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A Critical Discourse Analysis of Arab and Western Leaders' Responses to Gaza Starvation
(2025): Constructing Silence, Evasion, and Moral Responsibility

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Wasit University

College of Education for Human Sciences

Department of English



**A Critical Discourse Analysis of Arab and Western Leaders'
Responses to Gaza Starvation (2025): Constructing Silence,
Evasion, and Moral Responsibility**

A thesis

Submitted to the Council of the College of Education for Human
Sciences, Wasit University, in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education in English Language and Linguistics

By

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July 2026 A.D.

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To

My inspiring mother

The soul of my dear father

My three beloved sisters

My ever-supportive friend, Rasha Hilal

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DHA	Discourse-Historical Approach
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States

Abstract

In recent years, political discourse has increasingly shaped humanitarian crises. The Gaza starvation crisis is among the most serious humanitarian emergencies in the contemporary world and is characterised by acute food insecurity and widespread malnutrition due to complex political and structural factors. Political discourse, in this context, shapes how the crisis is perceived by privileging humanitarian concern and concealing accountability. Although the crisis is severe, limited scholarly attention has been paid to the linguistic construction of responsibility in political discourse during humanitarian crises. To fill this gap, the current study aims to examine how selected Arab and Western leaders construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in response to the Gaza starvation crisis through linguistic patterns and discursive strategies. The study adopts an eclectic model based on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) discourse-historical approach within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. Through a qualitative research design, this study analyses 10 official speeches delivered in 2025, five by Arab leaders and five by Western leaders. The findings indicate that the examined leaders employ specific transitivity patterns, ideological-rhetorical strategies, and discourse-historical strategies to negotiate responsibility. These patterns and strategies construct silence by masking the responsibility of Israel, enact evasion by diverting attention from it, and project moral responsibility by foregrounding the leaders' humanitarian assistance. Within the historical and political context, this reflects the leaders' diplomatic, political, economic, and security interests with Israel and its major ally, the United States.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, Gaza starvation crisis, silence, evasion, moral responsibility

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Background of the Study

Kapucu et al. (2023) stated that no single definition of a humanitarian crisis is universally accepted. Nonetheless, crises are commonly perceived as an event or sequence of events that poses great danger to the health, safety, or well-being of a community or a number of individuals. Such crises are the result of a complex set of causes and factors, including political violence, military aggression, terrorism, and similar drivers.

In this context, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has become one of the most severe contemporary crises. In 2025, Israeli forces tightened the blockade of the Gaza Strip, blocking the border crossings and limiting the delivery of food, fuel, and other humanitarian supplies. The famine in Gaza cannot be interpreted as a natural disaster or an emergency. Instead, it has been described as the result of a deliberate starvation policy (Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network, 2025). As a result, the population have experienced highly critical rates of food insecurity, with areas in Gaza reaching phase five (catastrophe), which corresponds to famine levels (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC], 2025a). In this context, the World Health Organization (2025) reported that malnutrition rates were alarming because almost one in five children under the age of five is acutely malnourished.

Although the humanitarian implications of the Gaza crisis have been well-documented, the issue of how it is represented and framed in political discourse is also important. Crisis narratives can be used in political discourse to legitimise some

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types of inclusion and exclusion, perpetuate power dynamics, and influence political agendas (de Rycker & Mohd Don, 2013). In this respect, Barnett and Weiss (2011) suggested that humanitarianism is a normative tool whereby dominant actors seek specific goals. Humanitarian discourse can therefore both obscure structural causes of violence and permit the framing of crises as merely cases of suffering (Ticktin, 2014).

These narrative constructions are embedded in ideological and power relations. Discourse is strongly connected to power and ideology (Fairclough, 1995a). Similarly, van Dijk (1995) explained that powerful actors may influence public perception to advance their political interests and agendas. In this regard, van Leeuwen (2008) noted that the discursive representation of the social actors, whether including or excluding them, may serve as a strategy for obscuring responsibility.

Such processes of inclusion and exclusion are especially evident in political responses to the Gaza crisis, where discourse shows opposing positions. Various discursive and linguistic strategies are used by political leaders to depict the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Some adopt explicit language to denounce Israeli activities and support Palestinian rights. In contrast, others use more cautious rhetoric of de-escalation and diplomatic resolutions, such as a two-state solution (Al-Rawe, 2024).

In the current study, such discursive variations raise significant questions regarding how silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are linguistically constructed in particular Arab and Western leaders' speeches in 2025 in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. Against this backdrop, this study analyses the way in which these discursive strategies are grammatically, ideologically, and contextually realised within a Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA) framework.

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1.1. Statement of the Problem

The worst-case famine scenario now exists in the Gaza Strip. Recent reports stated that parts of the Strip have already hit two of the three famine thresholds. Almost 50% of pregnant and breastfeeding women are malnourished, and families subsist on a few staple foods with almost no dietary variety. This has become a critical nutritional crisis that can lead to irreversible and long-term consequences (World Food Programme, 2025).

Reacting to this growing humanitarian crisis, political leaders in various geopolitical contexts have made numerous statements about starvation in Gaza that are examined in this study. In this vein, political discourse is not neutral (Fairclough, 1989). Chilton (2004) argued that "politics is very largely the use of language" (p. 14). Political discourse thus has a very close relationship with the exercise of power in society (van Dijk, 2006). Therefore, the leaders' statements are significant in shaping how the crisis in Gaza and responsibility are perceived. They may focus on humanitarian concern. However, these remarks can blur responsibility, allowing patterns of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility to take shape without necessarily attributing structural causes of starvation.

Within this framework, silence cannot be regarded merely as an absence because what is not said carries discursive content (Vieira, 2020). Ferguson (2002) similarly observed that silence could be an effective social practice of withdrawal. In conjunction with silence, evasion is a political mechanism that does not face reality directly and leaves responsibility unclear (Galston & Kamarck, 1989). This usually occurs through discursive shifts that redirect the focus of the discourse (Clayman & Heritage, 2002). Moghaddam (2019) stated that such practices overlap with moral

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responsibility, which refers to the interpretation and evaluation of actions. This kind of responsibility is often invoked by political leaders during humanitarian crises to position themselves as morally responsible actors in the international arena. It often indicates the absence of political will to act rather than moral consciousness (Beardsworth, 2015).

In light of this, the Gaza conflict has attracted increasing academic interest. For instance, Benyza (2025) analysed the linguistic representation of the crisis in international reactions. Al-Awad (2024), on the other hand, examined its discursive formation in Arab and Western media discourse. Nonetheless, the linguistic analysis of political leaders' discourse regarding the Gaza starvation crisis is still limited. More specifically, there are few studies that have investigated the construction of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in leaders' discourse addressing the starvation crisis in Gaza. This is particularly important considering the significance of such discourse in determining how the crisis is perceived and who is blamed.

To fill this gap, the current study aims to examine the construction of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility at grammatical, ideological, and contextual levels in specific Arab and Western leaders' speeches in 2025 in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. To meet this aim, the study relies on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) Discourse-Historical Approach (henceforth, DHA). Examples 1.1 and 1.2 provided below show how the three strategies of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are linguistically developed in political discourse about the Gaza crisis.

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Example 1.1

This example is from a speech given by the president of Egypt, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, in which he stated:

"أن حياة الشعب الفلسطيني في قطاع غزة، ويمكن في الضفة الغربية أيضاً، تستخدم الآن كورقة سياسية للمساومة" (Ahram Gate, 2025, para. 7).

"The lives of the Palestinian people in Gaza, and possibly also in the West Bank, are now being used as a political bargaining card" (Ahram Online, 2025, para. 4).

According to Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the passive verb "are being used" eliminates the actor and foregrounds "the lives of the Palestinian people" as the goal. Furthermore, the circumstance of role "as a political bargaining card" implies moral responsibility by criminalising the actions of an unnamed actor. Within van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, "political bargaining card" invokes the victimisation strategy, constructing evasion by redirecting the focus to the situation rather than the actor. In line with Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the absence of an explicit mention of Israel through the nomination strategy is interpreted as strategic silence. This could indicate common political interests and diplomatic ties between Egypt and Israel.

Example 1.2

This example is taken from a statement made by the United States (henceforth, US) President, Donald Trump, about the US assistance to Gaza, in which he said:

"We gave 60 million dollars two weeks ago and nobody even acknowledged it" (Hindustan Times, 2025, 3:06:19).

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Drawing on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the material process "gave," with "we" as the actor and "60 million dollars" as the goal, foregrounds the donation process, which assigns moral responsibility. Based on van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the use of "we gave" refers to the positive self-presentation strategy. This creates evasion through shifting attention towards aid instead of the causes of the crisis. According to Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the recurrent nomination of the pronoun "we" generates a moral in-group and leaves other actors unnamed. This indicates strategic silence through the nomination strategy, which can reflect diplomatic relations and political interests between the US and Israel.

1.2. Research Objectives

The present study aims to:

1. Investigate the transitivity patterns employed by selected Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their responses in 2025 to the starvation crisis in Gaza.
٢. Find out the ideological-rhetorical strategies used by particular Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in these responses.
٣. Analyse how discourse-historical strategies are utilised by specific Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in these responses within historical and political contexts.

1.3. Research Questions

The current study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

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١. What transitivity patterns are employed by selected Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their responses in 2025 to the starvation crisis in Gaza?
٢. Which ideological-rhetorical strategies are used by particular Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in these responses?
3. How are discourse-historical strategies utilised by specific Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in these responses within historical and political contexts?

1.4. Procedures of the Study

To achieve the objectives of the study and draw the final conclusions, the following steps are adopted:

١. Reviewing the literature on the topic of starvation in Gaza, the notions of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility, in addition to the CDA approach.
٢. Gathering 10 official speeches produced in 2025 (five speeches delivered by Arab leaders and five by Western leaders) to address the aims of the study.
٣. Adopting an eclectic model for the analysis of the selected data, drawing on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA.
٤. Providing findings and discussion, drawing conclusions, and giving recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

1.5. Scope and Limits

The current study follows a qualitative research design. It adopts the CDA approach to examine the construction of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in selected Arab and Western leaders' speeches delivered in 2025 in response to the Gaza starvation crisis. The data comprise 10 selected extracts from speeches produced by five Arab and five Western leaders. The analysis adopts an analytical framework based on three models, namely Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study contributes to CDA literature by providing better insight into how silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are articulated in official political discourse in times of humanitarian crises. Political discourse cannot be interpreted in a superficial way. Instead, it needs to be analysed linguistically and contextually to understand the ways and reasons for framing agency and responsibility while maintaining a moral image.

This study can be useful to students, political discourse analysts, and researchers because it offers an eclectic analytical framework that is structured to study the implicit meanings in official speeches. Encouraging in-depth analysis of political language during humanitarian emergencies helps readers better understand the discursive construction of meaning and positioning to further political agendas.

1.7. Layout of the Study

This study includes five chapters. CHAPTER ONE covers the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, the

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procedures, the scope and limits, the significance, and the layout of the study.

CHAPTER TWO includes a review of the literature on the topic of starvation in Gaza, silence, evasion, and moral responsibility, the CDA approach adopted in the research, as well as some previous studies. CHAPTER THREE presents the research methodology, including the nature of the study, data collection and description, the criteria of data selection, the procedures of data analysis, the theoretical framework, and justifications for the selected models. CHAPTER FOUR is devoted to the analysis of the selected data, the findings, and the discussion. CHAPTER FIVE provides the conclusions, contributions of the current study, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to providing an overview of the theoretical aspects of this study. Starvation in Gaza is discussed in this chapter alongside silence, evasion, and moral responsibility. A theoretical background to the CDA approach, including its key concepts (ideology, power, and political discourse), and its approaches, is provided. Lastly, some previous studies related to the current study are presented.

2.1. Starvation in Gaza

According to de Waal (2017), the concept of starvation is both a process and an outcome. It is a process whereby actors deny the targeted individuals access to resources required to sustain their lives. When the population is deprived of food to the point of death, starvation occurs. In famines, infectious diseases are usually the leading cause of death due to hunger. The real issue is mass famine that arises when people, groups, countries, or classes are denied access to food and essential resources.

Conley and de Waal (2019) stated that famine can encompass diverse forms of behaviours. The primary factor is depriving people of food, which involves not only refusing them access to resources such as food stockpiles but also impeding their ability to trade, labour, and forage. Other forms of deprivation also occur, such as the degradation of public health, including the destruction of health facilities, forcing individuals to live in unhealthy situations, restricting access to clean water, and worsening housing and shelter. In this context, the decisions made by leaders in pursuit of political, military, or economic goals lead to starvation crimes. Starvation is

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used as a weapon of war or repression, although many of the acts that result in mass starvation are already unlawful under various international legal proscriptions.

This is evident in the Gaza Strip, a small area of approximately 365 square kilometres that has been marked by humanitarian crises, socioeconomic challenges, and geopolitical disputes. The area has experienced a rise in attacks by Israeli forces since the military escalation in October 2023, which has brought significant disruptions to daily life, infrastructure, and essential services. This has intensified existing vulnerabilities, particularly in terms of food security and hunger levels in Gaza. Estimates indicate that Israeli attacks in the Gaza Strip have resulted in the deaths of approximately 85,750 people, or eight percent of the population of 2.34 million Palestinians living there. Recording the full scope of the catastrophe is essential for historical responsibility and future efforts. This alarming mortality rate shows the necessity of an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian assistance (Khatib et al., 2024).

In this vein, Alaimo et al. (2020) maintained that hunger and food insecurity are severe issues in conflict regions like Gaza that affect the health and well-being of people, as well as the socioeconomic stability of societies. This is often exacerbated due to factors such as the lack of access to food, destruction of agricultural resources, displacement of people, and the disintegration of local markets.

There have been many reports about acute food shortages, lack of access to necessities, and a significant rise in the number of hungry individuals and households in the period following October 2023 (Haan et al., 2024). The population of Gaza faces significant risks to their health due to the extreme limitations on access to food that have been in place since the onset of the October 2023 conflict. Food insecurity

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has five stages, namely minimal, stressed, crisis, emergency, and catastrophe/famine (IPC, 2025b). Phase four (emergency) was applied to the entire Gaza population during September-October 2024. Approximately one year into the conflict, 1.84 million people in Gaza were at or above phase three (crisis) of acute food insecurity. There were 664,000 people in phase four and roughly 133,000 in phase five (catastrophic food insecurity). Households were severely affected by extreme hunger, fatigue, and food shortages. Acute malnutrition affected 10 times as many people as it did prior to the October 2023 conflict (United Nations [UN], 2024).

By September 2025, half a million people in the Gaza Strip are expected to reach the fifth stage of catastrophe (phase five), which is defined by an extreme shortage of food, starvation, destitution, and death. High levels of acute food insecurity (phase three or higher) are likely to affect the whole population in Gaza. The governorates of North Gaza, Gaza, and Rafah are expected to have high rates of malnutrition. Specifically, over 70,000 children under the age of five and 17,000 pregnant and lactating women are projected to experience acute malnutrition in Gaza. All parts of Gaza are under threat of famine (IPC, 2025b).

This food insecurity is further exacerbated by the extreme limitation of humanitarian relief actions. Humanitarian aid remains severely limited because of the high number of security incidents and the constant rejection of humanitarian access requests. Aid groups have reported that they have not been able to carry out their duties throughout the Gaza Strip since the war began. At the Rafah crossing, for example, shipments of food kits produced by Mercy Corps in March have lain idle in a queue of lorries. It is uncertain whether the aid trucks are permitted to enter Gaza, so they wait in line at the border gates (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2025). Mercy Corps (2024) affirmed that damaged infrastructure and unstable

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communication caused by power outages are obstacles to humanitarian aid operations in Gaza. Moreover, the inability of workers to deliver aid safely and efficiently also limits such operations, even if the trucks go through Israeli security checkpoints.

There have been numerous international reactions to these humanitarian issues. Benyza (2025) explained that the war is complex, and its entrenched nature is reflected in the mixed responses, which range from strong approval to open condemnation. The reactions of other countries are often based on existing political polarities and indicate a common international challenge of reaching agreement on such complex issues. The conflict has also shown the failure of the existing international institutions to address long-term conflicts and ensure the safety of civilians. Ultimately, the war in Gaza is widely viewed as a global wake-up call that a holistic and fair resolution to the Palestinian dilemma is urgently needed.

Overall, the Gaza Strip has now experienced a variety of problems, such as famine, inadequate living conditions, the illegal siege and occupation, settler colonialism, and the decline of the healthcare system. Such conditions have been described as a premeditated plan to torture and exterminate the Palestinian population, rather than a tragic outcome of war. The illegal blockade of Gaza must be addressed under international law, and the provision of humanitarian aid must be ensured (Smith et al., 2023). Food justice and food security in Gaza can be achieved only through the adoption of sound policies that address the structural causes of the genocide of the Palestinian people. This also involves the full realisation of their rights to sovereignty, self-determination, and the right to return to their homeland (UN, 2001).

2.2. Silence

According to Gray (2013), silence refers to a condition where nothing is said. Patton (1989) defined silence as the unspeakable, the overlooked, or the perceived but preferably unsaid. Silence is a concept that either discloses or hides something (Crocker, 1980). It is capable of performing several functions and can occur anywhere. When an actor's lack of action plays a significant role in contrast to their fundamental desires, this shows how the actor should act in a relevant situation. The connection between the desire to remain silent and the ability to recognise its existence is noteworthy. Silence is a condition of inactivity that is used in the context of individuals whose immobility differs from that of others. Most scholars fail to explore the possibility of silence as enabling choice in itself, just as speech is (Gray, 2013).

Gendron (2011) elucidated that the refusal of one side to talk about something that the other raises to retain power is an illustration of how silence can be used to demonstrate power. Silence, however, can also be a short-term opportunity for both parties to think about their prior exchanges and their preferred way of acting. The lack of spoken communication does not always mean that communication does not exist at all. The end of a discussion may have diverse implications for the communication flow. This enables a person to better understand the viewpoint of the other individual. Moreover, it demonstrates the ability to severely limit the complete expression of thoughts and feelings of the other party.

