A Pragmatic Study of Impartiality and Neutrality in Selected News Channels

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The current study aims to investigate impartiality and neutrality in broadcasting discourse, as this subject has not been tackled comprehensively. This is in order to remedy the gap related to this subject and enrich the literature. The study rests on the assumption that news channels should be impartial in the sense that they provide only information, free from value judgment, sensationalism, evaluation, and bias. Furthermore, these channels are neutral in the sense that journalists avoid subjective opinions. This is supposed to be reflected in the kind of linguistic expressions that journalists choose, i.e., language is a tool in the journalist's hand, and it is significant for conveying the channel's message. The data of the present study are extracts taken from two broadcasting news channels: BBC News and Al-Jazeera English. The researcher makes use of two models: Levinson's (2000) implicature (presumptive meaning) theory and Martin and Rose's (2007) 'Appraisal theory.' In addition, detailed analysis has been performed in order to uncover how journalists practice impartiality and neutrality as they cover the news. The study concludes that news language is filled with expressions of evaluation and judgment. The journalists tend to 'play' with words and use expressions that explicitly or implicitly trigger the audience's emotions, make judgments about people and show an appreciation of things. Accordingly, news channels are far from being impartial and neutral. These concepts are difficult to put into practice; because of the restriction on the journalists to be impartial, they tend to implicitly violate these codes by relying on marked, weak, and subjective expressions.

Key words: Impartiality, Neutrality, Sensationalism, Bias, Emotive Language, Implicature, Appraisal.

Literature Review
The Concept of Impartiality

The concept of impartiality requires that broadcasters or journalists avoid employing any strategy to conceal facts or affect the public's perception of the facts. McQuail (2000 as cited in Harcup, 2009) (Harcup, 2007) defines impartiality as the "balance in the choice and use of sources, so as to reflect different points of view, and also neutrality in the presentation of news – separating facts from opinions, avoiding value judgements or emotive language or pictures." McQuail (2010) expands on this by indicating that impartiality is the avoidance of sensationalism, bias and emotive language. These three concepts will be covered in the following section as they are essential factors for achieving impartiality.

Sensationalism

Sensationalism is a common concept in news. It is used to refer to those pieces of news aiming to trigger an unpleasant emotional reaction from the audience. This may cause subjective evaluation (Mott,1962 as cited in Nordin, 1979). Uribe and Gunter (2007) define sensationalism as "a characteristic of the news packaging process that places emphasis upon those elements that could provoke an effect on the human sensory system". Udeze and Uzuegbunam (2013) consider sensationalism to be a "type of editorial bias in mass media." This means that sensationalism is one of the strategies that are utilized by journalists to present their stories.

Grundlingh (2017) argues that utilizing sensationalist language is an indicator that a journalist fails to mirror the events perfectly. As a consequence, they are not an absolute, impartial, or ideal observer. This strategy includes a certain degree of subjectivity, a matter which is considered a violation of ethical principles.

To recognize sensationalism in a particular text, Grundlingh (2017) differentiates between two types: subtle and obvious. Subtle sensationalism is defined as any sort of information that unintentionally triggers the audience's interest in a news story. It encompasses all information about crimes, victims, etc. even if it be insignificant. This additional information includes further description of victims in the form of paraphrasing or direct quotations from relatives of the involved person, and so on. On the other hand, obvious sensationalism suggests itself when the journalist's stance or feeling is specified clearly in the news.

In the same vein, Bulla and Sachsman (2017) indicate other factors for the identification of sensationalism. They consider topics, tone, and degree to be the main indicators of sensationalism. The topics of the news include events involving violence, disasters, tragedies, massacres, mayhem, etc.. The linguistic expressions manipulated to describe such horrific

details contribute to create the sensational tone: for instance, modifiers such as "*disguising*", "*barbarous*", "*splendid*", etc. Accordingly, it can be seen that sensationalism is a strategy that is employed by journalists for the purpose of affecting their audience's perception of news stories, since it is based on triggering their sensations and emotions. This can be identified in news text through their subjects, which are usually serious events.

