice, and intonation. The social context analysis stage aims to understand the values, ideologies, and social conditions that influence the formation of texts. Finally, the interpretation stage connects linguistic findings with the social context to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the meaning of news. According to Sudibyo (2001), three main concepts in social semiotics are used in this study: the field of discourse, the involvement of discourse, and the mode of discourse. The discourse field is concerned with the context or social situation in which the text is created; the discourse engagement describes the relationship between the writer and the reader and its communicative purpose; while the discourse mode highlights the forms and patterns of language used to convey the message. Through this approach, the research seeks to

uncover how Al Jazeera constructs narratives and ideologies in its reporting, particularly regarding humanitarian issues such as the crisis in Yemen (Akhdani, 2023).

According to M.A.K. Halliday (1978), language has three main *metafunctions* (how language is used to create meaning and interact in social contexts) that work simultaneously, namely *ideational* (refers to how language is used to represent our experience of the world, including our thoughts, perceptions, and logical relations between things, often referred to as the function of language to describe reality or to construct the clause as a representation), *interpersonal*, and *textual* meanings (Farikha & Nuzulia, 2025). All three show that language serves not only as a means of communication, but also as a means of representing experiences, building social relationships, and crafting coherent messages. Ideational meaning describes how language represents social reality through actions, actors, and the context of events; interpersonal meaning shows the role of language in expressing attitudes, emotions, and relationships between the author and the reader; Meanwhile, textual meaning functions to regulate how messages are arranged so that they become complete and meaningful texts according to their context. These three metafunctions are in line with the concept of discourse field, discourse involvement, and mode of discourse that Halliday also put forward in the analysis of social semiotics.

The field of discourse is related to the content or topic discussed in the text, reflecting the ideational function that describes social reality. Discourse engagement refers to the relationship and role between the author and the reader, in line with interpersonal functions that emphasize the expression of attitudes and social relations. Meanwhile, the mode of discourse concerns the form of message delivery or communication channels and describes the textual function of organizing the structure of language so that the message is conveyed effectively (Halliday, 1978). Thus, through the three metafunctions and concepts of discourse, it can be understood how media such as Al Jazeera construct meaning, structure news, and form communicative relationships with their audiences in presenting humanitarian issues such as the crisis in Yemen.

Several studies use the same theory. Previous research that uses Halliday's perspective includes Ismandianto & Isnaini (2020), Malawat & Hengki (2023), Rahman & Josua (2018), Trimansyah & Mirnawati (2022), and Widoty et al. (2025). Ismandianto & Isnaini conducted research to examine the terrain of discourse, the involvement of discourse, and the means of discourse in news from both online media. The results of the study show that in the discussion of the infidel controversy on Kompas.com (Kompasiana.com, 2019) and Republika.co.id, the emphasis is on providing more background and responses from the public, including pros and cons (Republika.co.id, 2019). The resource persons appointed as citations are in accordance with their fields. The language in this news shows that Kompas.com agrees while Republika.co.id agrees and disagrees (Ismandianto & Isnaini, 2020). Malawat & Hengki describe and interpret the socio-cultural symbols of the language used in the novel Ghoky Aku Papua by Johan Gandegoay. The object of the research is the field of discourse, the involvement of discourse, and the means of discourse.

The method used is Halliday's social semiotics of the content analysis model. Data collection techniques include (1) reading GAP novels; (2) writing speeches from figures that contain elements of discourse terrain, discourse involvement, and means of discourse; and (3) classification of data in the form of clauses into tables containing discourse fields, discourse

involvement, and means of discourse (Malawat & Hengki, 2023). Rahman & Joshua's research shows that the field of discourse portrays the settlement of Ahok's legal case as an unfair decision; discourse participants involve resource persons according to their competence; And the mode of discourse in the news contains many things, such as paradoxes, cynicism, and sarcasm. Theoretically, further research is recommended to further explore the meaning by using social semiotic analysis. In practice, the media is expected to present more objective news by avoiding bias in its content (Rahman & Yosua, 2018). Trimansyah & Mirnawati conducted an analysis of the text of BSP's Facebook status on March 27, 2022 which caused a communication conflict, so the results of the study can be obtained as follows. First, BSP constructed a discourse about the students interviewed regarding the LPDP scholarship, claiming that none of the female students covered their heads in the style of desert men. Second, the diction used by BSP directly refers to signs/symbols in Islam. BSP uses a style of sarcasm (irony) that represents certain symbols. Unfortunately, the symbol straightforwardly shows dislike for Islam in general through diction that shapes the field and mode of discourse (Trimansyah & Mirnawati, 2022). Widoty et al analyzed the symbols of social criticism contained in the lyrics of the songs of the Feast band such as education, morals, politics and so on which are one of the factors of social criticism. The results show that Feast uses metaphors, irony, and various other symbols to voice resistance to social injustice, economic inequality, and political issues (Widoty et al., 2025).