From a cultural perspective, Tannen (1985) proposed that silence can be deciphered as a positive communicative impression in most cultures, such as Eastern cultures. However, in the West, this may be interpreted as a sign of social coldness or

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non-cooperative behaviour. In this light, Ling (2003) maintained that silence may have various meanings according to the context.

In the analysis of political discourse, it is assumed that research on what is omitted is significant. Nevertheless, few studies specifically focus on concealment and silence in political discourse. This gap indicates a need for analytical frameworks that can reveal meaning beyond the surface level. Pragmatics and discourse analysis are merged in CDA where pragmatic concepts are often applied when linguistic content is studied in depth. Such approaches are also useful in explaining the connection between what is emphasised and what is hidden (Schröter, 2013).

Ferguson (2002) demonstrated that silence is positioned as detrimental to politics because it is usually perceived only as a restriction of speech applied to the weak. Silence in political discourse, which is normatively constructed, can never be more significant than absence. The subsequent discovery that silence can be used as resistance to dominance has made possible new approaches to its use in political practice. The argument, however, extends beyond this duality and examines how silence can be utilised to form identities and even communities rather than legitimise or even resist authority. Politics cannot fully establish and determine silence, as it may function in many ways, such as oppression, resistance, and community building.

When a work responds to an exigence or a situation that is to be addressed, it turns rhetorical. Silence is therefore rhetorically employed by a rhetor who responds to such an exigence (Bitzer, 1968). The silence of a politician may be strategic in that it does not conform to popular expectations. When the nature of that political silence is not clarified and later explained, this represents a way in which silence can be made strategic and political. However, the people then anticipate silence as an appropriate

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reaction in such a situation when the politician is able to give an adequate reason why they are silent (Brummett, 1980). The definitions and interpretations of silence seem to be absolutely conditional on circumstances since there can be no denotation without signs (Schröter, 2013).

Perez and Dionisopoulos (1995) argued that the strategy of silence can be used in political discourse by politicians in a number of ways. Some of the functions of silence include Rose Garden silence, the denial of the existence of problems in an effort to deny legitimacy, and avoidance by political leaders. In all these cases, politicians try to address state-related problems by using the rhetorical device of silence. The first function of strategically positioned political silence is called the Rose Garden. Through rhetorical silence, the president performs the role of the president even when they prefer not to participate in politics. This kind of rhetorical silence is important in that it protects the president from intrusive domestic and international issues. The idealised status of the president supersedes their platforms and opinions on both domestic and foreign policies. Using this strategy, the president is able to take a break without necessarily expressing their ideas. The second function involves denying the existence of a problem in an effort to undermine its political legitimacy.

The third function of silence that politicians apply in political discourse is avoidance. In this context, avoidance denotes that a rhetor is silent on a certain issue but not necessarily completely silent. During protests and disturbances, politicians have to decide whether to take a stand on the issue or remain silent. A politician uses the avoidance technique when they prefer not to discuss a certain issue. In the face of political silence, the politician can attempt to evade responsibility through avoidance during a crisis (Heath, 1978).

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This tactical type of avoidance is especially evident in political reactions to the Gaza crisis. Leaders sometimes decide to adopt an avoidance strategy by taking a neutral stance on the Gaza crisis, instead of condemning one side or absolving the other. The global reaction to the situation in Gaza can be viewed as an example of this. The frequent themes in the reaction of the world to the war in Gaza are global condemnation of the deaths of civilians on both sides, frequent appeals to an immediate ceasefire, and an ongoing debate about the right of Israel to self-defence (Benyza, 2025).

This avoidance extends beyond the political leaders. The Lancet (2025) reported that despite the severity of the consequences of the famine in Gaza, many medical schools and health professional organisations that claim to value social justice have been silent in the face of the atrocities against the civilian population in Gaza. The United Nations Security Council has also remained unresponsive despite repeated reports regarding the killing, injury, devastation, malnutrition, sickness, torture, and repeated displacement.

2.3. Evasion

Dou and Zhang (2007) demonstrated that evasion refers to the intentional use of unclear, confusing, or indirect utterances that usually occur when dealing with a problematic topic. Evasive messages are a means of avoiding directness (Bradac, 1993). Harris (1991) stated that a reply is evasive when either it challenges the question or it does not give a straightforward answer. Pyle and Karinch (2018) illustrated that an evader is a person with a listening and information-processing style that makes it difficult for them to answer questions as they may have something to hide.

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Galasiński (2000) indicated that the two major types of evasion tactics are overt and covert evasion. Overt evasion is carried out by explicit expression, indirect suggestion, and presenting oneself as someone who should not be asked. On the other hand, covert evasion is carried out by changing the textual context of the question, the focus of the question, or both the focus and the textual context of the question. It should be noted that overt evasion tactics are more evident than covert tactics.

Obeng (2002) mentioned that individuals can avoid embarrassing questions in informal discussions. However, politicians cannot avoid debate, so they resort to evasion. By using this strategy, they do not answer questions that may expose sensitive information, compromise their reputation, or jeopardise policy objectives and opportunities (Clayman, 2001; Galasiński, 2000). To maintain voter confidence and increase their chances of electoral success, politicians apply evasion tactics that shield them from embarrassing revelations (Al-Sahlanee & Abd Al-Rudaa, 2021). According to Obeng (1997), evasion is a strategic and purposeful tool for protecting and advancing political careers. Political rhetoric is affected by praise, criticism, loyalty, alliances, bargaining, and competitiveness. Politicians often resort to indirect and possibly vague communication techniques to cope with these difficulties. Lauerbach (2001) stated that these tactics can also serve political purposes, yet they do not come without costs. Continuous avoidance may raise the level of scepticism, alienate the public, and decrease voter turnout.

Building on this, a politician makes a distinction between answering directly and paraphrasing when responding to a question. This practice serves to simplify difficult queries and avoid the topic. Some cases may result in avoiding the question, such as summarising the subject, shifting to another topic, and answering part of the question. The latter case involves answering the first part of the question while

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evading the second part through various evasive methods (Clayman, 1993). Taken together, evasion may serve to avoid issues, preserve one's reputation, reduce adverse responses, avoid being blamed or speaking about specific issues that are generating conflicts in the media, and avoid appearing dishonest while concealing underlying motivations. In addition, evasion is mainly employed by politicians and presenters to persuade rather than to inform (Obeng, 2002).

In relation to the international response to the Gaza crisis, there is an obvious case of evasion, in the sense that the international community deliberately sidesteps condemning Israel while at the same time providing structural support to Israel. This assistance contributes to the perpetuation of aggressive Israeli policies against the Palestinian people (Siddique & Khan, 2025). Although humanitarian relief is necessary, Benyza (2025) noted that reactions remain reserved due to geopolitical interests. This collusion leads to a gap between what politicians say and what they do.

2.4. Moral Responsibility

According to Chernyshenko et al. (2018), responsibility implies that people have duties towards others, be willing to perform such duties, and realise that their actions have implications. Moral responsibility is the extent to which an individual believes that another individual or group has acted wrongly and ought to be held responsible for breaking moral standards by acting inappropriately or failing to act (Skitka et al., 2015). Moral responsibility is categorised as descriptive rather than normative (Bauman & Skitka, 2009).

Unlike the normative perception of how individuals ought to allocate moral responsibility, the reviewed theories and studies are based on how individuals assign this kind of responsibility. In contrast to the term "ethical," which denotes

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communitywide standards of right and wrong, "moral" is used to denote the standards of an individual with regard to fundamental notions of right and wrong. In reality, social norms of good and evil often coincide with morality. For instance, the vast majority of people agree that fraud and murder are immoral (Skitka et al., 2005).

Other theorists distinguish between moral and non-moral judgements by specifying the relational processes that determine moral importance. Moral responsibility judgements concern situations in which moral agents harm moral patients (Gray et al., 2012). In other words, a responsibility judgement is morally important when the subject can choose freely, when they commit an act that involves the infliction of harm, and when the object of the action suffers harm (Wisneski et al., 2016).

More importantly, moral responsibility judgements determine who to praise and blame. These judgements affect moral character evaluations, which largely shape how individuals are perceived by others and influence the tendency to build or maintain relationships with them. The attribution of blame or praise is driven by the actor's moral responsibility for a positive or negative outcome. The presence or absence of explanations or excuses often determines how responsibility influences blame. As an example, an actor can claim that an event was either beneficial or contributed to another desirable event even after being held responsible for a harmful outcome (Malle et al., 2014).

Concerning responsibility in politics, Vetterlein (2018) elucidated that it is the result of interactions and deliberations among political actors to solve problems through policy. A typology of responsibility is further provided by building a triangular conception of responsibility between a subject, object, and authority.

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Sienknecht and Vetterlein (2024) indicated that moral responsibility is an important concept in scholarly discussions and political debates. French (1984) emphasised that a morally responsible politician is someone who can be held accountable for their actions with regard to the intent and outcomes of their actions.

In the last two decades, global leaders have often emphasised the moral responsibility to end unjustifiable human suffering, address vulnerability to climate change, and reduce poverty in the world. This language of moral obligation, though important in itself, obscures the absence of international political agency regarding these issues. In other words, the regularly invoked appeal to "our moral responsibility" towards those most in need is more symptomatic of an absence of political will and action than of a new global moral consciousness (Beardsworth, 2015).

Goodhart (2017) noted that political discourse lacks moral responsibility, particularly when it comes to systemic problems of injustice such as exploitation and poverty. He argued that the traditional philosophical conceptions of responsibility that focus on morality and empirical evidence often do not help address these complex issues. Moral responsibility in political discourse is inadequate to address systematic inequalities, and instead a more flexible, politically oriented understanding of responsibility is proposed. The moral responsibility embedded in traditional discourse is weak, thus limiting collective political action to rectify injustice. Political engagement has the strength to challenge established norms and redefine accountability.

In practice, the responsibility to protect is an ethical obligation of the international community to safeguard populations. Its inability to be implemented,

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however, in a strong, consistent, and coherent manner in response to the Israeli attack on Gaza points to the fundamental weaknesses of the norm. It validates arguments about isolationism and the alienation of the doctrine from reality (Hobson, 2022). Moses (2024) affirmed that the true measure of the value of a norm is not when it is useful to the strong, but when it runs contrary to that. The responsibility to protect demonstrates the highest marginal value in the case of Gaza, but it is not the only norm tested by this measure. The basis of human rights, international humanitarian law, and humanitarianism can be questioned as well. It is the politics of military power that prevails in each instance.

2.5. Critical Discourse Analysis: An Overview

Gill (2000) indicated that knowledge of CDA presupposes an understanding of what is meant by discourse. The term "discourse" may have varied meanings for different individuals. Discourse is a social act that individuals employ in speaking and writing to promote positive attributes, assign blame, or offer apologies. Widdowson (2004) defined it as "the pragmatic process of meaning negotiation" (p. 8). Mayr (2008) described it as "language above the clause" (p. 7).

In this respect, Eriyanto (2006) expressed that discourse analysis in linguistics is a response to formal approaches to language, which lay stress on words, phrases, and sentences rather than on interactions among them. Discourse analysis examines language at higher levels (Sheyholislami, 2001). In other words, besides phonological, morphological, grammatical, and semantic features, high-level properties have been proposed. These are coherence, themes, topics of news stories, general schematic forms, and rhetorical structures of the text (van Dijk, 1988).

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According to Fairclough (1995a), the term "critical" is what makes CDA different from other discourse analysis approaches. This concept exposes the relationships and elements that language users conceal. Also, the word "critical" is applied in the sense of attempting to bring out relationships that an individual would otherwise overlook, including those between language, power, and ideology (Fairclough, 2001). Moreover, Loke (2004) argued that the term "critical" is frequently applied to a broad set of nouns, such as critical theory, critical literacy, critical approaches, critical applied linguistics, and others.

CDA is a form of discourse analysis that focuses on the way language is used to exert power in society. It highlights the relationship between discourse, power abuse, domination, and inequality. Language can be employed by elites to carry out strategies of dominance (van Dijk, 1993). CDA initially emerged in Europe in the second half of the 1980s. The first scholars to use this approach were Fairclough, van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). Discourse makes it difficult to identify the social practices of individuals. Therefore, a key feature that differentiates CDA is that it exposes social discursive behaviours of individuals (Fairclough, 2001).

CDA is based on critical linguistics, which was established by the scholars of the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom (henceforth, UK). Critical linguistics seeks to uncover the embedded ideologies and power relations in the use of language as they are manifested (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018). Although CDA is a more recent development, both approaches are used interchangeably (Wodak, 2001).

In this regard, Fairclough (1995a) elucidated that CDA, a transdisciplinary approach, studies and evaluates the use of language in social, cultural, and political

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contexts. It recognises that language is an effective means of communicating and influencing ideologies, power, and social structures rather than an objective instrument. Wodak (2001) showed that CDA requires the application of a wide range of disciplines, such as rhetoric, textual linguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and classical applied linguistics.

With the ultimate goal of promoting social justice and equality, CDA aims to reveal hidden meanings, implicit biases, and hegemonic discourses. It is "fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language" (Wodak, 1995, p. 204). Fowler et al. (1979) explained that language users employ some lexical items, discursive forms, and structures to influence and persuade audiences at social and institutional levels. Depending on the speaker's perspective, this discourse can be politically or ideologically motivated.

Van Dijk (1998) noted that one of the most important features of CDA is how ideology operates in discourse. He described ideology as a set of beliefs, representations, and values that benefit certain social groups. CDA attempts to understand the impact of social norms and power relations by studying the role of language in the construction, distribution, and legitimisation of ideologies. This approach examines discursive structures, linguistic decisions, and presuppositions to reveal the concealed ideologies that support and maintain social injustice. According to van Dijk (2003), research in CDA should meet certain criteria to be effective. They are as follows:

1. The work of CDA is often interdisciplinary. It pays much attention to the relations between discourse and society to adequately examine social problems or subjects.
2. The main focus of CDA is the use of writing and speech by participants of social

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groups to maintain or challenge (group) power, dominance, and inequality relations.

3. The major concern of most CDA researchers is the underlying ideologies that either support or oppose the continuity of dominance or inequality.

CDA analysts seek to expose inequity in positions of power, encourage people to take action to rectify societal issues, and provide a voice to the voiceless (Blommaert, 2005). Van Dijk (1993) asserted that several key issues, such as the general state of oppression, injustice, and inequality, have been highlighted by critical discourse analysts in the 1990s. Researchers have paid more attention to the problems of immigrants, refugees, and underrepresented communities.

2.5.1. Key Concepts of Critical Discourse Analysis

According to van Dijk (1998), CDA focuses on ideology, power, and political discourse. It considers how these concepts are integrated into discourse, as this reflects the aim of this approach to draw attention to social issues.

2.5.1.1. The Concept of Ideology. This concept was first introduced by Antoine Destutt de Tracy during the French Revolution. He defined ideology as the study of ideas (Heywood, 2021). This perspective is reinforced by the fact that certain ideas are not divinely or naturally inspired but are created through social context (Richardson, 2007). Eagleton (1991) clarified that the concept of ideology is a combination of the terms "idea" and "logy." "Logy" refers to the scientific study of a given phenomenon. In this sense, ideology can be considered the study of human concepts. Hodge and Kress (1993) noted that ideology is "a systematic body of ideas, organised from a particular point of view" (p. 6). The ideology of an individual entails their beliefs, values, and attitudes (van Dijk, 1998). Another definition of ideology is the process behind the production of norms, values, and beliefs of social life. It is a set

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of ideas that characterises particular social groups and reflects ideas that are influenced by society (Eagleton, 1991).

In this vein, ideology may be described as a form of social cognition, which is shared among members of social groups. Ideologies are the basis of the social activities of a group as they shape its discourse and act as an instrument of development, reproduction, and contestation. The discursive aspect of ideology shows how audiences recognise ideological discourse, how ideas shape language use in daily life, and how discourse is based on representations of ideologies in society (van Dijk, 1998).

Although numerous scholars have discussed various types of ideology in many aspects, van Dijk (1995) provided a more insightful idea of the concept by blending its basic elements. He outlined them as follows:

1. Notably, ideology consists of what people think about and what is commonly studied by psychologists.
2. The linguistic theory holds that ideology is not innate knowledge, but it can be learned or modified only through verbal or written communication.
3. Group membership and value judgement represent two socially situated aspects of ideology that are commonly examined by sociologists and social scientists.

The concept of ideology has many definitions, including a political belief system, the ideas that influence people in a social context, the ideas that the ruling classes advance, and the development of the sense of community (Eagleton, 1991). These ideas are therefore necessary to construct and structure the political and social domains. It is through their ideas that human beings are able to understand the world they live in (Freedon, 2003). Van Dijk (2006) explained that ideology is a term that is

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commonly applied in both social sciences and the media. It refers to the dogmatic and distorted beliefs of other people. Social and cognitive elements of ideologies often need to be merged into a general framework.

Van Dijk (2008) mentioned that discourse as a social practice and the minds of people including their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies, as well as other social or personal representations are subject to control. Mind control is an indirect action of discourse, a premeditated but not always explicit consequence. Those who control discourse can manipulate the minds of people in a subtle way. Moreover, since the mind determines the actions of people, mind control is also a form of indirect action control.

Furthermore, this manipulation of ideology in discourse can be seen in how actors in politics present themselves and others. The assertion of "our" good attributes and "their" bad attributes and the minimisation of "our" bad attributes and "their" good ones are unmistakable signs of political ideologies in political discourse. Such a general strategy can be observed across discourse contexts (van Dijk, 2006).

According to Fairclough (1995a), an important feature of ideology is that "ideologies are propositions that generally figure as implicit assumptions in texts, which contribute to producing or reporting unequal relations of power" (p. 14). Thus, Fairclough emphasised that ideologies operate implicitly rather than explicitly to realise particular agendas.