Bias

Bias is a widely utilized concept. It pervades various domains of life, and it is used in different ways. Hahn and Harris (2014) argue that for many people the concept of 'bias' is interpreted differently because of its direct meaning and connotations, which are broad. Bias as a concept in daily usage means "the lack of impartiality or an undue preference".

Hofstetter and Buss (1978) define bias in terms of "selectivity." Accusing a reporter of bias means they select certain facts to report and that the consequences of this selection are distortion and unfairness. The process of selection is directed by social implication theories.

Avoiding bias is necessary for achieving impartiality. As Barkho (2013) states, impartiality should be reflected in choosing a balanced construction which includes contextual details, quotation, syntactic formation, paraphrasing, the kinds of linguistic expressions used, and the inserted commentary. It assumes that the reporters should have strategies or tools for depicting the sides of the conflict impartially.

Emotive Language

There is a strong relationship between language and emotion. Regarding this relation, Bamberg (1997) argues that both language and emotion are systems that are equivalent and concurrent in their use. Broadly speaking, a common view of language is that it performs its function emotively. Along the same lines, people's emotions normally have an influence on their communication. Accordingly, this can be established through the linguistic expressions they use, among other things.

According to Ouayed (1990), emotion is a powerful means of convincing because it stimulates the audience's sentiment. Indeed, it places them under the impact of the writer's text or the speaker's utterances. So, one function of using emotive words is to convince others.

Macagno and Walton (2010) view emotive language as a special kind of rhetorical and dialectical tactic that aims to convince people via emotions. When the linguistic expressions affect the audience through leading them to formulate a judgment based on partial

information, they are regarded as emotive. On the base of the values shared among communicators within the same society, emotive expressions result in bad/good classification.

People encounter innumerable emotive expressions like "war", "terrorist", "death" and so forth daily. The extreme influence of such expressions results from the power they have on others. Rather than obtaining new information, interpreting messages or modifying their value system, people form judgments, are attracted to a particular situation, or feel disgust as they encounter such words (Macagno & Walton, 2014). Since emotive words are manipulated to hide certain facts and to lead the public to form certain perspectives, this indicates that there is certain evidence that journalists have violated the rules of impartiality.

Impartiality is usually investigated with regard to certain rules that can include: the separation of viewpoints from facts, preventing discrimination based on political views, religion, race, etc., crediting the source of information, avoiding expressions of the journalist's comment; and excluding offensive depictions or labelling individuals as malign or benign (Keeble, 2012; Fico, Zeldes, Carpenter & Diddi, 2008; Hurcap, 2007; Allan, 1997; Barkho, 2013).

The Concept of Neutrality

A notion closely related to impartiality is that of neutrality. This tends to be narrow and there is little literature concerning it. Neutrality deals with how power is manipulated in the context of dispute. In this regard, Waldron (1993) maintains that neutrality is established in a context where two sides (sometimes more than two) are engaged in a dispute. They might be individuals, creeds, groups, beliefs, or principles. Its core is the emphasis on the action of the "third or additional party" who is sometimes worthy of the description of neutral and sometimes not (non-neutral). Focus is usually on the ability of this third participant to neutrally achieve his/her role without being influenced by those between whom they are supposed to judge. As a result, neutrality is usually connected with two points that are constant: (a) "If the third party takes part in the contest in the same way and on the same terms as the sides by whose actions and interactions its constituted, he can never be described as neutral," and (b) "if the actions or existence of the third party can have no impact on the contest at all, either on its course or on its outcome, then the question of his neutrality does not arise." Waldron adds that such third sides sometimes take the middle ground between the two points as they affect or perhaps have an impact by serving the interest of particular groups (p. 146).

Furthermore, Harrington and Merry (1988) point out that the mediators (in this case the journalists) describe neutrality as establishing a position of detachment without giving consideration to the others' beliefs. The neutral individuals realize that their job is not to

impose explanations or views, despite the fact of having an explanation that they think is worthy and views about those that they are dealing with (Biber and Finegan, 1988).

Consequently, neutrality, according to Umbreit (2006), is defined in that the mediator (i.e., the journalist) must not be personally associated with either side of a conflict or have any concern with the result of what they describe, which may have an impact on his/her capability to evaluate others impartially and even-handedly.