This study aims to analyze the representation of humanitarian suffering due to the conflict in Yemen as described in the news titled "*Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūḥ wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'līmun limusā'adātin ghābat 'āmayn*" (Aljazeera.net, 2025). The theme of the food crisis in Yemen has never been researched with news objects using Halliday's social semiotics perspective. In addition, this research aims to uncover the construction of social and humanitarian reality by the media through narratives, diction choices, and viewpoints in the news. Another goal is to identify humanitarian messages and moral values that the media wants to convey to readers regarding the issues of displacement, hunger, and delays in humanitarian aid in Yemen. This research also seeks to examine how the media frames the suffering of Yemenis to arouse public empathy and awareness of the global humanitarian crisis. News "*Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūḥ wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'līmun limusā'adātin ghābat 'āmayn*" raising the reality of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen caused by the prolonged armed conflict. This news highlights the true story of refugees living in limited conditions due to the loss of humanitarian aid over the past two years. Through descriptive and narrative language, the news features the voices of victims who describe their suffering amid hunger, homelessness, and uncertainty about the future.

In addition to highlighting the suffering of civil society, this news also underscores the failure of the international system and humanitarian agencies to deliver aid sustainably. In terms of linguistics and discourse, this news text uses emotive language and elements of *human interest* to build emotional closeness with readers. Thus, this news is an important case study in the study of conflict and humanitarian crisis reporting in the Middle East. As an object of research, this text is relevant to be studied through a descriptive qualitative approach because it can reveal the meaning, narrative structure, and ideology implied behind its presentation.

Through this analysis, the research is expected to contribute to understanding how the media shapes public perception of the conflict and humanitarian suffering in Yemen.

Semiotics, or commonly known as semiology, is a unique science; its study is grounded in a constructivist view, using meaning to assess signs and markers from various perspectives. More generally, semiology is the study of all forms of communication, both linguistic and non-linguistic. Semiology is an approach rooted in linguistics but has been adapted to sociology, especially in the analysis of communication media, cultural studies. And the study of film semiotics is supported by structuralism. In social science, it primarily concerns the expression of ideology (Rorong, 2024). In Language as Social Semiotics, Halliday argues that language is a social reality, and that social reality is a semiotic construct of meaning, formed through interaction or the praxis of communication. Semiotic meaning building, or constructs or semantic systems, encodes two fundamental aspects of language: language as a tool for reflecting on something (ideational) and as a tool for acting/interacting (interpersonal). In semantic systems, language as a tool of reflection is an ideational component of meaning, and language as a tool of interaction is an interpersonal component of meaning, (Kurnianta & Maharani, 2020).

Halliday and Ruqaiyya Hassan, quoted by Ibn Hamad, the developer of Social Semiotics, see that the text contains three important components: The Field of Discourse (*Field of Discourse*), which refers to what happens; what is used as mass media discourse about something that is happening in the field. Discourse Involvement (*Tenor of Discourse*): pointing to the people listed in the text (news); the nature of those people, their position, and their role. In a report (news) there are people with their respective positions or positions are quoted. Why are these people the resource persons; others do not. Why did a newspaper or online news cite so many on one side, fewer on the other side? Is it true that for purely technical reasons? Especially when it concerns one party, it is highlighted as good, whereas when it comes to the other party, it is only presented with biased opinions. Fashion Mode (*Mode of Discourse*): refers to the part played by language: how communicators (read, mass media) use language styles to describe the terrain (situation) and the engager (the people quoted); Whether to use refined or hyperbolic, euphemistic or vulgar language (Turistiati, 2017).