2.5.1.2. The Concept of Power. Fairclough (1995b) elucidated that one of the key concepts of CDA is power. He described it as unequal power exercised by those in authority. It is a social interplay of groups in which the dominant group determines the attitudes and behaviours of the subordinate group. Fowler (1991) described power

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as "the ability of people and institutions to control the behaviours and material lives of others" (p. 61). Craig (2004) expressed that power is not confined to individuals but also operates within larger societies. There are two forms of power, namely cognitive power and behavioural power. The first affects people's minds while the second affects their behaviours (van Dijk, 1995). Power refers to the ability of elites or powerful individuals to express their social and political views directly or indirectly. Therefore, it is a means through which people can create, disseminate, and shape discourse in various forms, as well as access and control it (Fairclough, 1995b). In political discourse, power can be gained and used through continuous efforts of political actors or institutions to prevent and manage possible conflicts (Chilton, 2004, as cited in Al-Hilu, 2023).

The basic consequence of power in society is inequality in the sense that power permits both inclusion and exclusion, selection and differentiation. Although one may argue that power is not inherently negative, people in authority may not share this view (Blommaert, 2006). The field of CDA can be regarded as a sub-branch of discourse analysis that focuses on several conceptual dimensions of language use, such as domination, inequality, and power abuse. These concepts are applied across social, political, and anthropological contexts (van Dijk, 1998). Van Dijk (1993) emphasised that the ultimate goal of CDA is to reveal social inequality, which is manifested in the behaviour of people in positions of high social status when interacting with others through language.

2.5.1.3. The Concept of Political Discourse. Chilton and Schäffner (2002) maintained that political discourse is concerned with politics, so it is essential to understand what politics is. Politics has been described as a struggle for power because the acquisition of power is the main objective. Political language studies

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discourse as a means of achieving dominance. Van Dijk (2006) explained that political discourse is defined as discourse concerned with power struggles or the manner in which power is exercised. In this way, discourse is used in election campaigns and other political activities. Consequently, the analysis extends to examining how language is processed within political contexts.

Bayram (2010) suggested that this type of discourse is an important tool used by politicians to set objectives for their constituencies, gain support, give their political views credibility, control situations, influence the public, and disseminate the dominant ideology. It enables politicians to persuade the audience to support their agenda. Schäffner (1997) noted that political discourse is a subset of discourse with functional and thematic dimensions. It is functional as it helps achieve political goals. It is thematic as it is primarily concerned with political concepts, issues, and actions. By analysing political discourse, one can detect political ideologies and demonstrate how language is used to shape public opinion.

Such a discourse is one of the primary areas in which CDA is usually utilised as a research instrument. It covers debates, political speeches, and presidential campaigns that are referred to as genres (Bloor & Bloor, 2013). In this context, discourse refers to the use of text in a specific context (van Dijk, 2006). The overall concept of context includes location, event, action, and identity. Considering the impact of context on discourse, politicians ought to address political issues within appropriate contexts to achieve their goals (van Dijk, 1997). According to van Dijk (1993), political discourse encompasses all the actors who carry out their responsibilities in political events either directly or indirectly. It is not limited to the discourse of politicians who perform political acts. However, it involves the political behaviour of the media, political parties, power institutions, and political actors. It

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examines the ways in which identities are represented, ideologies are restructured and expressed, and power is abused and manipulated.

2.5.2. Major Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis

2.5.2.1. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Approach. Norman Fairclough is considered one of the most significant pioneers of CDA due to his major contribution to the field (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). He stated that he was primarily interested in making people aware of language as it was the first step towards not being subordinate to the power of other people (Fairclough, 1989). Fairclough (2003) emphasised that the major discourse analysis methods, including pragmatics and sociolinguistics, lack a critical perspective of discourse. He introduced his approach to CDA to develop a social theory of discourse. Fairclough demonstrated that the traditional division between linguistics and other social sciences resulted in the establishment of CDA.

Fairclough (1995a) presented CDA as a means of analysing discourse in relation to ideology and power. He indicated that ideology is a set of propositions that construct or reproduce unequal power relations and dominance. Ideologies are typically represented as implicit assumptions in texts. Fairclough conceptualised power in terms of the relationship between interlocutors and their power to exploit others and produce texts in unfair ways.

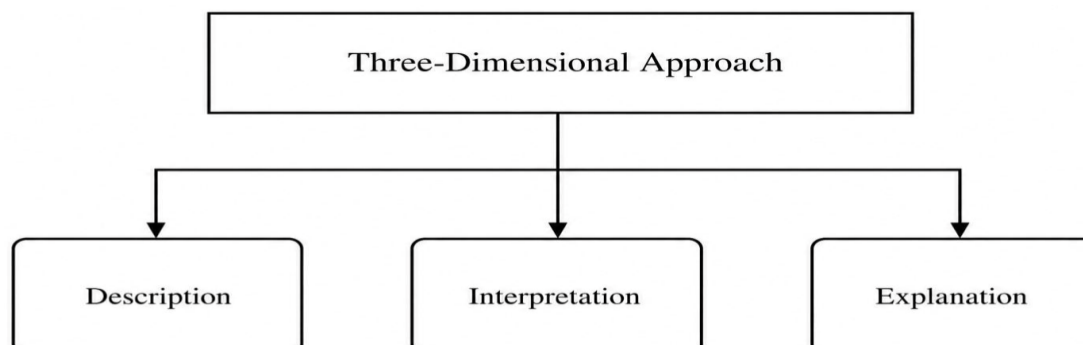
Rogers (2004) elaborated that CDA "includes not only a description and interpretation of discourse in context, but also offers an explanation of why and how discourses work" (p. 2). Thus, Fairclough developed three stages of discourse analysis within his three-dimensional approach, including description, interpretation, and explanation. The three stages are also described as three interconnected

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dimensions, namely the textual dimension, the discursive dimension, and the social dimension. The initial phase of the analysis is the textual, descriptive one, which is concerned with the formal aspects of the text. This dimension consists of three components, which include text structure, grammar, and vocabulary (Fairclough, 2001). According to Fairclough (1989), the second phase is concerned with exploring text production (writing, speaking, and designing) and consumption (reading, listening, and viewing) processes.

In connection with the second phase, situational context and intertextuality are important aspects of the interpretation. The main emphasis of situational context is on the immediate circumstances, which form an element of the interpretation process. Situational context aims to answer four major questions in the communication events. First, it examines what occurs by addressing the content of the events, goal, and activity type. Second, it attempts to find an answer to who is involved by referring to the theme of the situation. Third, it considers the relationships among participants, or power relations, which are established and maintained during a particular speech event. Fourth, it discusses the role of language in that context by correlating the text with the situation (Fairclough, 2001). Within this stage, Fairclough (2003) articulated that intertextuality is applied to describe the incorporation of a particular text into a previous text. Moreover, he explained that interdiscursivity operates across different genres beyond the spoken and written texts.

Al-Mas'udi and Al-A'mery (2021) mentioned that in the third stage, there is an examination of sociocultural practices which are embodied in the hidden ideologies that govern the power relations of discourse. At this level of analysis, critical analysis aims at revealing the sociocultural practices and the formation of ideological patterns.

Figure 2.1*Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Approach*

Note. Adapted from *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (p. 98), by N. Fairclough, 1995a, Longman.

2.5.2.2. Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach. Teun van Dijk is one of the most important figures in the CDA community. One of the main concepts of van Dijk's approach is social cognition. This notion is defined as socially shared representations of social arrangements, groups, and relations together with mental processes such as interpretation, reasoning, and thinking (van Dijk, 1999). According to Zaher (2009), cognition serves as a mediator between individuals and groups, as well as between action and discourse. Social cognition is applied to examine the relations between discourse and dominance and to explain how discourse achieves persuasion. Van Dijk (2001) referred to his approach to CDA as the socio-cognitive approach because of its explicit focus on social cognition.

Within this framework, CDA is a branch of discourse analysis concerned with how language is utilised in social and political situations to enact, reproduce, and resist social power abuse, dominance, and inequality. In such research, critical discourse analysts take an overt position, attempting to understand, expose, and

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ultimately oppose social inequalities (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). Van Dijk (2001) further highlighted that the basic concepts of CDA are ideology, hegemony, reproduction, domination, and power. Similarly, Fairclough (1995b) indicated that CDA focuses on "the social reproduction of relations of domination" (p. 24).

Based on these concepts, van Dijk's theory suggests that discourse has three dimensions, namely text, social cognition, and social context. The text dimension looks at how discursive techniques and text structure reinforce certain topics. In this regard, social cognition is concerned with the influence of discourse on people's thoughts. Finally, social context demonstrates how discourse shapes society and vice versa (Eriyanto, 2006). The three dimensions of van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach are as follows:

1. Text Structure

The textual dimension involves the study of how a particular theme is stressed using discourse strategies and textual structure. Van Dijk divided the structure of the text into three layers that complement each other and can explain the way the media reports an event through a particular linguistic choice. These layers are classified into macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure (Eriyanto, 2006). Van Dijk (2004) illustrated that the macrostructure of a discourse is the general meaning (global meaning) which is apparent in the selected topic or theme. The superstructure is a discourse structure connected to the textual components organised to create the whole news report. In other words, superstructure is a schematic structure of a text or speech which consists of an introduction, content, and conclusions. Microstructure can be analysed through different dimensions of discourse such as syntactic, semantic, stylistic, and rhetorical features.

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2. Social Cognition

Van Dijk (1988) elucidated that discourse analysis involves examining both text structure and production. A text is meaningless in itself, as meaning is constructed through the mental processes of language users. The basic concept of social cognition is reformulated more clearly to incorporate person perception, group perception, attitude formation, and interaction.

3. Social Context

This dimension examines the processes of production and reproduction related to an individual or an event, and the discourse that develops in society. To illustrate this, when van Dijk's model is applied to a news discourse on sexual harassment against women, it is important to look at how gender discourse develops in society (Miller, 1989).

Van Dijk (1998) introduced discourse analysis as a form of ideology analysis. Ideology is the core of social representations and a schema for out-group and in-group relations. Ideology is the source that symbolises the goals, principles, and interests of the group. In addition, ideology affects individual cognition of members. Under the strategy of "us versus them," groups can present themselves positively and others negatively (van Dijk, 1995).

Considering this, van Dijk (1993, 2002) introduced the ideological square model to study and relate discourse production and understanding to social situations. Van Dijk's ideological square model is a major framework in CDA. He framed it in terms of the polarisation of "us" and "them." Discursive patterns are applied to emphasise the good of the in-group and the bad of the out-group, while de-

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emphasising the bad of the in-group and the good of the out-group. In other words, each linguistic component of a text is employed to demonstrate the polarisation between "us" and "them," which can be viewed through the following general techniques:

1. Good Self-Representation: The members of the in-group (us) are addressed positively by using this strategy through minimising their weaknesses and highlighting their strengths.
2. Negative Other-Representation: It implies the use of speech to paint the out-group (them) in a negative light by highlighting their negative characteristics and downplaying the positive ones.

Figure 2.2

Van Dijk's Ideological Square

Emphasise our good things	Emphasise their bad things
De-emphasise our bad things	De-emphasise their good things

Note. Adapted from "Discourse and Ideology," by T. A. van Dijk, in T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction* (p. 396), 2011, SAGE Publications.

2.5.2.3. Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach. Todolí et al. (2006) stated that Wodak is among the earliest pioneers in CDA. Her work represents a significant contribution to CDA methods. Wodak emphasised the interdisciplinary nature of CDA. In this vein, Reisigl and Wodak (2001) mentioned that the DHA focuses on the importance of context. Therefore, it plays a significant role in CDA (Datonji & Amousou, 2019). This method is inspired by the Frankfurt School, which emphasises the significance of historical events and political discourse in communities. Wodak's approach aims "to incorporate systematically all available background data in the analysis and interpretation of the numerous layers of a written or spoken text" (Wodak, 1995, p. 209).

Reisigl and Wodak (2001) maintained that the historical context is explored and combined with discourse and text analyses. It is stated that "all discourses are historical and can therefore only be understood with reference to their context" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 15). According to Wodak and Ludwig (1999), this means texts cannot be interpreted outside their context. Discourses have a diachronic and synchronic relationship, indicating that the events are related and intertwined. Building on this, the DHA identifies two important premises. First, discourses are always affected by ideology and power. Second, discourses can be considered historical because they are related to a number of other communication events.

Wodak (2001) stated that CDA makes decisions regarding different choices beyond what is considered right or wrong because decisions are understood at each level of the study. Another aspect of the field entails the elucidation of whether subjective interpretations of discursive events are more suitable than others. Furthermore, Wodak asserted that triangulation is among the core concepts of CDA, which helps researchers reduce bias and partial interpretation. This is because it

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enables researchers to deal with a wide range of data, methodologies, theories, and background information. The triangulation is founded on the notion of context that involves multiple levels such as the descriptive level, the socio-political and historical level, the extralinguistic level, the linguistic context level, and the intertextual level.

Reisigl and Wodak (2009) elucidated that the DHA considers extralinguistic social and sociological influences, the history of an organisation or institution, frames of situations, as well as intertextual and interdiscursive connections among utterances, texts, genres, and discourses. Of these, intertextuality has special significance. It is a term used to describe the connection between past and present texts. The connection can be expressed in different forms, including direct mention of a subject or theme, statements of the same events, allusions or evocations, and the transfer of important points from one work to another.

Relevant to intertextuality, recontextualisation refers to the transfer of predetermined components into other contexts. When an element is taken out of one context, the decontextualisation process takes place. Then, when the same element is put in another context, the process of recontextualisation occurs. The element (partially) acquires new meaning since meaning is constructed through use. An example of recontextualisation is seen in the selective coverage of a political speech in various newspapers, compared to the original speech (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). In addition, interdiscursivity "occurs when different discourses and genres are articulated together in a communicative event" (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 73).

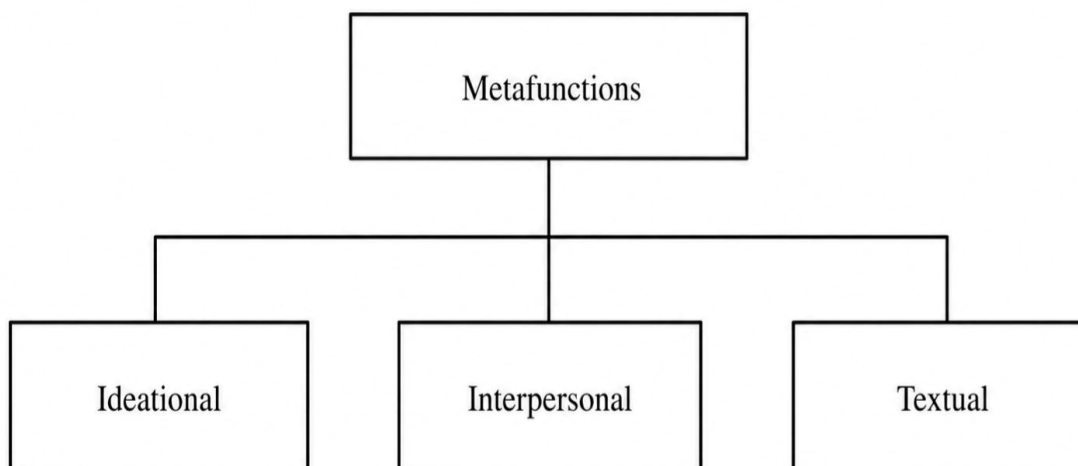
In this regard, the DHA is an integration of multidisciplinary research, ethnographic inquiry, and theoretical discourse studies. This approach is furthered by concentrating on certain categories, including macro-structural and text-inherent

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elements developed within the DHA. It is evident that the DHA is concerned with good self-presentation as well as negative other-presentation. For instance, this approach is interested in the way that antisemitic stereotypes are nurtured in wider discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2008).

2.5.2.4. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach. Sakrikar (2019) asserted that systemic functional linguistics (henceforth, SFL) developed by M.A.K. Halliday is an important approach in discourse analysis. It is a semiotic approach, which is concerned with making-meaning, learning, and social transformation (Gebhard & Accurso, 2020). Sakrikar (2019) indicated that SFL is mainly a context-based language theory. The main components of this approach are context, language, and functional grammar. It supports a view of language that is rooted in how it is used to construct reality and carry out social activities. Language is depicted as functional, referring to the fact that language is a systematic means of generating and exchanging meaning, similar to other semiotic systems.

According to Halliday (1985), SFL is a strong framework for characterising and simulating language as a resource for meaning-making and choice. The theory considers the situational and cultural contexts of language use in addition to formal aspects of language. Halliday proposed that context, structure, system, stratification, and metafunction are the primary semiotic features that organise the structure of any language. He used the term "metafunction" to refer to the functions that language serves. Bloor and Bloor (2013) maintained that the metafunctions of language can be divided into three main components, including the ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions.

Figure 2.3*Metafunctions of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics*

Note. Adapted from Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar (p. 30), by M. A. K. Halliday and C. M. I. M. Matthiessen, 2014, Routledge.

In the ideational function, language plays an important role in expressing experiences of the world. When content is the primary factor, the focus shifts to the clear communication of information so that it can be easily and quickly perceived. This system explains phenomena in the world and in human consciousness through modelling experiential meanings in terms of participants, processes, and circumstances. The interpersonal function is connected with creating and maintaining social relationships. This function involves modality since the speaker is also capable of expressing their personal attitudes to the ideational content of what is said (and personal judgement of it). The system comprises two major components, namely mood and residue (Halliday, 1985).

The textual function deals with the organisation of discourse and the structuring of clauses to achieve cohesion, coherence, and information flow (Ilham et

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al., 2025). Similarly, Halliday (1985) stated that this function deals with the generation of texts rather than only individual sentences. This element structures information into units and avoids redundancy, giving the message cohesion, whereby the wording of sentences in discourse is considered and connected to that of prior sentences. It also provides coherence in which the ideas are presented in a logical and meaningful sequence. The text can be divided into two types of structures, namely informational (new and given) and thematic (theme and rheme).

Halliday (1967) defined the theme as the "point of departure" of a clause that is typically actualised as the leftmost English constituent. In this respect, a theme is the beginning of an utterance and can be found in every basic sentence. According to Mathesius (1942), this is what the speaker sets as the foundation of the message. Meanwhile, the rheme is everything that follows, or what the speaker says about or in relation to this initial point. Continuing this distinction, Eggins (1994) noted that the theme normally carries known information in context, but the rheme carries new information that moves the message forward.