Pragmatic Theory

The study makes use of two theories, namely Levinson's (2000) presumptive meaning theory and Martin and Rose's (2007) appraisal theory. These are covered in the following sections.

Levinson's Presumptive Meaning

In contrast to other pragmatic theories, Levinson's Generalized Conversational Implicature (hence GCI) is "carried by the structure of utterances, given the structure of the language, and not by virtue of the particular contexts of utterance" (Levinson, 2000). He calls for a new layer that is "exclusively about a new, strange level" (p 241).

Levinson (2000) states that "this level is to capture the suggestions that the use of an expression of a certain type generally or normally carries, by default."

Normally, a communication theory is built on two layers. The layers are the sentence meaning and the speaker's meaning. Levinson states that there is a third level that is intermediate between the sentence meaning and the "utterance token meaning". He dubs it "utterance type meaning" depending on common expectations as to the ways that language is employed and not on the speaker's intentions (Levinson, 2000). On this level, the linguistic expression has an interpretation that is both idiomatic and preferable ((Levinson, 2000).

According to Levinson (2000), GCI is an idiomatic theory, which consists of guiding principles that lead to the selection of the appropriate expressions to propose a certain interpretation, and a theory that is concerned with the interpretation that is preferable.

As such, this preferable inference is relatively invariant across different contexts. Levinson (2000) points out that some of the heuristics provided in his theory can be practised on a "words by words basis", for instance the quantifier "some" will generate the default interpretation "not all" before the rest of the statement is provided.

Levinson's Heuristics

Levinson (2000) builds his theory on three heuristics as follows:

Heuristics

"What isn't said, isn't," which corresponds with Grice's Maxim of Quantity: "Make your contribution as informative as is required" (Grice, 1989). This heuristic is necessary for scalar and clausal implicature. The former is a quantity implicature originating from making use of a weak expression in a contrast set (Levinson, 1983), while the latter indicates a quantity implicature that originates from making use of a form which does not entail the truth of its statement (Levinson, 1983). Those implicatures depend on the "contrast set, of linguistic expressions in salient contrast" (Levinson, 2000).

In Levinson's (2000) opinion, those scales encompass quantifiers such as *"all, most, many, some",* connectives such as *"and, or",* adverbs such as *"always, often, sometimes",* models such as *"must, should, may", "possibly, probably",* adjectives of degree such as *"hot, warm",* and verbs such as *"love, like", "know, believe"*. Verbs can also result in causal implicature, i.e., (refute, reject), (reveal, hold), etc. (p. 111). For instance:

(1) "*Some of the boys come*." Q scalar +> "not all of the boys come."
(2) "*If there is life on Mars, the NASA budget will be spared*" Q clausal+> "there may be or not be life on Mars" (p. 36).

Heuristic

 "What is expressed simply is stereotypical exemplified" (Levinson, 2000). This relates to Grice's (1989) Maxim of Quantity, "Do not make your contribution *more* informative than is required." This heuristic allows the speaker to make use of all their contextual information (Levinson, 2000).

(3) "*John's book is good*." I+> "the one he read, wrote, borrowed, as appropriate."
(4) "*If you mow the lawn, I will give you ten dollars*." I+> "If you mow the lawn, will I give you five dollars" (p. 37).

M- Heuristic

"What's said in an abnormal way isn't normal" (Levinson, 2000). This corresponds with Grice's (1989) "Maxim of Manner" to "be perspicuous" in addition to "avoid[ing] obscurity

of expression" and "avoid[ing] prolixity," which are Grice's first and fourth maxims respectively.

Levinson's Principles
Q-principle

The Q-principle indicates that:

Speaker's maxim: Do not provide a statement that is informationally weaker than your knowledge of the world allows, unless providing an informationally stronger statement would contravene the I- principle. Specifically select the informationally strongest paradigmatic alternate that is consistent with the facts.