Method

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive approach because the focus is to provide an in-depth picture of linguistic phenomena in news texts (Naamy, 2019). The selection of this method is based on the characteristics of qualitative research, which emphasize the meaning and understanding of the object being studied rather than numbers or generalizations (Yunita et al., 2023). The research process was carried out online, using news texts published over the last 2 years to ensure the data remained current. The data analyzed were in the form of news sentences or narratives relevant to the research focus. To collect data, the researcher reads, translates, understands, and records repeatedly. This effort aims to ensure that the data obtained is accurate and reduces the potential for errors. Further, according to Miles & Huberman (1994 in (Zumhur et al., 2024), the analysis process is carried out thoroughly and in-depth through direct interaction between the researcher and the data obtained. Data collection begins with searching for news and then identifying its sources. The primary data of the researcher, namely,

news selected with a deadline of at least 2 years, not older than the last 2 years, so that it is still relevant. After identifying the source of the news, the researcher began reading and taking notes.

To ensure data validity, the researcher used several validation techniques. These measures include increasing due diligence by conducting repeated data checks, triangulating sources and theories through comparisons of various news sources and supporting literature, and engaging in peer discussions to obtain input and ensure more accurate research findings (Rachman et al., 2024). Furthermore, the data analysis process is carried out by applying the Miles and Huberman analysis model, which includes three main components: data reduction to sort out relevant information, presentation of data in the form of structured descriptive descriptions, and drawing conclusions to find meaning and answer the focus of the research (Asipi et al., 2022). Data analysis is the process of finding and arranging it in an organized manner based on the results of records, interviews and observations or documents to increase a researcher's understanding of the topic being researched and explain to others as findings. Based on the findings, a presentation is needed to determine the meaning (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024).

Results and Discussion

News from Aljazeera.net media portal titled "*Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūh wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'limun limusā'adātin ghābat 'āmayn*" can be analyzed using the theory of social semiotics from the perspective of M.A.K. Halliday. So that the reader's understanding is formed while enjoying the news.

Field of Discourse

M.A.K. Halliday divides the situational context into three main aspects known as the Register. One of them is the field of discourse, an element in the analysis of the situational context of language within the Functional Systemic approach. The terrain of discourse refers to the social activities that are taking place. To analyze the terrain, questions can be asked about *what is going on*. In other words, the type of social activity or main topic that is being discussed in the text or speech. (Rahmah & Kurniasari, 2022). In the news titled "*Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūh wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'limun limusā'adātin ghābat 'āmayn*" published on the Al Jazeera media portal, has three points of view (*angle*) obtained:

Table 1. Field of Discourse

No.	Data	Translate	Information
1	لم يتمالك يوسف محمد نفسه من الفرح حين فرأ في صحفة محلية خبراً يتحدث عن قرب استئناف منظمات الأمم المتحدة تقديم المساعدات الإنسانية للنازحين والقراء في اليمن.	Mohammed Youssef couldn't contain his excitement when he read in a local newspaper that UN agencies would soon resume distributing humanitarian aid to refugees and the poor in Yemen.	After two years of no assistance from the United Nations (UN), Yemen was finally given assistance again, including basic needs, food, and health. In this Al Jazeera story, the <i>angle</i> raised and placed in the news <i>lead</i> is the issue of UN reinforcements.

2 47 يوسف، البالغ من العمر (47 عاماً)، يستعيد لـAl Jazeera Net about the details of his refugee journey, saying: "I never expected to leave home for 10 years in a row." Although the news is in the form of *straight news* and is up to date news from the rubric about the condition of Yemen, this news also provides the story of how the main source was evacuated.

3 يزداد المشهد الإنساني في اليمن اليوم قاتمة، بعد 10 سنوات من الحرب والنزوح، ارتفعت معدلات الفقر والجوع إلى مستويات غير مسبوقة. The humanitarian landscape in Yemen is currently increasingly bleak. After 10 years of war and displacement, poverty and hunger rates have risen to unprecedented levels. *The last angle* raised in this news is the crisis experienced by Yemen in the last 10 years. Al Jazeera narrated it in the last sub-headline to emphasize that Yemen's current condition is the worst in the country's history.

Source: Data from Aljazeera.net and Conclusions Drawn from the Application of Halliday's Theory

In Table 1. It contains three pieces of primary data in the form of news from Al Jazeera. In the narrative written, there are three points of view. Each is represented by a sub-heading. On data 1, Al Jazeera provided an *Update* on the situation in Yemen on August 01, 2025. According to the UN, out of the total humanitarian funding request of \$2.5 billion (approximately 40.5 trillion Indonesian Rupiah) for Yemen this year, the amount realized only reached \$222 million (3.6 trillion Rupiah), or just 9 percent of what is needed, up to mid-May (Times, 2025). The need for humanitarian aid has also increased, as humanitarian access constraints complicate aid delivery, leading to starvation and disease outbreaks. Furthermore, reports of a spreading cholera epidemic also add to their suffering. The health system has lost the capacity to provide basic services, with some health facilities no longer fully functional. Significant security threats are also experienced by humanitarian aid workers in Yemen. Security challenges such as staff detention, harassment at checkpoints, delayed visa processes, and local interference in program delivery and monitoring are faced by humanitarian aid workers, which consequently slow aid distribution. The interventions that have occurred have also contributed to large-scale internal displacement in Yemen (Asriyana et al., 2024).