2.6. Previous Studies

Some previous studies that have dealt with politics and media discourse of the Gaza conflict are relevant to the present study. However, none has critically examined Arab and Western leaders' responses in 2025 to starvation in Gaza or explored how silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are constructed in these responses.

Laelasari (2023), from Islamic State University Raden Intan Lampung, Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty, English Education Study Program, conducted a thesis. It is titled *A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Israel and Palestine Conflict Reported in Al Jazeera and USA Today's News Articles*. The aim of the study was to

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analyse how USA Today and Al Jazeera framed the May 2021 ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas. The three main variables examined in this study through van Dijk's (1993) social-cognitive approach were text structure, social cognition, and social context. The findings indicated that the two news websites covered the conflict differently. Al Jazeera was more neutral and provided an objective assessment of the ceasefire. In contrast, USA Today displayed a certain ideological bias by focusing on party loyalty. The study emphasised the role of media representation in shaping the readers' perceptions of sensitive international conflicts. It highlighted inconsistencies in the headlines, event schemata, and aspects of social context, including power relations and accessibility.

At University of Kerbala, College of Education for Humanities, Department of English, Al-Awad (2024) carried out a thesis. It is entitled *The Representation of Palestine and Israel in the Western and Arab Online Media During the Gaza Crisis: A Critical Discourse Analysis*. This study examined the coverage of the Arab publications (Gulf News and The National) and the Western newspapers (The Guardian and The Telegraph) on Palestine and the Zionist entity. The goals of the study were to reveal underlying ideologies, analyse the messages conveyed in the reporting, and identify the linguistic strategies used in news discourse. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study used an eclectic model that integrated Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional approach, and van Dijk's (2006) discourse and manipulation theory. Five reports from the selected newspapers were analysed. The analysis showed that the Western media often employed terms such as "state of war" and "the Zionist entity's defence forces" to describe the Zionist entity as defensive. Conversely, it portrayed Hamas as a "militant group," which was responsible for "surprise assaults" and the "slaughter" of civilians.

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Arab media, in turn, depicted the Zionist organisation as an aggressor and highlighted Palestinian suffering and resistance. The study concluded that ideological manipulation and language choices shaped a range of narratives in Arab and Western media.

Another related thesis was undertaken by Al-Rawe (2024) at University of Anbar, College of Education for Humanities, Department of English. It is entitled *A Critical Discourse Analysis of World Leaders' Speeches During the Cairo Summit in 2023 on the Zionist Occupation–Gaza War*. It employed a CDA approach to analyse the speeches of the Jordanian king, the Turkish foreign minister, the Iraqi prime minister, and the Egyptian president. The study was based on the application of rhetorical, stylistic, semantic, and linguistic devices by leaders to convey political stances, moral responsibility, and ideology in relation to Gaza. The study was qualitative and relied on Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional approach, van Dijk's (1996) socio-cognitive approach, Wodak and Meyer's (1995, 2014) DHA, and Chilton's (2005) cognitive linguistic approach. These frameworks, in combination, demonstrated the interaction of language, ideology, and power in the speeches of world leaders. The findings indicated that the speeches of world leaders were framed using rhetorical means such as pronouns, metaphors, repetition, and emotional appeals. These strategies constructed an image of the enemy and appealed to humanitarian principles and selective solidarity. In conclusion, language was used as an instrument of power to sustain ideologies, shape perceptions, and influence people.

University of Garmian, in collaboration with University of Human Development, conducted an article by Kareem and Najm (2024). It is titled *A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Biased Role of Western Media in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. The analysis was based on van Dijk's (1998) ideological-rhetorical

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strategies. This model examined the news extracts from Middle East Eye and NowThis Impact on YouTube to determine how Western media influenced the narratives about the crisis. The analysis demonstrated a recurring discursive pattern that defined Israeli actions as defensive and justified while demeaning Palestinians who were often described as terrorists, militants, or aggressors. Selective reporting, manipulation of presuppositions, and the use of language that dehumanised the Palestinians and concealed the power imbalance between the two parties were all factors that served to reinforce this biased framing. The researchers came to the conclusion that the Western media promoted inequality in discourse and undermined the objectivity of the coverage of the conflict. They stated that it did so not only by reinforcing the ideological hegemony of a pro-Israeli stance but also by affecting international attitudes and policy-making.

The article *Global Reactions to the New Israeli War on Gaza: A Critical Analytical Perspective* was carried out by Benzya (2025) at University of Batna. To determine the causal motives and inconsistencies of the global reactions to the Israeli war on Gaza in 2024–2025, the study critically examined these reactions. The research was based on a mixed-methods approach, which incorporated quantitative content analysis and comparative case studies. It paid attention to media coverage, data on social media, opinions of leading world powers, and official positions of international organisations (the European Union and the UN). It was revealed that global reactions were divided. Some nations criticised the actions of Israel in terms of human rights and humanitarian discourse. Conversely, some of them aligned with broader geopolitical goals. Moreover, the study established that there was an increasing gap between official policy and public opinion, particularly in Western democracies, where grassroots movements threatened traditional orientations.

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Focusing on these processes, the study concluded that international reactions to Gaza were indicators of shifting global power dynamics and diplomatic reorientations, along with current humanitarian concerns.

At University of Mohamed Boudiaf – M'Sila, Faculty of Letters and Languages, Department of English Language, a thesis was undertaken by Guettouche and Kouchida (2025). It is entitled *Analysing Power Dynamics: A Critical Discourse Study of Amar Bendjama's Speeches on the War on Gaza, Post October 7*. This study aimed to examine the way the Algerian Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Amar Bendjama, symbolised power relations and established ideological positioning in his speeches delivered after October 7, 2023. The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, using Fairclough's (1989, 1995) three-dimensional approach, van Dijk's (1993, 1998) socio-cognitive approach, and Wodak's (2001) DHA. The study demonstrated the systematic use of discursive devices such as victimhood, polarisation, and presupposition, supported by language choices which emphasised aggression, violations of international law, and moral posturing. Moreover, the contrast between in-group (Algeria/Palestine) and out-group (Israel) representations was also reinforced with the constant application of rhetorical devices and personal pronouns. Thus, the study reached the conclusion that the discourse of Bendjama provided a valuable understanding of the role of language in the diplomatic context in terms of delegitimising the Israeli occupying forces. It also highlighted how this discourse enhanced the image of Algeria as an agent of justice and legality.

The aim of the present study differs from previous studies in that it gives a linguistic understanding of the discourses produced in 2025 by selected Arab and Western leaders in relation to the starvation crisis in Gaza. In contrast to the previous studies, which typically focused on the war in Gaza or the wider Israeli-Palestinian

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conflict in media discourses or political speeches, the current study has a narrower focus. It examines how Arab and Western political leaders construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility as discursive strategies to frame the famine. This study specifically addresses the starvation of Palestinians caused by Israel, an aspect that has not yet been fully examined in previous studies. To realise the intended purpose, the study uses transcripts of political speeches from official and reliable sources. It employs the CDA approach as a methodology, combining Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA. Such a framework allows for the examination of the ways in which linguistic choices, ideological-rhetorical strategies, and socio-political context overlap to reveal how and why Arab and Western leaders frame their positions regarding this crisis. The study thereby fills a gap in the literature and provides fresh insights into the discursive construction of responsibility in the context of starvation in Gaza.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter introduces the theoretical framework and methods employed in this study to analyse the data. It describes the nature of the study, data collection and description, the criteria of data selection, and the procedures of data analysis. The theoretical framework and justifications for the selected models are also discussed.

3.1. The Nature of the Study

Abuhamda et al. (2021) stated that any research design is divided into quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research methods. Quantitative research aims to measure phenomena by generating numerical data or information that can be converted into useful statistics. Therefore, Bryman (2001) indicated that the quantitative research method focuses on numbers and figures in the collection and interpretation of data. Quantitative research seeks patterns through the study of variables instead of individuals (Dörnyei, 2007).

Conversely, the qualitative research method is the process of collecting, interpreting, and analysing non-statistical narrative data to understand a specific phenomenon (Gay et al., 2012). Such a research aims to answer the question of "how" and "why" social phenomena take place under certain conditions and in particular contexts (Polkinghorne, 2005). It uses smaller samples and involves researchers as key instruments in data collection and interpretation (Schreier, 2012).

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Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) asserted that the third methodological movement is mixed-methods research. This type of research combines quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The aim of integrating methods is to acquire a deeper insight into the research issues (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The current study is qualitative since the data analysed are political speeches, which require deep analysis to understand the construction of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in the responses of the selected Arab and Western leaders regarding the Gaza starvation crisis.

3.2. Data Collection and Description

The researcher is the main instrument of the study because they gather words, analyse them inductively, and observe what speakers or writers produce. Accordingly, data collection entails various steps, including research planning, data selection and classification, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and summarisation of conclusions (Creswell, 1998). In this respect, Wang (2006) described data selection as the methodical procedure of gathering dependable and pertinent information from a large body of data.

According to this view, the data of this study are obtained from 10 official speeches, comprising five speeches delivered by Arab leaders and five delivered by Western leaders. A particular extract from each of the speeches is chosen as being relevant to the study, resulting in 10 extracts to be analysed. All speeches are obtained from reputable and authoritative sources to ensure their reliability. Most transcripts are accessed through governmental or presidential websites. When official

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texts are unavailable, speeches are sourced from reliable and well-known media platforms.

Regarding the speeches of the Arab leaders mentioned in Table 3.1, the Arabic version of the speech of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi is retrieved from Ahram Gate, while its English translation is found on Ahram Online. The speech of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is obtained from Al Arabiya in Arabic, and its English version is accessed from Arab News. Additionally, the speech of the Qatari Amir Tamim bin Hamad is retrieved from the Amiri Diwan website, where both the Arabic and English versions are officially posted. The speech of the United Arab Emirates (henceforth, UAE) Vice President and Prime Minister, Mohammed bin Rashid, is sourced from the Government of Dubai Media Office, which also provides the speech in both languages. Conversely, the speech given by Jordanian King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein was originally produced in English, which is available on the King Abdullah II Official Website.

With respect to the sources of the Western leaders' speeches presented in Table 3.2, the speech of the US President Donald Trump is accessed from Hindustan Times. The UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer's speech is retrieved from GOV.UK. The speech of the French President Emmanuel Macron is sourced from the official website of the Présidence de la République. Similarly, the speech of German Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz is retrieved from Federal Government of Germany, while the speech of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni is available on the Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

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Table 3.1*The Sources of Arab Leaders' Speeches*

No.	Arab Leader	Source	English Translation
1	Abdel Fattah El-Sisi (President of Egypt)	https://gate.ahram.org.eg/daily/NewsPrint/989203.aspx	https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/550737.aspx
2	Mohammed bin Salman (Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia)	https://youtu.be/eJFR6Zen0xY?si=nvLeKr2MXKMuhFjf	https://www.arabnews.com/node/2603755/saudi-arabia
3	Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani (Emir of Qatar)	https://diwan.gov.qa/en/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks/2025/october/21/hh-the-amir-speech-at-shura-council	https://diwan.gov.qa/en/briefing-room/speeches-and-remarks/2025/october/21/hh-the-amir-speech-at-shura-council
4	Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE)	https://www.mediaoffice.ae/en/news/2025/december/07-12/under-directives-of-mohammed-bin-rashid-mbrgi-completes-packing?utm_source	https://www.mediaoffice.ae/en/news/2025/december/07-12/under-directives-of-mohammed-bin-rashid-mbrgi-completes-packing?utm_source
5	King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein (King of Jordan)	https://kingabdullah.jo/en/speeches/address-by-his-majesty-king-abdullah-ii-at-the-plenary-session-of-the-80th-general-assembly-of-the-united-nations-1	Originally delivered in English

Note. Extracted by the researcher based on the selected data.

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Table 3.2

The Sources of Western Leaders' Speeches

No.	Western Leader	Source
1	Donald Trump (President of the US)	https://www.youtube.com/live/0T6Z0Ef487w
2	Keir Starmer (Prime Minister of the UK)	https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-words-on-gaza-29-july-2025
3	Emmanuel Macron (President of France)	https://www.elysee.fr/front/pdf/elysee-module-25223-en.pdf
4	Friedrich Merz (Federal Chancellor of Germany)	https://www.bundesregierung.de/br-eg-en/news/statement-egypt-2388868
5	Giorgia Meloni (Prime Minister of Italy)	https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-address-80th-united-nations-general-assembly/29851

Note. Made by the researcher drawing on the data selected.

3.3. Criteria of Data Selection

This study discusses how specific Arab and Western leaders construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their speeches delivered in 2025 in response to the starvation in Gaza. It employs a CDA approach to analyse political language as a strategic and ideologically charged practice. This approach is selected due to its ability to explore the ways in which political discourse of the leaders strategically constructs and hides responsibility from grammatical, ideological, and contextual perspectives.

In this regard, the data of the study include speeches given by multiple Arab and Western leaders. Among the key selection criteria are the production of the speeches in 2025 during the intensification of the Gaza starvation crisis and their explicit or implicit reference to the crisis. They also reflect the leaders' political

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positions that are discursively constructed in relation to the Gaza crisis. For these reasons, the speeches are regarded as political responses to the ongoing crisis in the region. Furthermore, the speakers are chosen depending on the strength of the states they represent and the direct involvement of these countries in the Palestinian issue and the Gaza famine. These criteria are used to ensure that the analysis is directed towards politically influential discourse, which shapes international reactions to the starvation crisis in Gaza. More specifically, the selection of certain speakers as opposed to others from the same states is based on their executive authority or direct political influence in shaping official political positions, not only on hierarchical titles. It is also guided by the availability of full and verifiable speech transcripts that can be analysed using CDA.

To make the analysis comprehensive and deep, reach analytical saturation, and improve the reliability of the findings, the study takes a balanced sample of political speeches released in 2025. Accordingly, 10 speeches are chosen, five by Arab leaders and five by Western leaders, which guarantees equal representation of Arab and Western political discourses. Such a sampling design avoids reducing the findings to the style of one speaker or considering silence, evasion, and moral responsibility as strategies of only one party. Rather, it enables these discursive patterns to be studied as systematic practices in various political contexts. Furthermore, this selection of speeches does not aim to create a direct comparison between the two groups, but to demonstrate that these discursive strategies are employed by both Arab and Western leaders. Moreover, this balanced corpus minimises the possibility of bias towards either Arab or Western discourse, which supports analytical neutrality. Five speeches per group are enough to provide analytical saturation and corpus adequacy since fewer speeches yield less analytical coverage and more speeches lead to redundant

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analysis. The speeches considered in this study are taken from credible and publicly available sources, which ensure data reliability and allow the speeches to be verified and revisited.

3.4. Procedures of Data Analysis

The current study uses several procedures to analyse and interpret the discourses of Arab and Western leaders. These procedures are as follows:

1. Providing sources for the speeches of the selected Arab and Western leaders.
٢. Transcribing the speeches and organising them into extracts for systematic analysis.
٣. Examining the speeches grammatically in line with Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis.
٤. Exploring the ideological meanings and patterns of polarisation in the speeches according to van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies.
٥. Analysing the speeches in terms of the discursive strategies within the socio-political and historical contexts in line with Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA.
٦. Presenting the key findings of the analysis and discussing them to draw relevant conclusions.
7. Providing recommendations and suggestions for further studies related to the present study.

3.5. Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study adopts an eclectic model to critically analyse the selected data to meet its objectives and answer its questions. The models employed in this study are

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Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA as clarified in Figure 3. It is worth noting that the application of Halliday's and van Dijk's models is based only on the components or strategies found in the speeches. This is because the selected speeches may not include all the elements of these models. However, Reisigl and Wodak's DHA is applied in its entirety, as the emphasis of the model in this study is not on which strategies are used. Rather, it is on how they are used by Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility within historical and political contexts.

3.5.1. Halliday's (1994) Transitivity Analysis

Halliday (1981) and Sakrikar (2019) illustrated that transitivity analysis is one of the main concepts of Halliday's systemic functional grammar, which is used as a tool in discourse analysis. Transitivity is a sub-component of ideational metafunction. It is defined as the grammar of the clause as a structural unit for expressing a range of ideational meanings. Transitivity is made up of three components, namely participants, processes, and circumstances. It is shown that "transitivity is a system of the clause, affecting not only the verb serving as the process but also participants and circumstances" (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 181). According to McNulty (2014), each element of the clause represents a different experiential aspect, as in the following:

1. Participants are the things or people involved in a particular experience.
2. Processes show what happens or the state of a person or thing.

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3. Circumstances are other elements of a clause that give additional information about the process such as time, place, manner, and reason. Halliday provided many types of circumstances, including location (time and place), extent (duration, distance, frequency), manner (quality, means, comparison, degree), cause (reason, purpose, behalf), contingency (condition, concession), and angle (source and viewpoint) (Rizkiani, 2023).

In an attempt to differentiate the elements, Halliday (1985) highlighted that "transitivity specifies the different types of processes that are recognised in the language and the structure by which they are expressed" (p. 101). There are six types of processes, namely material, mental, verbal, relational, behavioural, and existential processes (Bustam, 2011). Halliday (1994) listed them as follows:

1. Material Process (Causing or Doing): Among the most significant types of processes are those that entail physical activities like cooking, writing, and running. These are referred to as material processes, which involve two participants, the actor and the goal.
2. Mental Process (Sensing or Experiencing): Feeling, thinking, and seeing are all mental or sensory processes. They relate to different issues concerning human cognition. Mental processes involve two participants, the sensor (a conscious individual) and the phenomenon (what is felt, liked, thought, believed, or seen).
3. Verbal Process (Saying): It is a process of saying something or performing a symbolic action. Verbal processes are also referred to as saying processes. The participants of this process are the sayer, the receiver, and the verbiage. However, there is another type of verbal process in which the sayer employs verbs such as

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flatter, slander, praise, insult, and abuse to verbally act upon another direct participant. Such a participant is known as the target.