Recipient corollary: Take it that the speaker made the strongest statement consistent with what he knows, and therefore that:

a. if the speaker asserted $A(W)$, where A is a sentence frame and W an informationally weaker expression than S, and the contrastive expressions <S, W>form a Horn scale (in the prototype case, such that $A(S)$ entails $A(W)$), then one can infer that the speaker knows that the stronger statement $A(S)$ (with S substituted for W) would be false (or $K \sim (A(S))$: 'the speaker knows that it is not the case that $(A(S))$

b. if the speaker asserted $A(W)$ and $A(W)$ fails to entail an embedded sentence Q, which a stronger statement $A(S)$ would entail, and (S, W) form a contrast set, then one can infer that the speaker does not know whether Q obtains or not (i.e., $\sim K(Q)$ or equally, $(P(Q), P \sim (Q))$): 'it is epistemically possible that Q and epistemically possible that not-Q') (Levinson, 2000)

This principle encompasses various scales and instances, as follows:

(5) "*John tried to reach the beach*." Q +> "he does not succeed" (Levinson. 2000).
(6) A. "*If eating eggs is bad for one, we should give up omelettes*." Q +> "(For all the speakers know) eating eggs may be bad for one; we perhaps should give up eating omelettes, or we perhaps should not."

B. "*Since eating eggs is bad for one, we should give up omelette*" (p. 109).

Principle

Levinson states the I-principle according to the following principle:

Speaker's maxim: The Maxim of Minimization. "Say as little as necessary"; that is, produce the minimal linguistic information sufficient to achieve your communicational ends (bearing Q in mind).

Recipient's corollary: The Enrichment Rule. Amplify the informational content of the speaker's utterance, by finding the most *specific* interpretation, up to what you judge to be the speaker's M-intended point, unless the speaker has broken the Maxim of Minimization by using a marked or prolix expression. Specifically:

a. Assume the richest temporal, causal and referential connections between described situations or events, consistent with what is taken for granted.
b. Assume that stereotypical relations obtain between referents or events, unless this is inconsistent with (a).
c. Avoid interpretations that multiply entities referred to (assume referential parsimony): specifically, prefer co-referential readings of reduced NPs (pronouns or zeros).
d. Assume the existence or actuality of what a sentence is about if that is consistent with what is taken for granted (Levinson, 2000).

This principle is an affective one and supports various linguistic expressions including: "generality narrowing" (NO., 7), "conjunction buttressing" (NO., 8), "conditional perfection" (No., 9), "mirror maxim" (No., 10), etc. as in the following instances:

(7) *"John's book is good"* I+> "the one he read, wrote, borrowed, as appropriate."
(8) "*John turned the switch and the motor started*" I+> that the turning happened and then the motor started.
(9) "*if you mow the lawn, I'll give you 5$* " I+> "if you mow the lawn, then will I give you 5$."
(10) "*John and Jenny bought a piano*" I+> they bought it together (Levinson, 2000, pp. 37-38).

M-Principle

Levinson (2000) dubs this principle as the M-principle. The assumption here is that utilizing an expression that is marked indicates that the interpretation that is typical will not hold. (p. 38). For instance:

Speaker's maxim: Indicate an abnormal, non-stereotypical situation by using marked expressions that contrast with those you would use to describe the corresponding normal, stereotypical situation.

Recipient's corollary: What is said in an abnormal way indicates an abnormal situation, or marked messages indicate marked situations (Levinson, 2000).

The M-principle provides maxims for various instances such as "lexical doublets" (NO., 11), "periphrases" (NO., 12), "litotes" (NO., 13), "repetition and reduplication" (NO., 14), as seen respectively in the following instances:

(11) "*Her residence is on the corner.*"
M ++> "*Her immodest, pretentious house is on the corner*" (vs. house) (Levinson, 2000).
(12) "*Larry caused the car to stop.*"
M ++> "Larry caused the car to stop in a non-stereotypical way, e.g., using the emergency brake" (vs. stops the car) (p. 141).
(13) "*It took a not inconsiderable effort.*"
M ++> "It took a close-to-considerable effort" (p. 144)
(14) "*He went to bed and slept and slept*"
M +> "he slept longer than usual" (p. 152).

Appraisal Theory

The concept of appraisal is an umbrella that includes all the "evaluative uses of language." Appraisal is a special approach for illustrating, investigating, and explaining the manner in which language is utilized for adopting a stance, evaluating, controlling situations, and presenting participants in certain texts (White, 2005). Martin and Rose's (2007) appraisal theory is divided into the following:

Attitude

Shaw and Wright (1967) (as cited in Beere, 1990) define an attitude as "a set of affective reactions towards the attitude object, derived from the concepts or beliefs that the individual has concerning the object, and predisposing the individual to behave in certain manner towards the attitude object." According to Martin and Rose (2007), attitude is concerned with the evaluation of an individual's personality, objects, and feeling.