In data 2, Al Jazeera presents the story of the main source, namely, Youssef Mohammed. His personal story: an incident ten years ago left him unable to return home, so he had to evacuate. The condition of Yemeni citizens displaced due to the humanitarian crisis and armed conflict in the country is in a very difficult situation and has been repeatedly referred to by the UN as the world's worst man-made humanitarian crisis. To this day, millions of Yemeni citizens are still living as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), meaning they have been forced to leave their homes and residences to seek safer places within Yemen itself. With the war situation in Yemen involving airstrikes and blockades, it has become increasingly difficult to earn a living in the refugees' areas of origin (Adriani et al., 2024).

Data 3 highlights Yemen's state of emergency code, which has led to Yemen becoming the third country with the worst child nutrition (Yemenonline, 2025). The Yemen conflict has become a serious concern regarding the humanitarian crisis. The Yemen conflict has worsened

since Saudi Arabia's involvement in 2015 to maintain the regime of President Mansur Hadi. The increasingly severe fighting in Yemen has created difficulties for journalists in reporting on the situation there directly. Journalists even struggle to obtain permission from the Houthi militia or access from the Saudi military. Mainstream media often broadcasts news about the Yemen conflict from outside Yemen, such as from several countries deemed stable in the Middle Eastern region. This phenomenon has influenced the content reported since 2016, which prioritizes the political view that the Yemen conflict is a proxy conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia or between Shia and Sunni, rather than highlighting the overall condition of the public in Yemen (Ramadhan & Wibowo, 2025).

Tenor of Discourse

Discourse Involvement (*tenor of discourse*), from the perspective of M.A.K. Halliday, refers to the aspect of social relations between participants in a communication or language interaction. Discourse engagers include those involved in communication, the nature of their social relationships, and the role and status of each participant in the context of the discourse. In the issue of The Story of Yemeni Refugees and Famine, there were several speakers involved. Discourse participants can reveal the figure's position or how it is positioned, thereby influencing the issue (Husain et al., 2023). In the news titled "*Qissatun Yamanīyyin ma'a an-nuzūḥ wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'limun limusā'adātin ghābat 'āmayn*" published on the Al Jazeera media portal, three sources were found:

Table 2. Tenor of Discourse

No.	Data	Sources	Information
1		يوسف محمد Youssef Mohammed	Yemeni citizens as well as refugees from the city of Taiz.
2		جوليان هارنيس Julien Harneis	United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen.
3		فاتك الردينى Fatik Al-Radini	Head of the Mona Relief and Development Organization

Source: Data from Aljazeera.net and Conclusions Drawn from the Application of Halliday's Theory

Table 2. presents three main figures who form distinctive social relations in humanitarian discourse: Youssef Mohammed, Julien Harneis and Fatik al-Radini. Youssef represents the voice of the small people, a refugee who has been a direct victim of war and famine in Yemen. The dialogue and narrative depict emotionally charged personal suffering, creating interpersonal closeness and fostering reader empathy. Julien Harneis, as the U.N. Permanent Representative in Yemen (U.N. Yemen, 2025), serves as an authoritative figure with institutional legitimacy and bridges communication between international institutions and local authorities. Meanwhile, Fatik al-Radini, head of the Mona Relief and Development Organization (M. R. Yemen, 2023), appears as an operational actors who explain the impact of funding termination and technical challenges in the field factually. In the framework A

Conversation (*tenor of discourse*), the relationships between figures show diverse social hierarchies and communicative roles: Youssef is in the position of the beneficiary (low participant relations), Harneis represents a global institution with high authority, and Al-Radini occupies a middle position as a liaison between the sufferer and the donor institution. The combination of the three creates a formal yet empathetic tenor of discourse, in which humanitarian concerns are built through a blend of personal testimony, institutional authority, and global moral responsibility.