4. Relational Process (Be, Have, and Become): It is commonly known as a process of being because it essentially states that something was, is, or will be. It also includes the verb of possession, "have." The main characteristic of relational processes is that they tie a participant to their identity and description. The participants in the clause that contains a relational process may be token and value, or carrier and attribute, depending on the identification and description.

5. Behavioural Process: Behavioural processes are physiological and psychological behaviours such as coughing, breathing, smiling, dreaming, and looking, which are mainly displayed by human beings. Certain verbs are also used to describe the behaviours that depict the state of mind, which include laughing, grimacing, crying, snoring, gasping, hiccupping, and contemplating. There is only one participant involved in this process, namely the behavior.

6. Existential Process (Exist): It indicates the existence of phenomena. The word "there" is employed in its construction. The thing or occurrence that is purported to exist is called the existent.

3.5.2. Van Dijk's (2006) Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies

Van Dijk (2006) indicated that there are systematic techniques that can be undertaken to investigate discourse at different levels for finding how ideologies are expressed or enacted. Such means are related to the polarisation of the relationship between groups, where positive aspects of the in-group and negative aspects of the

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out-group are highlighted. In this regard, van Dijk identified the ideological-rhetorical strategies as follows:

١. Actor Description: This strategy attempts to provide a complete description of the objects in the discourse (person, thing, and place). Since the out-group is described negatively and its negative activities are highlighted, the discourse producer prefers to describe their group in a favourable manner and downplay its negative practices.
٢. Authority: The speaker refers to authorities, including specialists, global organisations, leaders, and experts, to support their arguments, claims, and ideas, as well as to persuade the audience.
٣. Burden: It refers to the loss of a specific group (people or property) and attempts to blame a specific group of people for causing financial or social problems for the in-group.
٤. Categorisation: This semantic tool is employed by the speakers to put people in groups, especially when terms of classification or titles are used. It involves categorising individuals into a number of groups, such as citizens, workers, and immigrants.
٥. Comparison: It is used to highlight the similarities and differences between two entities, such as people, groups, places, activities, and objects. Comparisons between in-groups and out-groups are employed in discourse. This strategy suggests that the speaker makes a negative comparison of the out-group and a positive comparison of the in-group.
٦. Consensus: One of the most common political tactics is a national consensus when the country is under external threat. It is applied to show inter-party or national

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consensus. This strategy is meant to strengthen and foster unity. For example, politicians concur that immigration is a threat to their country.

٧. Distancing: The most notable aspect of this strategy is the creation of a perceived distance between the members of different social groups or categories using language. This can be achieved through the use of demonstrative pronouns. These pronouns are used to imply some kind of dissociation or separation from the out-group, without directly referring to or describing them, for example, "those people."

8. Dramatisation: It is a rhetorical technique of exaggerating views or occurrences in order to provoke emotions and influence the audience. Minor issues are often discussed as national crises or threats in social and political debates.

٩. Empathy: This strategy aims to sympathise with and understand the feelings of other people. In a political context, this strategy is often exhibited through support or sympathy. It can be addressed to both in-group and out-group members and it may be strategic or sincere.

١٠. Euphemism: This is one of the semantic mitigation techniques that are commonly employed in discourse. It is the replacement of an offensive or harsh word with a softer or milder one, such as "decease" instead of "death." It is applied to reduce the negative behaviours of the in-group and the negative perceptions that outsiders have towards it.

١١. Generalisation: It is the attribution of the positive or negative aspects of an individual or a small group of people to a larger population. In most cases, speakers of racist discourse generalise to construct bias about the negative features of immigrants.

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١٢. Humanitarianism: This is a strategy of argument based on protecting human rights, criticising those who violate them, and establishing guidelines for the humane treatment of refugees.

١٣. Hyperbole: It is a semantic rhetoric strategy that aims at exaggerating something. In this respect, general tactics of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation portray the negative behaviours of the in-group in mitigated terms and those of the out-group in exaggerated terms.

١٤. Implication: When people talk, they do not necessarily say what they know or think. The audience should use general knowledge to draw conclusions because discourse is like an iceberg and most of it is implicit.

١٥. National Self-Glorification: In this type of positive self-presentation, speakers show respect or admiration for their country, values, history, and traditions. This is employed to create a positive image of one's own country and is commonly observed in parliamentary speeches on immigration.

١٦. Negative Other-Presentation: This strategy is employed by the discourse producers to categorise individuals into out-groups and in-groups. Van Dijk argued that this classification is not value-free but it is imbued with ideologically driven norms and values. It always portrays the out-group negatively.

١٧. Norm Expression: This is a grammatical tool where the speaker attempts to describe something in a normal and unbiased way. Since it denounces and rejects any form of discrimination, it means that discourse such as anti-racist discourse is normative. In light of this, the speaker informs individuals about what they should and should not do.

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١٨. Number Game: It shows that speakers emphasise objectivity by mentioning statistics in debates. It is an example of a more popular strategy, which is referred to as "facticity." Van Dijk (2008) mentioned that this is a helpful strategy for legitimacy and indicating truth and accuracy in political discourses.

١٩. Polarisation: This strategy refers to the segregation of people into the in-group and the out-group. Moreover, the in-group is assigned positive attributes and the out-group negative attributes. These representations are affected by the underlying ideologies, beliefs, and viewpoints of the speaker.

٢٠. Positive Self-Presentation: It demonstrates that speakers emphasise the positive side of their organisation, country, and party in discourse. This device is a necessary ideological tool because of its positive self-schema, which reflects the ideology of a group.

٢١. Pseudo-Ignorance: This is a fallacy in which the speaker knows something about a topic, but pretends ignorance. Such a fallacy is often evident in disclaimers that are used to make claims without evidence.

22. Reasonableness: It is a strategy whereby speakers attempt to demonstrate that their arguments are not only sound, but reasonable and logical. This is a useful tactic when an argument suggests that the speaker is irrational or biased. The objectives of this move are positive self-presentation and impression control.

٢٣. Repetition: Van Dijk defined it as the practice of repeating words or phrases to create impact or emphasis. Repetition is frequently used in immigration discourse to draw attention to the negative features of immigrants or refugees.

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٢٤. Situation Description: This strategy aims to describe how events, experiences, and entire situations are explained. It is a crucial element in making a point since how a situation is described implies various aspects, such as its origins, causes, consequences, and evaluations. This may be in the form of generalisations or short narrative vignettes.

٢٥. Vagueness: Ambiguous language can be used by speakers in various situations. This language entails fuzzy sets that have no definite referent. Vague expressions may be adjectives like "low" and "high," nouns such as "thing," quantifiers like "few" and "a lot," adverbs such as "very," and other phrases that might be used in such discourse.

٢٦. Victimisation: It is the use of a binary pair of "us" and "them" or in-groups and out-groups to describe in-group members as the victims of injustice and portray out-groups adversely.

3.5.3. Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) Discourse-Historical Approach

The DHA is a flexible but systematic tool within CDA (Reisigl, 2017). According to Reisigl and Wodak (2001), the DHA is a context-sensitive theory that follows a complex definition of social critique and is concerned with the historical and political aspects of discursive practices. Although it was initially designed by Wodak, the formulation of its analytical strategies was subsequently improved by her collaboration with Reisigl. In this regard, Reisigl and Wodak observed that the analysis of the discursive elements and strategies, in their discourse-analytical perspective, requires particular consideration. Moreover, their book *Discourse and Discrimination: Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism* is another outcome of many years of fruitful discussion and collaboration between the two authors.

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Thus, Reisigl and Wodak (2001) provided a set of five discursive strategies in the DHA. These strategies help depict how language forms and reproduces ideologies, power relations, and social significance. The five key strategies are nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivisation, as well as intensification and mitigation. All these strategies comprise the methodological basis of the DHA. They allow the analyst to explore how discourses position the speakers, allocate values, justify policies, construct identities, and shape the effects of assertions. Reisigl and Wodak explained the strategies as follows:

1. Nomination Strategy

Wodak and Meyer (2008) remarked that the referential or nomination strategy is the first strategy in the DHA framework. This is a particularly applicable tactic to self-presentation and other-presentation. Through this strategy, people, processes, events, and other abstract or concrete objects are named. Such entities can be portrayed either in a positive manner through respect or in a negative manner through low regard. The construction of in-groups and out-groups is identified by analysing the lexical choices of naming and representing various categories of social actors. This is done through various membership categorisation devices. Such devices include deictic expressions and tropes such as metaphors, metonymies, and synecdoche.

2. Predication Strategy

Once the social actors, actions, and events have been identified or named, speakers employ the predication strategy to assign evaluative and often stereotypical qualities. These attributions can be negative or positive in the description of social actors. They are linguistically articulated through implicit or explicit predicates. To

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attribute certain qualities to social actors or actions, speakers may strategically use explicit linguistic devices. These devices include adjectives, relative clauses, prepositional phrases, infinitive clauses, and pronouns. Moreover, they can make use of implicit semantic tools, such as presuppositions and implicatures (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001).

3. Argumentation Strategy

Reisigl and Wodak (2001) stated that positive or negative representation of the chosen social actors and actions is justified through the argumentation strategy. Individuals and organisations that participate in the event under consideration are denoted as "social actors." This strategy may function as verbal coercion to manipulate people rather than persuade them. Within this strategy, topoi are argumentative tactics that are frequently employed by powerful speakers. Topoi are content-related warrants or rules for drawing conclusions which relate arguments to the conclusion and the claim. Richards et al. (1993) also suggested that they serve as sources of generalised key ideas through which particular statements or arguments are produced. Wodak (2011) outlined that the most common topoi are the following:

1. Topos of Burden: When an institution is overwhelmed by a certain issue, then one should take action to reduce it.
2. Topos of Reality: It indicates that a certain action should be taken based on reality.
3. Topos of Numbers: When adequate numerical and statistical data are provided, a certain action is required.
4. Topos of History: Since history teaches that particular actions have particular consequences, one ought to take or avoid action in a specific situation.

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5. Topos of Threat: If certain dangers or threats are detected, one has to act to address them.

6. Topos of Justice: When persons, actions, or situations are equal in certain aspects, they should be treated equally.

4. Perspectivisation Strategy

According to Reisigl and Wodak (2001), the perspectivisation strategy is used by speakers to express their participation in the discourse and to position their viewpoint in the discursive context. Although they pinpointed a set of selected tactics of perspectivisation, all five strategies reveal the perspective of the speaker in relation to a discursive event.

5. Intensification and Mitigation Strategy

Reisigl and Wodak (2001) elucidated that the degree of emphasis or softness given to discriminatory or inclusive statements is realised through the discursive strategy of intensification and mitigation. In this context, intensification is defined as a discursive activity that enhances the illocutionary force of an utterance. It reinforces the epistemic position of propositions by increasing the level of certainty that the speaker conveys, thus making statements more credible. Moreover, intensification tends to enhance emotional expression, which makes discourse more persuasive to the audience. The linguistic devices typically used by speakers are emotive metaphors, emotionally-charged lexis, and hyperbole to enhance meaning and justify certain evaluations or political standpoints.

Conversely, mitigation is a discursive strategy which minimises or diminishes the effects of statements, acts, or events. It indicates how language can be used to

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reduce blame, downplay responsibility, and lessen negative effects. Under the CDA approach, mitigation is closely connected to the perception of language as a site of power and ideology. It is a strategic resource through which political actors manage accountability, influence public perception, and safeguard the interests of certain social or political groups (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009).

3.6. Justifications for the Selected Models

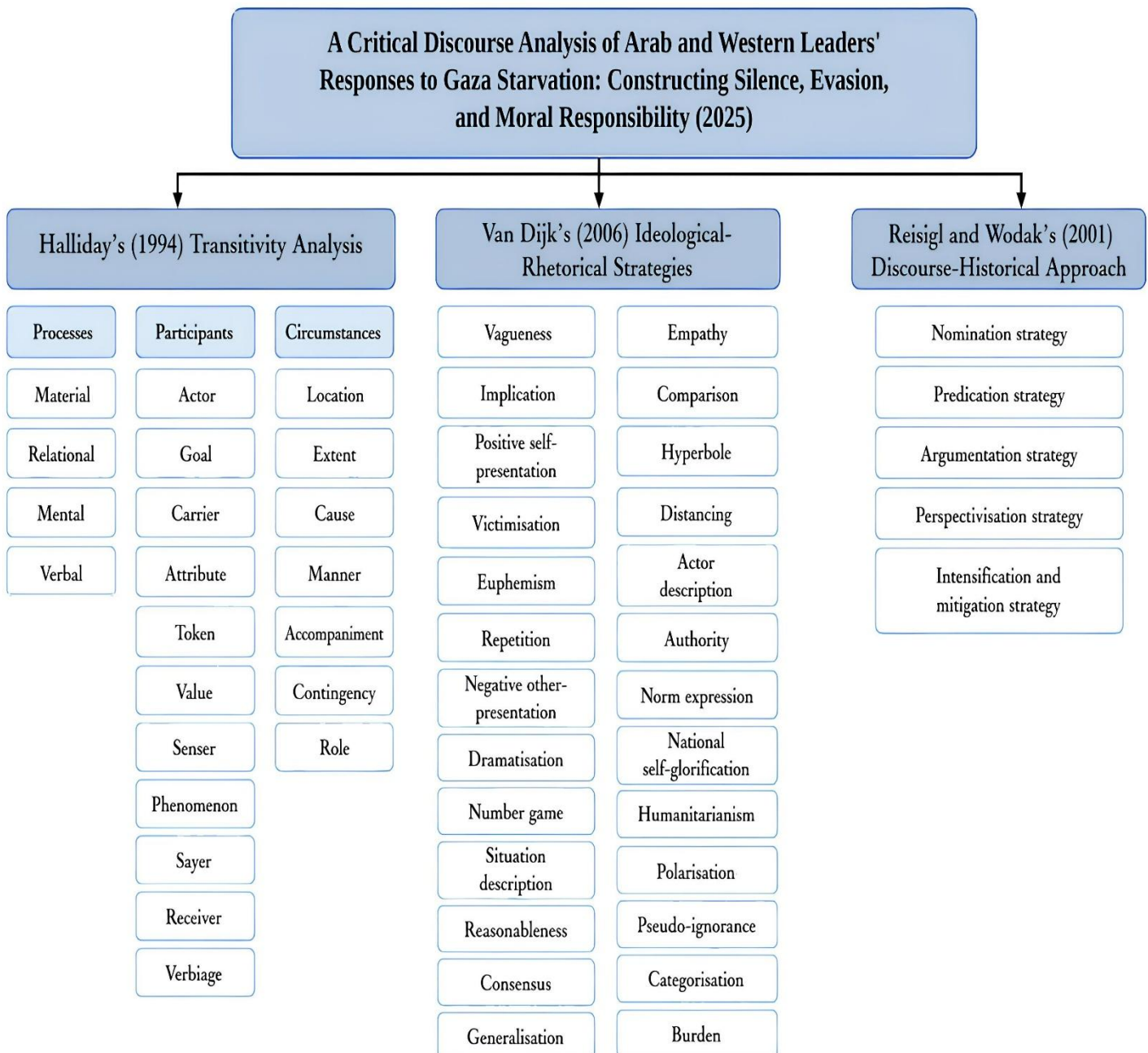
The current study adopts an eclectic analysis framework, combining Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA. These models are complementary in analysing how the chosen Arab and Western leaders construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. Halliday's model is applied in this study at the grammatical level, which is concerned with transitivity patterns used for encoding or obscuring agency and the assignment of responsibility in the selected speeches. Van Dijk's model is employed to provide an ideological perspective that focuses on the way in which the leaders employ discourse and rhetorical strategies to justify certain positions, influence public perception, and reproduce power dynamics.

Lastly, Reisigl and Wodak's DHA provides a historical and socio-political layer to the analysis of the speeches by placing the discursive strategies in their broader contexts. This model is employed to understand why the leaders make certain linguistic decisions during the Gaza starvation crisis. Therefore, the combination of these models enables a multi-layered grammatical, ideological, and contextual analysis of how silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are constructed in political discourse.

Figure 3.1

Theoretical Framework of Data Analysis (Adopted From Halliday's (1994)

Transitivity Analysis, van Dijk's (2006) Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) Discourse-Historical Approach)



Note. Made by the researcher based on the framework of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0. Introduction

The current chapter is divided into four main sections, namely Arab leaders' discourses, Western leaders' discourses, findings, and discussion. The first section analyses five selected extracts from speeches delivered by Arab leaders in 2025 in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. The second section analyses five extracts taken from speeches by Western leaders addressing the same crisis.

The 10 selected extracts are examined within the framework of CDA with particular attention to how the leaders construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their representations of starvation in Gaza. To achieve this, the study employs three analytical models, namely Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA.

4.1. Arab Leaders' Discourses

This section examines the speeches of selected Arab leaders delivered in 2025 in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. It focuses on five key figures, namely Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and Jordanian King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein.

4.1.1. Analysis of Extract (1)

On 5 August 2025, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi delivered a speech during a joint press conference with Vietnamese President Luong Cuong at Al-Ittihadiya Presidential Palace in Cairo. Ahram Gate covered the speech in Arabic, while Ahram Online translated it in English. The speech concerned the humanitarian crisis and starvation in Gaza. In this context, El-Sisi said:

أن حياة الشعب الفلسطيني في قطاع غزة، ويمكن في الضفة الغربية أيضاً، تستخدم الآن كورقة سياسية للمساومة. ... قبل الحرب، كان يدخل من مصر ٦٠٠ إلى ٧٠٠ شاحنة محملة بالأغذية والمواد المطلوبة لإعاشة نحو ٢,٣ مليون من الفلسطينيين. وتصوروا أن يتم تقليل هذه الكمية لدرجة الصفر على مدى الـ ٢١ شهراً الماضين. والوضع الذي ترونه الآن في القطاع ناجم عن ذلك، وليس ناجماً عن أن مصر قد تخلت في دورها في إدخال المساعدات أو أنها تشارك في حصار القطاع. ... منفذ رفح لم يتم غلقه أثناء هذه الحرب، ولا من قبل ذلك. (Ahram Gate, 2025, paras. 7–8, 11)

The lives of the Palestinian people in Gaza, and possibly also in the West Bank, are now being used as a political bargaining card. ... Before the war, 600–700 trucks of food and basic necessities used to enter Gaza daily to support 2.3 million Palestinians. Imagine reducing that number to zero over the past 21 months. The current situation in Gaza stems from this, not from Egypt abandoning its role or participating in the siege. ... The Rafah crossing has not been closed by Egypt at any point. (Ahram Online, 2025, paras. 4, 10, 12)

4.1.1.1. Transitivity Analysis. Within Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the clause employs a passive material process of "are being used" to grammatically obscure the actor. This decision tends to foreground "the lives of the Palestinian people" as the goal, which enables strategic silence. The circumstance of location (place) "in Gaza and possibly also in the West Bank" expands the spatial scope of the clause. In comparison, the circumstance of location (time) "now" reduces the temporal emphasis. This possibly makes it easier to evade any mention of the

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extended Israeli violence against Palestinians by disconnecting the current exploitation from the past. The circumstance of role (guise) "as a political bargaining card" also ideologically contributes to indirect moral positioning through indicating exploitation without attributing responsibility directly to any specific actor.