Affect (Reflecting one's emotion)

Individuals commonly convey their emotions through discourse; these emotions are either "good" or "bad". Consequently, affect will be "positive" or "negative." Furthermore, affect is explicit or implicit (Martin & Rose, 2007).

Judgments

Judgment is related to an evaluation made about other individuals' personality and behaviours. Judgments are either positive or negative, and explicit or implicit. Judgments could be personal or moral. The former is either "admiration" or "criticism" and the latter is "praising" or "condemnation". In addition to this, metaphor can also be utilized to convey a judgment (Martin and Rose, 2007).

Appreciating Things

Instead of judging people, the category of appreciating things is concerned with the evaluation of things that can be "positive" or "negative". It comprises one's attitude concerning, for instance, homes, buildings, performance, and so forth. Abstract nouns such as relationships among individuals and value of life can also be appreciated (Martine & Rose, 2007).

Amplifying Attitude

Attitude is gradable. This indicates that people can express their attitude weakly or strongly. Amplification is of two kinds: force and focus. Force is related to whether the amplification is intensified or not. These consist of "words that intensify meanings, such as very/ really/ extremely, and vocabulary items that include degrees of intensity, such as happy/ delighted/ ecstatic". The other kind is "focus", which demands "'softening or 'sharpening' categories of people and things, using words such as about/ exactly or real/ sort of/ kind of" (Martin & Rose, 2007) (Eggins and Slade, 1997).

Amplifying the Attitude Force

Force has an impact with "respect to alignment and solidarity. Up scaling of attitude frequently acts to construe the speaker/ writer as maximally committed to the value position being advanced and hence as strongly aligning the reader in to that position" (Martin & White, 2007). When the expression of the attitude is downscaled, the speakers or the writers have "only a partial or an attenuated affiliation with the value position being referenced" (Martin & White, 2007).

Focus: Sharpening and Softening

Focus is a kind of amplification that contains resources for forming an object that is intrinsically "nongradable/gradable." Focus is either to "sharpen" or "soften" (Martin & Rose, 2007), and it "applies most typically to categories which, when viewed from an

experiential perspective, are not scalable" (Martin & White, 2005). When the term that is softened is "negative", the effect implies "a lessening of the speaker/ writer's investment in the value position and hence to offer a conciliatory gesture directed toward maintaining solidarity with those who hold contrary views", while with a positive term, as Martin and White (2005) state, softening implies that it is thought "that the positive assessment is being construed as potentially problematic for writer- reader solidarity".

Sources of Attitude

This relates to who originates the evaluation. Essentially, Martin and Rose (2007) differentiate a "heterogloss" source, which indicates that "the source of an attitude is other than the writer," and "monologs," which indicates that "the source is simply the author" and sometimes is referred to as a "single voice". Heterogloss is subdivided into "projecting source", "modality", and "concession."

Projecting Sources

Projecting sources is related to reporting or quoting others' thoughts or sayings. It could be the same speech that is uttered by other persons (direct quotation) or providing the general gist of what is said (Martin & Rose, 2007).

Modality

Modality is a means of presenting an extra voice in a text, for instance, saying *"it is"* or *"it must be"* looks assertive as there is little uncertainty. These are stronger than *"it might be,"* which presupposes an opposition but is weaker than avoiding modality (Martin & Rose, 2007).

Concession

Concession, sometimes called "counter expectancy" is where the speakers or the writers contrast what the listeners or the readers expect. This could be established through utilizing "conjunction" or "continuative." There are certain conjunctions that are employed to reflect counter-expectation such as *"but"*, *"however"*, *"although",* and so forth (Martin & Rose, 2007) (Martin, 2005).

Continuations are similar to conjunctions except they are usually found within the sentence instead of initially, as in *"finally", "already", "still", "just",* etc. Continuatives convey time designations that an event occurs "sooner" or "later" or continues for a period longer than what would be expected (Martin & Rose, 2007).