Mode of Discourse

Mode of discourse refers to the way or channels of communication are used in a language event, as well as the role of language and images in that context. Language is used to inform and influence the reader's perception factually and emotionally. Images provide additional visual context, shaping readers' responses through visual representations of the reported reality (A. N. Putri et al., 2024). To analyze visual meaning in news, the multimodal approach of Kress and Van Leeuwen is used. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), multimodality is an approach that integrates linguistic concepts with visual analysis to understand how meaning is constructed and conveyed by considering the various semiotic elements or signs used to convey meaning visually. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) state that visual resources play a very important role in communication practices and, therefore, must involve interaction and representation to achieve the goals of the existing communication practice (Firdausiyah et al., 2024). In the news titled "*Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūh wa al-jū'... intizhārun mu'limun limusā'adātin ghābat 'amayn*" published on the Al Jazeera media portal examined four modes of images found in the news:



Source: Aljazeera.net

Figure 1. Yemeni women are waiting to receive food aid from their families after 2 years without aid.

In Figure 1. It showed some Yemeni women still sitting, waiting for social assistance to be distributed to them. Yemeni women have little to do but wait for help to come to them. Systematic violations of the rights of women and girls have occurred there, including the rights to freedom of movement, freedom of expression, health, and employment, as well as widespread discrimination. The Houthis have increasingly restricted women's freedoms since taking over Sanaa in 2014 (Watch, 2023). The visual analysis of this image, using the Kress

and Van Leeuwen framework, highlights the contrasting representation between the needy human subjects and the aid objects being presented. Representatively, the image is divided into two main participant groups: the Food Aid (symbolizing supplies and humanitarian intervention), which is massively arranged in the foreground, and the Women and Children (symbolizing vulnerable recipients) who are patiently waiting in the background. The caption "waiting to receive" reinforces this narrative of a passive process. Interactionally, the women in the image do not make eye contact (an "Offer" relationship), and the eye-level viewpoint positions the viewer as an objective, neutral witness, merely observing the offered situation without being required to interact directly.

This maintains the focus on the factual nature of the distribution situation, rather than individual emotions. Compositionally, the dominance of the stacked aid in the foreground and the bright lighting give the aid objects themselves the highest Salience value, making the availability and quantity of the supplies the main message. This implicitly underscores the importance of the distribution after being "absent for two years," as explained in the caption. This arrangement effectively visualizes the narrative of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, where the material need (aid) is visually more prominent than the recipients who are forced to wait in the shadows.



Source: Aljazeera.net

Figure 2. The two-year absence of aid has exacerbated Yemen's refugee crisis.

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Figure 2. Showing refugees opening staples to be distributed. The caption provided by Al Jazeera on the image is also informational. Yemen's aid was not provided for two years, worsening the conditions of the refugees. Some refugees also lack permanent jobs and are therefore dependent on aid (N. A. R. Putri et al., 2022). The visual analysis of this image, utilizing the Kress and Van Leeuwen framework, highlights the active process of receiving aid, which contrasts with the preceding narrative of the "absence of assistance."

Representatively, the image captures a moment of Narrative Process (Actional) in which two Yemeni men representing vulnerable recipients actively interact with a large sack of 50 kg labeled 'wheat flour,' which symbolizes vital food supplies. Their traditional attire and serious posture visualize the hardship of life and the importance of the supply. Interactionally, the lack of direct eye contact with the camera creates an "Offer" relationship; the viewer is presented as an objective witness to the ongoing distribution moment, without being demanded to engage emotionally. The eye-level viewpoint maintains objectivity and equality between the viewer

and the participants. Compositionally, the large sack of wheat flour dominates the frame, granting it the highest Salience value. This visual emphasis on the aid object confirms that, in the context of a refugee crisis exacerbated by scarcity, the core of the message is the urgent availability of food. Overall, the image visualizes a crucial moment when aid intervention arrives to address the crisis and food insecurity among the affected population.



Source: Aljazeera.net

Figure 3. Although the aid distributed is limited, it is a glimmer of hope for the refugees.

Figure 3 is a means of conveying news for a narrative that Youssef Mohammed said, "He is very happy that help from UN humanitarian organizations has arrived." Overall, both images effectively visualize a "glimmer of hope" despite limited aid, according to the Kress and Van Leeuwen analysis. Representatively, the images focus on the Active Narrative Process, such as strenuously lifting sacks of aid or receiving 50-kg flour sacks, which visually override the suffering and passivity associated with the aid's absence. The men's strenuous action and focus project resilience and the importance of this critical moment. Interactionally, the "Offer" relationship, combined with the *Medium Close-up* distance, presents these moments as serious and genuine, assuring the viewer that real action is being taken. Finally, compositionally, the highest Salience value given to the physical aid sacks, which dominate the frame, confirms that these objects are tangible proof of a successful intervention; this is a material turning point that offers hope to the refugees amid a prolonged crisis because essential basic needs have demonstrably arrived.