The material process "used to enter" in the second clause assigns agency to the inanimate actor "600-700 trucks of food and basic necessities." Such a positioning redirects the focus from political constraints to logistical movement, with "Gaza" being the space, thus potentially enabling discursive evasion. Egypt is constructed as a constantly humanitarian actor through the circumstances of location (time) "before the war," extent (frequency) "daily," and cause (purpose) "to support 2.3 million Palestinians." Simultaneously, this tendency also creates a sense of distancing, which reduces responsibility attribution.

The imperative mental process depicted in the verb "imagine" puts the audience in the position of the senser, thus possibly constructing moral responsibility through this emotional engagement. The clause "reducing that number to zero" serves as the phenomenon that realises a material process in the verb "reducing." In this process, the actor (Israel) is not expressed, and this can implicitly result in strategic silence. In this clause, "that number" is the goal, while "to zero" is a circumstance of extent (degree). This construction offers the outcome in the form of complete deprivation. In this respect, the severity of the crisis is reflected in the circumstance of extent (duration) "over the past 21 months."

The following clause uses the relational process "stems from" to express causality. "The current situation in Gaza" is the carrier, and the deictic form "from this" is the circumstance of cause (source). This structure obscures the agent of action

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and deprives the clause of a recognisable actor. The contrastive negation "not from Egypt abandoning its role or participating in the siege" is also a circumstance of cause (source), which foregrounds Egypt but denies accountability. This discursive act shifts responsibility and allows the speaker to take a positive ethical position.

The last clause utilises the negated passive material process "has not been closed." "The Rafah crossing" is the goal, and the actor of the action is not expressed grammatically. The phrase "by Egypt" is embedded in a context of negation, and Egypt is the negated actor. Such strategic foregrounding apparently reflects tendencies of evasion. This is because the focus shifts away from an unspecified actor to a party who is not directly linked to the action. The circumstance of extent (frequency) "at any point" supports positive moral positioning of Egypt.

4.1.1.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Based on van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the extract foregrounds victimisation as the main strategy, as realised in the expression "used as a political bargaining card." This ideologically constructs Palestinians as an in-group positioned as victims of injustice. This is supported by the negative other-presentation strategy, which implicitly constructs an unnamed out-group that is responsible for the exploitation. The clause employs the euphemism strategy, in which "political bargaining card" is used instead of "leverage" or "political weapon." This language obscures the inhumanity of intentional starvation and makes the fate of Gazans seem like an ordinary part of political processes. The word "possibly" is a vague term used to realise the pseudo-ignorance strategy. It potentially implies that there were also Palestinians starving in "the West Bank," but this is not stated clearly.

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Egypt is then positioned in a positive manner through the positive self-presentation strategy. It is framed as a reliable humanitarian donor through "used to enter ... to support 2.3 million Palestinians" and conceivably builds up moral responsibility. The number game strategy is used through the use of particular numbers, "600-700 trucks" and "2.3 million Palestinians," which enhances the credibility of the information. Moreover, the situation description strategy organises the regular assistance flows using temporal indicators "before the war" and "daily." This can construct a sense of trustworthiness and accountability, placing Egypt in the moral in-group.

The appeal realised through "reducing that number to zero" uses dramatisation as the central strategy. It prompts reflection on a hypothetical situation of humanitarian collapse. This strengthens the case made by El-Sisi by comparing the current reality with a more frightening hypothetical scenario. Meanwhile, the negative other-presentation strategy recurs. It shifts blame onto an unnamed out-group through the temporal framing "the past 21 months." This could align with the speaker's agenda by allowing ideological silence through avoiding explicit condemnation of Israel and distancing Egypt from immediate responsibility.

The construction "not from Egypt abandoning its role" in the next clause is an instance of the distancing strategy, as it distances Egypt from responsibility. Egypt is presented as rational and moderate through the reasonableness strategy and the causal framing "stems from this." The vague deictic expression "this" shows the vagueness strategy, which obscures the responsible actor and arguably maintains silence about Israeli involvement.

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Lastly, the denial in the form "has not been closed by Egypt at any point" mainly reflects the pseudo-ignorance strategy. In this regard, El-Sisi appears to suggest that the decision to impose the blockade is not exclusively Egyptian, which downplays the Egyptian role. This provision could demonstrate a political effort to ideologically redefine responsibility by portraying Egypt as having a non-responsible role in the blockade. At the same time, the speaker pretended ignorance regarding the role Israel plays in the crisis in Gaza. Therefore, this deflects attention from the party that is actually in charge of the crossing to the innocence of Egypt. This kind of framing supports the positive self-presentation strategy and reinforces discursive evasion.

4.1.1.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. According to Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the speaker used the nomination strategy of collectivisation by referring to "the lives of the Palestinian people in Gaza ... in the West Bank." This is supported by the numerous references to "Gaza," "2.3 million Palestinians," and "the Rafah crossing," which can be taken to indicate moral responsibility. In comparison, Israel is systematically unnamed by the use of passive forms like "are being used" and "has not been closed." This is reinforced by unclear structures such as "reducing that number to zero" and "stems from this." However, Egypt is particularly referred to in "not from Egypt abandoning its role" and "has not been closed by Egypt." Such self-defensive nomination appears to construct innocence in contrast to blame attribution. This pattern does not make direct mention of starvation or famine. It downplays deprivation by referring to it as "the current situation." Contextually, these linguistic choices presumably form deliberate linguistic silence about Israel owing to broader diplomatic sensibilities towards the US, a major ally of Israel.

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Using the predication strategy, Palestinians are depicted as exploited and deprived by the constructions "used as a political bargaining card" and "reducing that number to zero." On the other hand, Egypt is portrayed as a credible and innocent humanitarian actor by mentioning "used to enter ... daily to support." The frequent denials "not from Egypt abandoning its role" and "has not been closed by Egypt at any point" support this. Israel is not mentioned and is implicitly characterised as destructive by its unarticulated agency in "reducing that number to zero." In the political context, this reliance on implicit predication might be interpreted as politically sensitive since explicit attribution could render the coordination of Egypt with Israel challenging.

The position of Egypt is defended through the argumentation strategy by the selective mobilisation of the topoi. The appeal to the topos of numbers in the constructions "600–700 trucks," "2.3 million Palestinians," and "over the past 21 months" is used to construct factual power. This is supported by the topos of humanitarianism in "food and basic necessities ... to support." The topos of causality is established through "stems from this, not from Egypt abandoning its role" and "has not been closed by Egypt," which shifts the blame for famine away from Egypt. Combined, these topoi might be employed to placate domestic criticism and prevent accusations of complicity. The topos of burden is also evident through the symbolism of Palestinian lives as "being used," which creates a moral obligation.

Through the application of the perspectivisation strategy, the speaker put Egypt in a morally justifiable position by referring to a time in the past such as "before the war." The hedge "possibly" serves as a marker of epistemic caution and admits that suffering exists, but does not directly ascribe blame. The deictic term "this" in "stems from this" can be viewed as strategic silence because it obscures the

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source of the situation in Gaza. It seems to be preconditioned by broader contextual factors that restrain explicit criticism. The denial "not from Egypt abandoning its role" forms a self-presentation which is both coherent and defensive. In this connection, the openness and accountability of the categorical statement "the Rafah crossing has not been closed by Egypt at any point" are projected. These discursive choices may maintain diplomatic stability in light of the security issues and economic interests of Egypt with Israel.

Within the intensification and mitigation strategy, intensification is reflected in the emotive appeal of the expression "imagine reducing that number to zero." It is also actualised in the temporal cumulation of "over the past 21 months," which intensifies the urgency and prolonged pain. The mitigation, in contrast, is passive in form, employing "are being used," "possibly," "used to enter," "has not been closed," and "stems from this." This position could also be interpreted as a sign of diplomatic restraint, as maintaining key international alliances would constrain Egypt from condemning Israel directly. This is further strengthened by the denial "not from Egypt abandoning its role," which preemptively safeguards Egypt.

4.1.2. Analysis of Extract (2)

During Eid Al-Adha celebrations in the city of Mina on 7 June 2025, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman delivered a speech to dignitaries and officials. The speech was reported by Al Arabiya in Arabic and by Arab News in English. It addressed the Palestinian issue and referred to the responsibility for ending the current situation in Gaza. In this respect, the Crown Prince stated:

معاناة اخوتنا في فلسطين مستمرة نتيجة العدوان الاسرائيلي. ونشدد على دور المجتمع الدولي في انهاء
التداعيات الكارثية لهذا العدوان وحماية المدنيين الابرياء ويجاد واقع جديد تنعم فيه فلسطين بالسلام

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وفقاً لقرارات الشرعية الدولية. ونسأل الله تعالى ان يديم على بلادنا وعلى سائر بلاد المسلمين والعالم
الامن والاستقرار. (Al Arabiya, 2025, 1:05)

The suffering of our brothers in Palestine continues as a result of the ongoing Israeli aggression. We reaffirm the importance of the international community's role in ending the disastrous consequences of this aggression, protecting innocent civilians, and working toward a new reality in which Palestine can enjoy peace in accordance with international legitimacy and relevant resolutions. We ask God Almighty to perpetuate security and stability in our country, in all Muslim countries and across the world. (Arab News, 2025, paras. 3–4, 8)

4.1.2.1. Transitivity Analysis. Based on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the first clause construes the relational process "continues." It makes "the suffering of our brothers in Palestine" the carrier of a continuing state and not the result of material actions. This is perhaps an effort to create silence regarding a process in which Israel is the actor. The circumstance of cause (reason) "as a result of the ongoing Israeli aggression" relocates causality in the circumstantial element. Although agency is recognised, it is not entirely realised in a process with an actor and a goal that is explicitly realised, thus backgrounding responsibility. In this sense, evasion could thus be created not only by omission but also by grammatical containment. This ideologically shifts the focus away from material acts of violence and places it on suffering itself.

The second clause realises a verbal process "reaffirm" in which the sayer is "we" and the verbiage is "the importance of the international community's role." This framing is arguably an act of evasion in which the speaker is positioned as a discursive authority and not a political actor intervening through material action. In this respect, the projected message includes material processes such as "ending ... protecting ... working toward." They portray activities as the desirable results rather

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than implemented actions. Evasion could be ideologically manifested by the transfer of agency to the international community as the actor. This configuration backgrounds Israeli agency and the position of the speaker as an agent who acts concretely and intervenes materially. Similarly, goals such as "the disastrous consequences of this aggression," "innocent civilians," and "a new reality" are repackaged as outcomes and aspirations instead of accountable actions.

The next clause actualises a mental process of affection "enjoy," in which "Palestine" is the senser and "peace" is the phenomenon. The modal "can" presents peace as a possibility but not as a certainty. The circumstance of manner (accordance) "in accordance with international legitimacy and relevant resolutions" strengthens this interpretation. Consequently, the responsibility can be evaded within the legal-institutional discourse rather than political action.

In the final clause, "ask" functions as a verbal process, with "we" as the sayer and "God Almighty" as the receiver. The so-called projected clause "to perpetuate security and stability" is the verbiage, which encodes desire rather than determination. Although the verb "perpetuate" is a material process, it is projected and not acted upon, thereby shifting the power from political actors into the hands of divine authority. "God Almighty" in this context is considered the actor and "security and stability" are the goal. The shift from "in our country" to "in all Muslim countries and across the world" also expands the range through a circumstance of location (place), which again constructs the concern as universal.

4.1.2.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Within van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the extract is introduced through the central strategy of victimisation. The speaker positioned Palestinians as an in-group marked by moral

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proximity through the expression "the suffering of our brothers in Palestine."

"Suffering" is presented as a continuous state of being, and direct allusions to starvation or siege are avoided, which possibly adds to the construction of silence. Moreover, the reference to "Palestine" instead of specifically naming Gaza in "the suffering of our brothers in Palestine" and "a new reality in which Palestine" signals the vagueness strategy. Such a tactic obscures the location of the siege. Spatial and referential indeterminacy is therefore a means of dispersing political responsibility.

"Our brothers" realises the actor description strategy, which indicates emotional closeness and identification with the Palestinian group. It puts the speaker in the same in-group as Palestinians but this affective identification is constrained politically with regard to actual obligation. The phrase "ongoing Israeli aggression" foregrounds the negative other-presentation strategy. Such a formulation suggests a form of implicit us versus them moral dichotomy. Ideologically, such a strategy appears to maintain the facade of commitment to the Palestinian cause intact at the discourse level only. The euphemism strategy is realised through the analysis whereby "aggression" substitutes the more direct lexicalisations of violence. Such substitution makes allusions to starvation and famine more indirect, thus potentially enabling evasion of direct criticism of Israel through minimising its concrete actions.

The next clause constructs responsibility primarily through the distancing strategy, which contributes to strategic silence about the Israeli role in the expression "we reaffirm the importance of the international community's role." Responsibility in this formulation is transferred to an external group of actors, which is represented by "the international community." This discursive move indicates the reasonableness strategy, which introduces the speaker's position as balanced and institutionally-oriented. This framing plausibly helps the speaker to advance his own agenda of

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presenting the nation in a positive light and restricting substantial commitment to Palestinians. This may also alleviate internal criticism without having to confront Israel.

The implication strategy operates through "protecting innocent civilians" and "working toward a new reality." These formations are an indication of victimisation coupled with moralisation. They also reposition the crisis as a gradual improvement initiative, rather than a crime with a responsible actor. The appeal to "international legitimacy and relevant resolutions" triggers the authority strategy. This call therefore grounds the discourse in institutionalised frameworks as opposed to humanitarian crises. The last clause of the prayer, "we ask God Almighty," is a mobilisation of the consensus strategy that is based on the collective religious identity. By concluding the speech with a prayer, the speaker might allow evasion of any commitment to Palestinians rather than taking concrete action against Israel.

4.1.2.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Within Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, Palestinians are nominated and collectivised as a moral in-group in the nomination strategy such as "our brothers in Palestine." This kind of wording implies unity without specifying the political details. Comparatively, Israel is only nominated with the abstract term "Israeli aggression," in which siege or famine are not mentioned. Responsibility is then transferred to high-level actors as "the international community" and "God Almighty." Contextually, the implications of these discursive choices may be construed to conform to wider strategic inferences. They may be geared towards protecting the interests of Saudi Arabia with Israel, as well as its major ally, the US, in the diplomatic, military, and economic arenas.

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Through the predication strategy, Palestinians are humanised but are portrayed as quite passive victims in "the suffering of our brothers in Palestine." The abstraction "Israeli aggression" depicts Israel negatively to potentially dilute the charge of the speaker's complicity. Meanwhile, the in-group of the speaker is presumably formed as a morally responsible and peace-seeking actor through constructions such as "we reaffirm," "working toward a new reality," and "peace in accordance with international legitimacy." This determined predication can be interpreted as aligning with a broader discourse of political stability and global investment. It potentially maintains Saudi stability and growth discourse, which could underpin the speaker's global involvement.

The argumentation strategy relies on the topos of humanitarianism in "protecting innocent civilians," which is supported by the markers of solidarity, such as "our brothers." This appeal can be understood as a reaction to internal pressures to avoid escalation, which results in instability. At the same time, the topos of legality in "the international legitimacy and relevant resolutions" universalises suffering and shifts the discussion of blame to procedural discourse. In comparison, the topos of causality is used in "the suffering ... continues as a result of the ongoing Israeli aggression." This arrangement prioritises humanitarian concerns and legal procedure and backgrounds concrete agency and responsibility.

By means of the perspectivisation strategy, the speaker probably adopted an evasive position, grounding his stance within a generalised religious-collective context rather than discussing the causes and effects of the Gaza crisis. This is realised in "our country ... all Muslim countries" and the prayer at the end "we ask God Almighty." This posturing positions him in the role of a protector of unity and stability rather than a political player. Through the shift in representing Palestine from

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a particular political issue to a more global or religious framework, responsibility becomes blurred and disconnected from actual political actors.

The intensification and mitigation strategy is employed to address the moral impact. Intensification is realised through evaluative expressions such as "suffering," "ongoing," and "disastrous" that enhance moral seriousness. Conversely, mitigation, which conceivably allows silence, is realised through "aggression," "consequences," "working toward a new reality," and "international community's role." Within the political context, this measured balance may legitimise the role of Saudi Arabia as a regional power player, which arguably involves balancing opposing political positions.

4.1.3. Analysis of Extract (3)

On 21 October 2025, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, Amir of the State of Qatar, delivered a speech at the 5th Ordinary Session of the Shura Council in Doha. The Amiri Diwan published the speech in Arabic and English, addressing major global and regional issues. In his speech, the Amir emphasised:

ليست قضية فلسطين قضية إرهاب، بل قضية احتلال مديد، أن أوان وضع حد له. هذا أساس السلام العادل، والسلام العادل يضمن الأمن للشعبين الفلسطيني والإسرائيلي. ... ومن المؤسف أن تكون الشرعية الدولية عاجزة عن فرض احترامها حين يتعلق الأمر بمأساة الشعب الفلسطيني الشقيق. ... وتقوم قطر بجهود مقدرة على الصعيد الدولي بالوساطة في حل النزاعات وفي العمل الإنساني. نحن نتفق في موقفنا هذا مع ما بات يتبناه الرأي العام العالمي والقوى المحبة للسلام في العالم أجمع.