Analysis
Data and Methods

The data of the present study comprised extracts selected from two news channels: BBC news and Al-Jazeera English. To achieve the aim of the study, the researcher selected two extracts relating to events in Yemen.

The data was analysed pragmatically. The analysis was based on two central theories. The first was Levinson's Implicature (2000). The reason behind choosing this form of implicature was to show how linguistic expressions can be used to trigger certain presumptive meanings. The second theory was 'Appraisal Theory', especially that of Martin and Rose (2007). The reason behind choosing this theory is that it concerns itself with the expressions that reflect an attitude or evaluation, be it explicit through certain linguistic expressions or implicit and suggested by the context. The investigation of impartiality and neutrality requires investigating the linguistic expressions and how choice of certain terms rather than others can reflect certain judgments and evaluations, and consequently trigger the audience's emotion. Moreover, appraisal theory depends on Levinson's implicature to uncover unusual or extraordinary behaviour. In terms of appraisal theory, unusual behaviour which implicitly expresses an attitude of negative feeling, and consequently negative affect, is difficult to uncover. Levinson's presumptive meaning fills this gap by depending on M-inference, which indicates that making use of marked expression implicates unusual behaviour. Accordingly, this unusual behaviour will imply implicit feeling in terms of appraisal theory.

Moreover, Levinson's implicature is also useful for distinguishing facts from opinion. After analysing the utterances according to Levinson's presumptive meaning, depending on his three principles, Q, I and M (see Section two), the same extract will be investigated in accordance with appraisal theory to find out what manner of emotion, judgment, or appreciation is made. Then, impartiality will be tested in relation to bias, sensationalism, value judgment, and emotive language. Neutrality, on the other hand, will be tested in relation to the type of verbs used and whether the journalist adopts the same distance with both sides of the struggle or tends to be non-neutral and subjective in his/her use of certain expressions.

Subsequently, the rules of impartiality will be applied to reveal whether they are violated or followed. These rules are summarized as the notions that facts and viewpoints should not be mixed together; information should be attributed to its sources; the journalist should avoid expressions that convey comment or opinion; information related to creeds, religions, races should be mentioned only if absolutely needed; exclude any depiction considered offensive; and fact should be presented completely and precisely in addition to avoiding personal

pronouns. The journalist should not issue judgment, saying something is 'right' or 'wrong' or labelling certain people as benign and the other as malign.

Analysis of the Data

(1) "What is most heart-breaking about Yemen's humanitarian catastrophe is that it is completely and needlessly man-made. All the suffering we witnessed was completely preventable and could be stopped within days if the political will - by the warring factions and their supporters abroad - was there to do so" (BBC News, 2017).

The occasion of the extract is to show the abnormal suffering of the people who live under severe shortages of food.

In *"...Yemen's... is completely and needlessly"*, M- implicature is triggered. The utterance suggests that the *humanitarian catastrophe* is not ordinary or normal. It is postmodified by *"completely and needlessly"*. According to this periphrasis and in accordance with the M-principle that "what is said in an abnormal way indicates an abnormal situation" (Levinson, 2000), the following implicature is triggered: M+> the humanitarian catastrophe was extraordinary and abnormal since it was man-made, i.e., it could cause huge devastation. This extraordinary action will covertly lead to implicit affect that is negative since in its context the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen was a unique example of its kind. The noun *"catastrophe"* is subjective and expresses bad feeling. The phrase *"what is most heart-breaking"* is an explicit comment and also functions to intensify the catastrophe in Yemen. Such comment (in the terms of Hurcap, 2007) should be avoided for impartiality's sake. Also, the adverbs *"completely"* and *"needlessly"* are subjective, and they are expressions that carry an attitude function to upscale the force of a catastrophe that is fully man-made. As such, those who made or participated in this catastrophe are implicitly criticised.