Source: Aljazeera.net

Figure 4. Yemenis receive food aid from the European Union's Mona Aid Agency

Finally, Figure 4 is a means of discourse for narrative. Fatik al-Radini, head of the Mona Relief and Development Organization, told Al Jazeera that the halt in international funding has had a major impact on the lives of millions of Yemenis, as many families are completely dependent on humanitarian aid programs. The final image effectively depicts Yemeni women receiving food aid from the European Relief Agency. Representatively, the image captures the Actional Process of gathering individual rations (sacks, oil, food boxes) that have been laid out. The presence of women (often with children) visualizes the vulnerable recipients, while the stacks of aid suggest an organized response. Interactionally, the "Offer" relationship, dominated by participants not looking at the camera, maintains objectivity and presents this scene to the viewer as a sincere fact. Compositionally, the highest Salience value is given to the aid objects (small 'mona' sacks, red boxes), which visually confirm that the main message is about the successful availability and distribution of rations, underlining the European Relief Agency's role in providing basic necessities for families in Yemen.

Although all four figures illustrate the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, they highlight different aspects of the suffering and challenges faced. Figure 1 specifically focuses on the vulnerability of women, showing those who are forced to wait for aid while highlighting systematic issues related to the restriction of rights and discrimination by the Houthis. Meanwhile, Figure 2 shifts the focus to the distribution of aid and the economic dependence of internally displaced persons without permanent jobs, while also highlighting the severe impact of a 2-year delay in aid delivery. Figure 3 and Figure 4 move from the visual depiction of suffering to the discourse on aid, where Figure 3 conveys the positive emotion and hope of a citizen (Youssef Mohammed) upon the arrival of UN assistance, and Figure 4 provides a critique and policy perspective from the head of an aid organization (Fatik al-Radini) regarding the severe impact of the halt in international funding that greatly affects millions of families dependent on these programs.

The Al Jazeera news piece focuses on the narrative of a severe humanitarian crisis and the faint hope that emerges following a long period of aid scarcity. Al Jazeera effectively uses visuals to reinforce and ground this narrative through three main approaches. First, the visuals depicting Yemeni women quietly waiting to receive aid rations reinforce the phrase "painful wait" in the title. The passive and covered posture of these women visually represents the conditions of passivity and vulnerability experienced during the aid's absence. Second, across all visuals, the value of Salience (visual prominence) is given to the aid objects themselves, such as large, labeled sacks of wheat flour (50 KG) and standard food packages. This visual emphasis on massive basic needs directly confirms the severity of the "hunger" crisis highlighted in the text. Third, the visuals showing the Active Narrative Process, such as workers unloading aid sacks from a truck or men receiving and carrying flour sacks, serve as physical proof of a "glimmer of hope". The strenuous action and focus in the distribution (in contrast to the passivity of waiting) visually mark a turning point from scarcity to intervention, validating the message of hope implied in the news.

Conclusion

The study concluded that an Al Jazeera news story titled "*Qissatun Yamaniyyin ma'a an-nuzūḥ wa al-jū'*... *Intizhārun mu'limun limusā'adātin ghābat 'āmayn*" represents the food and

humanitarian crisis in Yemen through the construction of a discourse that is full of social and emotional meaning. Using M.A.K. Halliday's social semiotics analysis, it was found that the field of this news discourse focused on three *angles*, namely the announcement that the United Nations had reduced aid, then focusing on the story of Youssef Mohammed's displacement, and the suffering of refugees who are currently Yemen is one of the countries experiencing a humanitarian crisis. Participants included Youssef Mohammed, Julien Harneis, and Fatik al-Radini representing international institutions and local humanitarian organizations. The mode of discourse is used effectively through visuals that evoke the reader's empathy for the suffering of the Yemeni people, there are four images in the news. Overall, this news not only informs the facts, but also builds global moral and humanitarian awareness. Through Halliday's semiotic approach, it can be concluded that Al Jazeera plays an important role in shaping public perception and promoting the value of solidarity against the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

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