The Palestinian cause is not a matter of terrorism, but rather one of prolonged occupation that must come to an end. This is the foundation of a just peace — a peace that ensures security for both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. ... It is regrettable that international legitimacy remains incapable of enforcing its respect when it comes to the tragedy of our brotherly Palestinian people. ... Qatar continues to play a significant role internationally through mediation in

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conflict resolution and in humanitarian efforts. We in our position align with what is being embraced by global public opinion and all peace-loving forces around the world. (Amiri Diwan, 2025, paras. 19, 25)

4.1.3.1. Transitivity Analysis. In line with Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the extract begins with the negated relational process "is not," which the speaker employed to construct the Palestinian issue. In this respect, "the Palestinian cause" is the token and "a matter of terrorism ... a matter of prolonged occupation" functions as the value. Such relational framing reframes the problem ontologically rather than as action-based. It conceivably suppresses agency and creates strategic silence concerning actual Israeli actions and starvation in Gaza. This silence may be further reinforced by "that must come to an end," in which occupation is an actor that is reified and non-human. Although the moral obligation is realised in the form of "must," the responsibility of political actors to end the occupation is backgrounded. This could absolve Israeli culpability by making the occupation a self-contained state, thus maintaining evasion.

The following clause realises the relational process "is." In this case, "this" (the ending of occupation) is the token, and "the foundation of a just peace" is the value. Such a relational construction presents peace as an abstract moral result instead of the outcome of particular political or military activity. This abstraction shifts the discourse away from causality, especially occupation leading to starvation, and instead reframes the issue as a question of values. In the same discursive vein, the clause actualises the material process "ensures." In this sentence, the word "peace" serves as an actor and "security" functions as a goal. This construction creates symmetry by ascribing agency to peace and equalising beneficiaries. Such symmetry could constitute discursive silence by masking Israeli asymmetrical power and its

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contribution to starvation resulting from the blockade. It also obscures the tangible agency of making peace.

The next clause actualises the relational process "remains." The carrier in this configuration is "international legitimacy" and the attribute is "incapable." In this attribution of incapacity through relations, the blame for the tragedy of the Palestinians is shifted to an abstract failure of institutions. The subsequent clause realises the material process "play," whereby "Qatar" is the actor and "a significant role" is the goal. The circumstance of extent (distance), "internationally," expands the scope of the process. This is also realised in the circumstance of manner (means) "through mediation in conflict resolution and humanitarian efforts." This arrangement foregrounds Qatari moral agency, while implicitly contrasting it with the lack of Israeli agency in other cases. With this opposition, moral responsibility can be ideologically constructed with humanitarian action instead of direct attribution of blame.

The last clause fulfils the relational process "align" with "we" functioning as the carrier rather than as an actor, thus foregrounding attitude over action. Such alignment is further defined by the circumstance of accompaniment (comitative), "with what is being embraced by global public opinion and all peace-loving forces around the world." With such relational positioning, the discursive alignment substitutes for material action to save Palestinians. Moral position is therefore stated not in material terms but in relational ones, thereby making obligation soft.

4.1.3.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. According to van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the speaker foregrounded the categorisation strategy. This is clear in the transformation of the term "terrorism" into "prolonged occupation"

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in the first sentence. This move repositions the issue on a political level and is strengthened by the euphemism strategy, which serves to recontextualise violence through the use of the word "occupation." Such a discursive choice can facilitate silence by introducing state terror as neutralised and normalised. Simultaneously, the polarisation strategy is built around the "terrorism ... occupation" dichotomy that ideologically justifies Israeli actions. The situation description strategy can also maintain silence by virtue of presenting suffering as a state instead of actions carried out by particular actors. Further, the discourse ostensibly indicates an unnamed occupier in the occupation, thus concealing responsibility, and this entails the implication strategy.

In this context, the second sentence is structured around the comparison strategy which is enacted by the phrase "security for both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples." This formulation puts the two parties in the same security and moral framework, which may result in evasion by means of equilibrium. It also shifts the focus from Israeli atrocities and continued aggression against Palestinians. This framing is reinforced by the reasonableness strategy which is observed in "a just peace." This presents the speaker's stance as impartial and reasonable and not accusing, thereby possibly supporting an evasive stance on the issue of condemning Israel. In this connection, the vagueness strategy underpins this framing by not stating how Palestinians are denied security by blocking or starving them.

In light of this, the third clause actualises the authority strategy through the reference to "international legitimacy." This reference introduces an outsider, and it shifts the responsibility away from Israel by saying that the external party is "incapable of enforcing its respect." Thus, it seemingly implements evasion by means of the distancing strategy. The victimisation strategy is also realised in the use of

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"tragedy," in which Palestinians are presented as sufferers but not victims of certain policies. Meanwhile, the emotional proximity, moral concern, and solidarity provided by the phrase "brotherly Palestinian people" realise the empathy strategy. Further, the euphemism strategy operates through the lack of direct terms like "starvation" or "siege." This omission could make the famine less real and continue the discursive silence surrounding the Palestinian issue.

Building on this framing, the clause "Qatar continues to play a significant role" invokes the positive self-presentation strategy. Such phrasing safeguards the moral image of the speaker and uses the hyperbole strategy through the broadness of Qatari influence through the word "internationally." Simultaneously, the national self-glorification strategy is found in "mediation" and "humanitarian efforts," which creates a moral leader image. This self-praise redirects attention away from naming or condemning Israel, thus plausibly perpetuating evasion.

The final sentence functions as a discursive conclusion to the discourse primarily through the consensus strategy by aligning with the "global public opinion." The mention of "all peace-loving forces around the world" presents the position as universal. Meanwhile, the ethical assessment of peace incorporates the norm expression strategy. Collectively, these strategies promote the speaker's discursive agenda of moral alignment, without necessarily laying blame against Israel.

4.1.3.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Within Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the speaker nominated "the Palestinian cause" as a case of long-term occupation through the nomination strategy. This framing implicitly collectivises the Palestinians as innocent victims instead of security threats. However, the open denial of "terrorism" may be discursive silence, which backgrounds the political reality of

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the cause and probably justifies Israeli actions. It is notable that Israel is not nominated in the discourse. Agency is instead transferred to abstractions such as "occupation" and "international legitimacy," which dilute responsibility. By contrast, Qatar is clearly nominated by the use of "we" and "Qatar," which constitute a morally coherent in-group related to "just peace," "mediation," and "humanitarian efforts." Considering the political context, such a structure could be used to maintain the mediatory role of Qatar by not confronting Israel and the diplomatic consequences that this may incur.

Through the predication strategy, the attributes are distributed asymmetrically between actors. The phrase "the tragedy of our brotherly Palestinian people" portrays Palestinians as victim subjects and humanises them. The international actor is depicted as ineffective in the assumption that it is "incapable of enforcing its respect," placing the global institution in a morally inferior position. Nevertheless, Qatar is favourably represented as a morally responsible actor with ethical activities through the expressions "mediation," "conflict resolution," and "humanitarian efforts." However, Israel is not predicated as glorified or criticised. Contextually, this selective allocation is likely to be used to protect strategic alliances and economic interests by avoiding language that draws outside pressure.

In this regard, the argumentation strategy is based on the topos of justice. The Palestinian cause is represented as "prolonged occupation that must come to an end" and as a basis for "a just peace," which justifies the claim without placing direct blame on any actor. The topos of humanitarianism is realised through "the tragedy of our brotherly Palestinian people." This statement prefigures the moral imperative and elevates Qatar to the role of a supporter of the Palestinian cause in Arab society. This could defuse domestic outrage and prevent charges of complicity with Israel. Lastly,

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the appeal for "security for both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples" makes use of a topos of balancing that neutralises asymmetry and spreads responsibility even further.

The employment of abstract moral collectives and the lack of identifiable actors appeal to the perspectivisation strategy. The speaker attempted to frame a controversial international space as moral consensus through "global public opinion" and "peace-loving forces around the world." This construction obscures the polarisation between Israel and Palestine. It also seems to produce discursive silence, as it does not explicitly criticise Israel, side with Palestine, or engage in historical accountability. Within the political context, this reserved stance can be viewed as an indication of a realisation that any outright denunciation of Israel would result in retaliation. This retaliation can then be instrumentalised to legitimise aggression and endanger the stability and security of Qatar.

Lastly, the intensification and mitigation strategy puts the discourse into a moral perspective. Intensification is implemented by using the emotive lexis "tragedy" and the adverb "internationally," which locate the stance of Qatar outside the regional scale. However, mitigation is reflected in not directly accusing Israel, particularly through abstract terms such as "international legitimacy." This tendency is further evident in "the Palestinian cause is not a matter of terrorism." The terrorism frame is refuted and the accountability is diverted to the "prolonged occupation" without necessarily referring to the aggressor.

4.1.4. Analysis of Extract (4)

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, gave a speech addressing Emirati humanitarian aid for Gaza. It

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was released in Arabic and English through Government of Dubai Media Office on 7 December 2025 in Dubai, in which he affirmed:

فخور بتسابق الجميع على المشاركة. فخور بجهود أكثر من ٢٠ ألف متطوع. هذا هو شعب الإمارات. وهذه روح أبناء زايد الحقيقية. وهذه هي المحبة التي يحملها شعب الإمارات لأبناء فلسطين وشعبها. وستبقى الإمارات مسانداً وداعماً للقضية الفلسطينية وللشعب الفلسطيني الشقيق. ... وهو ما يعبر عن أصالة الخير في مجتمعنا وتضامن أفراده العميق مع الشعب الفلسطيني الشقيق.

I am proud of our community's enthusiastic response, and of the efforts of more than 20,000 volunteers. This is the essence of the UAE people. This is the true spirit of Zayed's sons and daughters. It is a profound demonstration of the love the people of the UAE have for Palestine and its people. The UAE will always remain a steadfast supporter of the Palestinian people and their cause. ... This response speaks volumes about the deep-rooted generosity within our society, the profound solidarity our people feel for the Palestinian people. (Government of Dubai Media Office, 2025, paras. 5, 11)

4.1.4.1. Transitivity Analysis. Based on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the clause realises a relational process in the form of "am." The carrier in this clause is "I" and the attribute is "proud." This sentence foregrounds the speaker's agency and humanitarian pride in "our community's enthusiastic response" to starvation in Gaza. In the meantime, it masks Israeli agency in the production of famine, thereby possibly silencing the material causes that prompt such aid.

This discourse changes to collective identity as opposed to individual evaluation via the relational process realised by "is." The token is assigned to Emirati aid to Gaza, which is called "this," whereas the value is denoted by "the essence of the UAE people." This arrangement renders the humanitarian response as a national attribute, thereby apparently centralising moral responsibility. This framing is furthered by the other relational process actualised by "is" in which aid to Gaza, represented by "it," serves as the token. It is measured by the value of "the true spirit

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of Zayed's sons and daughters" that confirms the Emirati humanity and moral identity. The following clause realises the relational process "is" in which "it" is the token and "a profound demonstration of the love" is the value. At the same time, the relational process construed by "have" grammatically positions "the people of the UAE" as the carrier of "love for Palestine and its people." The wording creates an impression of emotional and moral solidarity with the Palestinians without providing any political commitment or action.

Furthermore, moral responsibility can also be implied in the relational process "remain." In this clause, "the UAE" is foregrounded as a carrier, whereas "a steadfast supporter of the Palestinian people and their cause" is an attribute. Evasion seems to be ideologically enacted by shifting agency to the UAE. On the other hand, Israel is not represented either as an actor of violence or as a carrier of negative attributes. The attribute "a steadfast supporter" and the circumstance of extent (frequency) "always" further reinforce the sense of consistency of the Emirati stance regarding the Palestinians.

The grammatical repetition of relational processes and deictic expressions such as "this" and "it" to stand with Gaza supports Emirati moral identity. In this sense, the emphasis is shifted away from the root causes of starvation towards the moral identity of the humanitarian actor. As a result, the source of the violence is strategically unstated, and Israeli accountability is not denied, but it might be silenced discursively.

The final clause fulfils the verbal process "speaks" in which "this response" is the sayer and "deep-rooted generosity within our society" is the verbiage. This framing is a way to position the Emirati generosity in the foreground and to spread

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responsibility. Then, the mental process is "feel" in which the senger is "our people" and the phenomenon is "profound solidarity with the Palestinian people." This represents a shift from moral to affective identification. Altogether, the lack of material processes and the exclusion of Israel as an actor background the blame for starvation in Gaza.

4.1.4.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. In line with van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the first clause constructs the key strategy of positive self-presentation. Moral virtue is foregrounded through evaluative lexis such as "proud" and "enthusiastic," alongside the number game strategy, realised through "more than 20,000 volunteers." This formulation constructs the in-group of the speaker as remarkably altruistic and morally authoritative. At the same time, Israeli responsibility is ideologically displaced in favour of humanitarian response rather than causation. Consequently, moral self-presentation takes precedence over material and political explanation.

Such ethical evaluation is intensified by the national self-glorification strategy. This is evident in the expressions "the essence of the UAE people" and "the true spirit of Zayed's sons and daughters." This arrangement serves to recontextualise the humanitarian issue as a narrative of national identity, thus apparently generating evasion. By doing so, the discourse marginalises issues of responsibility and positions the out-group actors beyond explicit ideological classification.

The clause is structured by the humanitarianism strategy through the use of emotionally charged expressions such as "a profound demonstration of the love" for "Palestine and its people." This kind of construction creates symbolic alignment with Palestinian pain. Nevertheless, such humanitarian framing depoliticises the crisis as it

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introduces starvation as an act of compassion instead of the result of deliberate policies.

The absolutist or generalised statement "will always remain a steadfast supporter" serves to reinforce the generalisation strategy as the dominant one. Such a formulation indicates moral conformity at the level of principle without specifying action or responsibility. This discursive move may ideologically enable the speaker's agenda to construct moral responsibility through supporting Palestine at the level of the discourse alone. Simultaneously, this framing prevents tangible engagement with the famine in Gaza as a politically manufactured catastrophe. In this regard, the abstract mention of the Palestinian crisis as "their cause" operates as the vagueness strategy. This conceals its siege-induced nature, which involves starvation and Israeli agency.

Lastly, the repetition strategy is realised through the repeated emphasis on group virtue through the use of lexical items, including "deep-rooted generosity" and "profound solidarity." In this vein, this clause activates the hyperbole strategy as seen in the expression "response speaks volumes." This strategy inflates the humanitarian action as being morally sufficient and beyond dispute. This action serves as a way of shutting down the argumentative space and ostensibly functions as a silence strategy. As a result, causality, agency, and accountability inquiries are foreclosed.

4.1.4.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Drawing on Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the nomination strategy constructs a moral in-group. This is done by using collective references like "our community," "the UAE people," and "Zayed's sons and daughters." Such nominations ground the national unity on the legacy of Sheikh Zayed. Palestinians are nominated together as "Palestine and its people" and

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"the Palestinian people," hence positioning them as an object of solidarity instead of political agents. The absence of a nominated opponent is likely to be the source of silence about responsibility for the plight of Palestinians. Given the diplomatic landscape in the region, these discursive choices can be seen as a delicate balance between support for Palestinians and remaining silent on Israel.

At the level of the predication strategy, the UAE community is credited with significantly positive attributes. This is reflected in "enthusiastic response," "deep-rooted generosity," and "profound solidarity" that make the in-group more virtuous. Palestinians are depicted as worthy of sympathy via words such as "love" and "support." By contrast, Israel, as a nameless out-group, has no positive or negative predication. In the geopolitical context, such calibrated predication of Israel might reflect economic considerations. In this light, strategic interests appear to support silence, rather than overt evaluative attribution.

The argumentation strategy is mostly based on the topos of humanitarianism and the topos of numbers. Humanitarian obligation is expressed through moral terms such as "love," "solidarity," and "steadfast supporter." Meanwhile, the reference to "more than 20,000 volunteers" is a legitimisation device, since it proves the dedication of the wider society. This framing justifies backing Palestine and evades a causal explanation of the problem. Contextually, this evasion may reflect security interests, which incline towards discursive restraint in relation to Israel.

The discourse is written in an institutional, official, and laudatory style that is in line with national pride through the perspectivisation strategy. This is evident in statements such as "this is the essence of the UAE people" as well as "this is the true spirit of Zayed's sons and daughters." These constructions position the speaker as a

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representative of the general moral truth. The focus on internal solidarity marginalises other political views and strengthens a depoliticised humanitarian viewpoint. Within the political context, this position could be interpreted as reflecting sensitivity to alliances and global positioning. Therefore, discursive caution may function to maintain alliances that are supportive of Israel, especially with the US, and to sustain a moderate global image.

Finally, the intensification and mitigation strategy operates through amplification and deletion at the same time. Intensification is actualised with emphatic evaluative expressions such as "profound demonstration," "deep-rooted generosity," and "always remain a steadfast supporter." Mitigation, in turn, is realised through the total avoidance of referring to Israel or of defining the reasons for Palestinian suffering. This strategy could alleviate possible political confrontation with Israel without losing moral positioning towards Palestine.

4.1.5. Analysis of Extract (5)

King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan delivered a speech on 23 September 2025. The speech was presented during the General Debate of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in New York. It was delivered in English and published on King Abdullah II Official Website, addressing global issues, particularly the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In this context, the King said:

The Palestinian–Israeli conflict ... should have elicited outrage and action, especially from major democracies. ... However, for almost as long, Palestinians have been living through a cruel cycle of "yet again". ... And throughout all these years, Israeli families, too, have not been able to live in true security. Because military action cannot bring them the safety they need.

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... Security will only come when Palestine and Israel begin to co-exist side by side. ... In Jordan, we are determined to work for a world in which people are secure in their homes, are safe to practice their faiths, and are able to live and thrive in dignity. (King Abdullah II Official Website, 2025, paras. 5, 14, 21, 32, 39)

4.1.5.1. Transitivity Analysis. Drawing on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the speaker framed the first clause as a material process "elicited," which is not realised. In this process, "the Palestinian–Israeli conflict" acts as the actor and "outrage and action" function as the goal. The verb frames action as a moral expectation rather than an accomplished event, which positions the "major democracies" as the expected agents of response.