In the second utterance, *"all the suffering… if the political will - by the warring factions and their supporters abroad - was there to do so",* an *if* clause captures "the inference of epistemic non-committedness associated with the conditional" (Levinson, 2000). This comes in correspondence with the Q-principle that "if the speaker asserted $A(W)$... and W [is] an informationally weaker expression than S, and the contrastive expressions <S, W>form a Horn scale... then one can infer that the speaker knows that the stronger statement $A(S)$... would be false" (p. 76). Subsequently, the utterance allows for the following implicature: Q clausal+> {(there may be a political will), or p~(there may be a political will), i.e., it is possible that there is a political will or it is possible that there is not a political will. Moreover, the same utterance also allows for I-implicature based on the I-principle: "assume the existence or actuality of what a sentence is about if that is consistent with what is taken for granted" (Levinson, 2000). Thus, the following implicature will be triggered: I+> if there be a political will, all the suffering can be prevented and stopped. The nouns *"suffering"* and *"warning"* trigger the audience's negative emotion. The adverb *"completely"* is subjective

and employed here to intensify the force of the attitude. Moreover, the verb *"could"* leaves space for doubt (Martin & Rose, 2007), so it does not convey the truth and is an indication of opinion (Bal, 2009) where neutrality is broken. Above all, the extract is a clear instance of sensationalism. All these strategies are clear violations of neutrality and impartiality.

(2) *"He wants friends and cash but did little to fix Yemen's internal problems... Critics say that more than a dancer, Salah was a dark horse of Yemen's tumultuous politics, playing off military and tribes to keep himself in power... but this was a weaker president abandoned by his political allies at home and under intense international pressure to hand over power"* (Al-Jazeera, 2017)

The extract's occasion is the death of Yemeni president Saleh. Yemen's former president Ali Abdulla Saleh was killed by the Houthi rebels. The reporter traces Saleh's presidency, showing his mismanagement and points of weakness (Rucinski, 1992).

"He wants friends and cash." In this utterance, the pronoun "he" refers to Saleh. Due to local co-reference preference, the utterance gives rise to I-implicature as follows: I+> "Saleh wants friends and cash". Levinson (2000) states that anaphora expressions demand pragmatic investigation as they are too general in semantic terms. Considering the whole utterance, it expresses bad feeling. The Yemeni president is implicitly criticised as a man who cares only for himself and his financial aims rather than for his own people.

"but he did little to..." One may think that *"little"* constitutes a scale with *"much"* as <much, little> but there is no scalar for antonyms (in the terms of Levinson, 2000). Alternatively, this utterance can also encourage the generation of I-implicature due to the I- principle (b): "assume that stereotypical relations obtain between referents or events" (Levinson, 2000). Thus, the implicature that is captured here is I- as follows: I+> he did not do much to solve Yemen's internal problem. What he did is intensified as being *"little"* and *"little"* in its turn functions to downscale the attitude, i.e., the amount produced is not much. The reporter does not express his endorsement and intends not to align the audience with what he says. The utterance encompasses negative affect that is expressed directly through physical expression by attributing a negative action to the president's personality. Moreover, Saleh is also criticised implicitly as the reporter conveys a personal judgment of criticism. He presents him as not competent enough and "he fails to live up to [the] socially desirable standards" (Eggines & Slade, 1997).

"Critics say that more than a dancer..." Due to the scale (disclose, say) and in harmony with the Q- principle that "if the speaker asserted $A(W)$ and $A(W)$ fails to entail an embedded sentence... then one can infer that the speaker does not know whether Q obtains or not (i.e., $\sim K(Q)$ or equally, $\{P(Q), P \sim (Q)\}$" (Levinson, 2000). Consequently, the following Q clausal

is captured: Q clausal+> {p (he may be more than a dancer...), or p~ (he may be more than a dancer...)}, i.e., it is possible that he is more than a dancer or it is possible that he is not more than a dancer. The verb *"say"* is a W verb and making use of it implicates that the S form *"disclose"* does not hold. The verb *"say"* (as it is based on Pajunen, 2008) is neutral, yet it does not entail the truth of its statement. The *"dark horse"* is a metaphor for the Yemeni president Saleh. Manipulating metaphor implies criticism for Saleh as a corrupt person. Metaphor activates implicit affect that is negative. The reporter attributes the utterance to a very general source that is *"the critics".* He does not specify these critics. Moreover, even if the reporter is not the author of the utterance, nonetheless, quoting it implicates relevance. When the reporter inserts certain opinions or attributes something to others, this implicates that they are "in some way relevant to his/her current communicative purposes" (White, 2005). Selection on the base of relevance implicates bias (Hofestetter & Buss, 1978). Describing Saleh as a *"dark horse"* carries a derogatory meaning and this is rejected by impartiality. Judging a person and discriminating regarding him on the base of political background is partial.

"...playing off military and tribes..." In this utterance no Q-implicature is generated since the reporter makes use of the S element in the scale <and, or>. Accordingly, the utterance gives rise to I-implicature activated by the conjunction buttressing of temporal sequence, i.e., p and then q, as follows: playing off military and then tribes to keep himself in power. Moreover, there is a personal judgment of criticism as to the personality of the former president. I-implicature can also be generated out of the ellipsis of the pronoun (he) before *"playing off",* since the I-principle encourages minimal expressions. Due to the connection between anaphora and ellipsis, one can generate the following: I+> he is playing off the military... to keep himself in power. Accordingly, Saleh exploited the military and the tribes to achieve personal aims.

 "...but this was a weaker president." Anaphora expressions require pragmatic investigation for the reason that in terms of semantics they are too general. As such, inferential specification and contextual resolution are of importance (Levinson, 2000). In line with this and in harmony with "local co-reference preference", the following implicature is triggered: I+> but Saleh was a weaker president.

At the same time, describing Salah as *"weaker"* rather than *"weak"* encourages the generation of M-implicature based on lexical doublets. This comes in line with Levinson's (2000) M-principle that "marked messages indicate marked situations". As a consequence, the comparative construction implicates that Saleh's weakness is not entirely ordinary. Hence, it implicates the following: M+> Saleh was not an ordinary president, but extraordinary, i.e., he was not able to manage his own country appropriately. This extraordinary behaviour promotes implicit negative emotion based on bad feeling as Saleh is

described as *"weaker"* (Martin & Rose, 2007). Expressions such as *"weaker"* are offensive, an approach which impartiality rejects. Describing Saleh as *"weaker"* is a form of explicit opinion that explicitly violates impartiality, which refuses to say that *this* is malign or *that* is benign (in the terms of Barkho, 2013).

"...abandoned by his political allies… intense international pressure to hand over power." This utterance suggests that Saleh had been abandoned by his political allies and handed over power in a non-ordinary way as he did this under "intense international pressure". The pressure is described as not only "international" but modified by being "intense". According to this lexical doublet ("intense international pressure" vs. "international pressure") and in harmony with M-implicature. Thus, the following implicature is captured: M+> he has been abandoned in an abnormal way and under extraordinary pressure, i.e., he was obliged to hand over power.

Describing a person as being abandoned indicates that he/she is undesirable; this also functions as a negative value judgment that is personal. As such, the extract encompasses personal judgment wherein the Yemeni president is presented as a weaker man who is not competent. He exploits his position to achieve personal aims. Fact is mixed with opinion to create more impact. Impartiality, as Keeble (2012) demonstrates, demands separating facts from opinions (Bell, 1997).

Conclusions

The study finds the following:

1- Journalists commonly violate the rules of impartiality as they cover their stories and depict other individuals. It is difficult to find any piece of news that strictly follows the rules of impartiality. On the contrary, most news items tend to be evaluative and judgmental, as people are normally criticised or condemned.
2- Most linguistic expressions used are those labelled as weak. They result from applying scalar and clausal implicatures. Rarely can one find the strong expressions that are supposed to reflect fact. The W form is sometimes connected with comment, to which, moreover, impartiality is supposed not to give rise.
3- The most pervasive implicature obtained is M-implicature. This promotes the conclusion that journalists rely on marked rather than unmarked expressions as the former aid them to implicitly convey their attitudes or opinions.
4- The selected extracts have reflected that impartiality is violated by inserting bias (in terms of selectivity), emotive expressions, and sensationalism. In their context, these create more impact.

5-Neutrality tends to be impracticable as journalists adopt stances. Subjective expressions are pervasive. Journalists can find the truth, yet they mirror the truth subjectively. Consequently, they intensify what they align themselves with, aiming to prompt the audience to consider such intensification as part of the event itself. Finally, rarely does news language contain positivity; negativity pervades every piece of news. Therefore, news channels are neither neutral nor impartial.

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