In the second clause, the absence of realised action prepares a transition from moral expectation to experiential suffering. This sentence fulfils a relational process of survival by using "have been living," which intensifies suffering. In this case, the carrier is the "Palestinians" and their agency is limited to continued survival. In this respect, "through a cruel cycle of yet again" functions as a circumstance of manner (quality) and "yet again" serves as a circumstance of extent (frequency). This framing can strategically produce silence by making violence a repetitive state of affairs, instead of an act by Israeli forces. The circumstance of extent (duration) "for almost as long" is an extension and naturalisation of pain as ongoing.

The analysis is then shifted to the negated relational process "have not been able to live" that construes the parallel insecurity of Israel. It places the "Israeli families" as the carrier and "in true security" as a circumstance of manner (quality). "Throughout all these years" is a circumstance of extent (duration), which protracts insecurity as prolonged and continuous, just as is the case with Palestinians. In this

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framing, the speaker employed mirrored temporal framing that results in Israeli and Palestinian suffering being presented as equal. This ideologically creates a symmetry that serves as discursive evasion because it shifts the attention to "the Palestinian–Israeli conflict" instead of Israeli structural responsibility for starvation in Gaza.

In this regard, the subsequent clause uses the material process "cannot bring." It presents "military action" as an actor and "safety" as a goal. This statement victimises the "Israeli families," as it positions them as parallel victims who need "safety." The following sentence indicates a change of state by the material process "come," which construes "security" as the actor. It then turns towards another material process realised through "to start coexisting," in which "Palestine and Israel" are active actors and not passive participants. Peace is framed through the circumstance of contingency (condition) "only" rather than as a political action.

In the final clause, the discourse shifts towards moral self-positioning. In realising a relational process of volition in "we are determined," the carrier is "we" and "determined" is the attribute. This may make the speaker appear morally responsible through his presentation of verbal engagement with the vulnerable, instead of being a material actor. Relational processes realised through repetition by the use of the verb "are" then connect the carrier "people" with the attributes of "secure," "safe," and "able to live and thrive in dignity." This framing is anchored in the circumstance of location (place) "in Jordan," which situates the discourse within a national frame and projects the state as a moral reference point.

4.1.5.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Within van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the norm expression strategy is employed by the speaker in the formulation "should have elicited outrage and action." It invokes moral

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obligation through the use of the modal verb "should." This enables the speaker to adopt an ethical position as it suggests what should be done without any commitment to take action. Simultaneously, the mention of "major democracies" triggers vagueness as the prominent strategy by avoiding responsibility through non-specific reference. Ideologically, this formulation is further reinforced by the generalisation strategy, which could indicate moral responsibility through showing the need for action without assigning political accountability.

Against this background, "cruel cycle" and "yet again" function as linguistic choices that trigger victimisation as the primary strategy. This is further reinforced through the metaphor of a "cycle" that realises the dramatisation strategy, which frames violence as recurring and persistent. Meanwhile, it is also observed to implement the empathy strategy by presenting Palestinian suffering. This discursive construction may produce evasion due to foregrounding the suffering, thus avoiding political action towards the Palestinian issue, the perpetrators, and the potential solutions to the crisis in Gaza. In doing so, it promotes the political agenda of the speaker but in a humanitarian manner as opposed to a political one. Moreover, the use of the phrase, "for almost as long," activates the vagueness strategy. This could imply discursive silence by depriving the discourse of historical reference, avoiding precise temporal specification, and obscuring responsibility and suffering specifics.

Then, the Israeli insecurity is framed through the context of "Israeli families" and the lack of "true security," with the marker "too" used mainly to engage in the comparison strategy. In ideological terms, such a move might facilitate discursive evasion through the construction of equivalence of Palestinian and Israeli suffering, which shifts attention away from the Palestinian cause. This structure does not presuppose a clear in-group/out-group dichotomy, thus shifting blame and

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responsibility. Consequently, it plausibly silences the historical and political realities that define the aggressor and establish Palestinian victimhood.

Under this framing, the speaker employed the vagueness strategy. The inability to provide "true security" to "Israeli families" is attributed to "military action," which fails to give them the "safety," indirectly positioning Israel as the source of insecurity for the Palestinians and Israelis. This attribution is mediated through abstraction and comparison, which enable the speaker to avoid political consequences. Meanwhile, the concept of peace is expressed through a conditional framing. The expression "security will only come when Palestine and Israel ... co-exist side by side," characterised by "only," performs a delicate balancing function. This framing supports the discursive silence by marginalising Palestinian political realities and the conditions of starvation in Gaza.

The shift to the expression "in Jordan, we are determined" primarily triggers the national self-glorification strategy. The use of "we" constructs Jordan as a moral in-group. Moral responsibility is implicitly expressed in words such as "work," "secure," "safe," and "dignity," which depict the humanitarian activities of Jordan. These words could function as a discursive strategy of evasion that deflects blame from Israel. In this context, silence appears to stem from evading direct engagement with the Palestinian crisis and the hunger in Gaza more than with Israeli suffering, thus maintaining a discursive balance. Evasion is further supported by the generalisation strategy through the generic reference to "people." This plausibly puts Palestinians and Israelis under one moral category and suspends Palestinian demands for rights.

4.1.5.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. According to Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the discourse abstracts and balances agency by framing the situation as "the Palestinian-Israeli conflict" through the use of the nomination strategy. This reciprocal labelling places the outrage on "major democracies" instead of Israel. It also constructs the situation as a reaction to a generalised condition rather than the Palestinian issue or starvation in Gaza, thereby potentially contributing to discursive silence. Within this framing, Palestinians are collectivised, while Gaza and starvation are omitted, as in "Palestinians have been living through a cruel cycle." By contrast, Israel is civilianised as "Israeli families." When read within wider geopolitical constraints, such calibrated nomination potentially functions as a risk-averse discursive strategy that possibly avoids diplomatic escalation and moral confrontation.

Within the predication strategy, the discourse distributes victimhood and neutralises blame. The suffering of Palestinians is naturalised through "cruel cycle" and "yet again" while Israeli insecurity is expressed through "have not been able to live in true security." Violence is further evaluated in "military action cannot bring them the safety they need," which frames harm in terms of effectiveness, rather than ethical responsibility. By this calibrated predication, Jordan seems to operate in terms of its structural constraints, possibly foregrounding restraint and a tendency to preserve economic interests with Israel and the US.

Through the argumentation strategy, the speaker foregrounded instrumental reasoning rather than causality. This is reflected through the topos of reasonableness in "military action cannot bring them the safety they need." The sentence "security will only come when Palestine and Israel ... co-exist side by side" realises the topos of counterfactuality, constructing coexistence as a condition. The topos of balancing is also realised through the parallels between "the cruel cycle" of Palestinians, the lack

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of "true security" for Israeli families, and the marker of "too." In the meantime, the inevitability topos of Palestinian suffering is addressed through "cruel cycle" and "yet again." Overall, this arrangement seems to be framed by broad diplomatic sensitivities.

The perspectivisation strategy enables the speaker to take a detached stance and put the conflict in the context of collective humanitarian misery rather than assigning blame. This impersonalised perspectivisation is supported by "should have elicited outrage and action," "for almost as long," and the parallelism of "Palestinians" and "Israeli families, too." In line with the political context, this balancing seems to be strategic. It may acknowledge the Palestinian cause to pacify domestic outrage, and it may also consider Israeli security to control criticism and curb retaliation. The alternation in futurity between the clauses "security will only come when Palestine and Israel ... co-exist side by side" and "in Jordan, we are determined" is a suspension of judgement. This reinforces a mediating stance which is based on stability and restraint.

Finally, the discourse uses the intensification and mitigation strategy to control the coverage of the Palestinian issue. The intensification is framed in "should have elicited outrage and action," "cruel cycle," and "yet again," which increase the suffering of Palestinians. This amplification of discourse would evoke a religious image of custodianship, thereby possibly establishing symbolic responsibility. "In Jordan, we are determined" promotes in-group formulation. This is offset by mitigation through the parallel mentioning of the suffering of the Israeli people in "Israeli families, too." In a broader sense, the conditional security framing, such as "security will only come when Palestine and Israel ... co-exist side by side," fuses moral judgement and shifts responsibility from the speaker.

4.2. Western Leaders' Discourses

This section analyses some speeches by specific Western leaders delivered in 2025 in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. It focuses on five leaders, namely the President of the US, Donald Trump, the Prime Minister of the UK, Keir Starmer, the French President, Emmanuel Macron, the German Federal Chancellor, Friedrich Merz, and the Italian Prime Minister, Giorgia Meloni.

4.2.1. *Analysis of Extract (6)*

The President of the US, Donald Trump, gave a speech on 27 July 2025 during a public meeting with the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, in Turnberry, Scotland. This statement, as reported by Hindustan Times, was made in response to a journalist's question: "Should Israel be doing more to allow food into Gaza?" (Hindustan Times, 2025, 3:06:10). Trump responded as follows:

We gave 60 million dollars two weeks ago and nobody even acknowledged it for food and it's terrible. You know, you really at least want to have somebody say thank you. No other country gave anything. We gave \$60 million two weeks ago for food for Gaza. And nobody acknowledged it. Nobody talks about it. And it makes you feel a little bad when you do that and you know you have other countries not giving anything. ... I mean nobody gave but us and nobody said thank you very much. And it would be nice to have at least a thank you. (Hindustan Times, 2025, 3:06:19)

4.2.1.1. Transitivity Analysis. Using Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the discourse begins with a material process expressed by the word "gave." In this case, "we" is the actor and "60 million dollars" is the goal. This is grammatically reinforced by the circumstances of location (time) "two weeks ago" and cause (purpose) "for food for Gaza." The speaker dealt with the question not only through a

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material process but also by personalising his donation. This donation is later reaffirmed through "we gave \$60 million." This probably strengthens moral responsibility while strategically silencing Israeli agency in the violence against Gaza.

The speech then shifts to the mental process of cognition by the word "acknowledged." In this process, the senser is obscured and represented by the pronoun "nobody," and the donation realised by the pronoun "it" is the phenomenon. The repetition of the clause via "nobody even acknowledged it" and "nobody acknowledged it" makes the complaint more forceful by suggesting that the lack of recognition is a continuous pattern. In the expression "it's terrible," the verb "is" is used to realise a relational process, with the pronoun "it," which refers to the lack of gratitude, as the carrier. In this sense, the carrier is negatively evaluated as "terrible." This reframing serves an ideology that shifts the focus away from the restricted food imports into Gaza and towards the ingratitude. This can implicitly maintain silence about the access mechanism that the question of the journalist implies.

In the following clause, the mental process "want" puts "you" in the role of the senser, an implicit reference to the speaker. This construction makes "to have somebody say thank you" the phenomenon, and normalises thanks as the ethical outcome of aid. The material process "gave" is then repeated in the comparison "no other country gave anything," where "no other country" is the actor and "anything" is the maximised goal. The repeated wording "no other country gave anything," "other countries not giving anything," and "nobody gave but us," intensifies the polarisation.

The concept of grievance is reinforced by the verbal process "talks," whereby "nobody" functions as a negated sayer, thereby indicating the absence of a realised speaker. The repetition of clauses such as "nobody acknowledged," "nobody talks,"

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and "nobody said" creates a totalising narrative of non-recognition. This enables the speaker to further emphasise that nobody spoke or showed gratitude towards him. Such repetition may ideologically construct evasion by diverting attention away from Palestine, starvation in Gaza, the reasons behind the famine, the guilty party, presumed solutions, and the journalist's question about the aid access, to the exaggerated, supposed concern of the speaker. Furthermore, the affective mental process realised in "feel" positions "you" as the grammatical senser, but it refers to the speaker himself. The repetition of "thank you" reduces the crisis to a complaint of the unrecognised aid.

4.2.1.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. According to van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the extract functions as a tactical response to the journalist's question. It can be interpreted as advancing the agenda of the speaker by evading the Israeli responsibility and privileging donor self-legitimation. The discourse provides grounds for the positive self-presentation strategy by the repetition of the donor claim "we gave" and the number game strategy through "60 million dollars" and "two weeks ago." These quantified claims function as evidence of virtue, constructing the speaker's side as highly humanitarian. Evasion is most likely reproduced by means of reiteration. The act of donation is presented as the focal moral activity, and the Israeli contribution to the creation of starvation and the manipulation of access are backgrounded within this framing.

This elevation of moral self-image is further reinforced through the polarisation strategy, as realised in "no other country gave anything" and "other countries not giving anything." Such absolutist formulation reinforces the in-group/out-group dichotomy and constructs a moral scorecard structured around the binary "we give / they do not." This polarisation may function as a strategy of

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discursive evasion by redirecting evaluative attention towards "other countries" instead of focusing on whether Israel facilitates or restricts food entry into Gaza. In this regard, responsibility is displaced away from the actor implied by the journalist's question and diffused across unspecified external actors.

The discourse then evolves into self-victimisation through the victimisation strategy to establish emotional and reputational damage. Configurations such as "nobody even acknowledged it," "nobody talks about it," "it makes you feel bad," and "at least a thank you" position the speaker as an unjust victim whose generosity is overlooked. This story changes the moral focus. Instead of foregrounding starving Gazans as the victims of famine brought about by the siege, the speaker is reframed as the victim of thanklessness. This act of victimisation possibly serves as discursive evasion in that it re-contextualises the starvation crisis as a personal grievance of the speaker.

Moreover, the rhetorical emphasis is arranged based on repetition as the main strategy. The lexical reiteration of "nobody" in expressions such as "nobody acknowledged," "nobody talks," "nobody gave," and "nobody said thank you" creates a totalising feeling of being neglected. This repetition is further intensified through the dramatisation strategy, which amplifies the perceived injustice of a minor failure in the form of a lack of thanks into a broader moral outrage. The lack of gratitude is ideologically dramatised more than the famine itself. Practically, silence may be reframed as silence concerning the contribution of the donor rather than concerning Israeli restriction or responsibility for starvation in Gaza.

Lastly, the burden strategy is triggered by the repetition of "thank you." It presents the donation as a voluntary sacrifice that is framed as something that should

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be thanked, instead of a humanitarian obligation that entails confronting the agent of deprivation. Similarly, the clause "nobody said thank you very much" reconfigures famine relief as an exchange based on gratitude. This, thus, shifts the focus from moral responsibility to self-attributed generosity. This undermines accountability for the conditions that cause starvation.

4.2.1.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Within Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the discourse constructs a definite moral in-group through the repeated use of collective references to "we" and "us" at the level of the nomination strategy. These references are evident in "we gave" and "nobody gave but us." This nomination constructs the speaker's side as the sole significant humanitarian actor. In comparison, Gaza is nominated as a passive recipient, "for food for Gaza," but not as an agent or a political voice. Most crucially, Israel is entirely absent from nomination. The fact that Trump did not nominate Israel as a negatively responsible actor can be an indicator of strategic silence. This may reflect perceived mutual advantage and the protection of diplomatic ties between the US and Israel, privileging self-credit without directly criticising Israel.

Through the predication strategy, positive attributes are assigned to the in-group through acts of giving and moralisation of aid, as in "\$60 million," and "for food." The negative assessment is instead deflected onto the unknown outsiders through the repetition of the pattern of "nobody" and the statement of "no other country gave anything." The relational clause, "it's terrible," adds to the negative moral judgement of Palestinians/Gazans for failing to be grateful to Trump. Israel is neither positively nor negatively predicated, as its condemnation is evaded through non-response and the redirection of the topic to avoid the journalist's question regarding access. This evasion may reflect perceived defence interests within a

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broader geopolitical context, in which criticism of Israel may jeopardise a security-related alliance.

The argumentation strategy is based on morality, justice, and injustice topoi. The figure of "60 million dollars" functions as a legitimising warrant and this indicates that the speaker has fulfilled the moral obligation. The discourse redefines justice as gratitude and recognition rather than taking firm action against Israeli practices in Palestine, particularly Gaza. Injustice, in turn, is reduced to the absence of acknowledgement and appreciation, as indicated through expressions such as "nobody acknowledged it" and "nobody said thank you." On contextual grounds, the perceived economic interests of the speaker's state may also support such a shift towards emphasising donor credit instead of direct blame.

The speaker adopted a self-centred moral position through the perspectivisation strategy, which frames the crisis through the emotional perspective of the donor. Expressions such as "it makes you feel a little bad" and the emphasis on "really ... want ... somebody to say thank you" foreground the feelings of the donor as the dominant perspective. Thus, this perspective relegates the lived experience of starvation in Gaza and sidelines the political process of deprivation. This formulation of perspective may also align with the assumed value of regional sharing of information. Hence, open denunciation of Israel would be rhetorically costly.

Lastly, the intensification and mitigation strategy operates through the interaction of both of its elements. The repetition of "we gave," "nobody," and the maximiser "anything" amplifies the virtue of the donor and builds the ungratefulness of Palestinians. This is reinforced through "no other country gave anything" and "it's

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terrible." This amplification is constructed through mitigation, where donor credit suppresses any reference to Israeli control over access to food.

4.2.2. *Analysis of Extract (7)*

On 29 July 2025, Keir Starmer, Prime Minister of the UK, delivered a speech at 10 Downing Street in London. The speech, published on GOV.UK, constituted an official prime ministerial statement on Gaza in response to the increasing starvation crisis and humanitarian conditions. In this speech, the Prime Minister stated:

Now, in Gaza because of a catastrophic failure of aid, we see starving babies, children too weak to stand ... Yesterday I discussed this with President Trump. And we are mounting a major effort to get humanitarian supplies back in. ... Our goal remains a safe and secure Israel, alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state. ... Our message to the terrorists of Hamas is unchanged and unequivocal. They must immediately release all the hostages, sign up to a ceasefire, disarm and accept that they will play no part in the government of Gaza. (GOV.UK, 2025, paras. 2–3, 5, 7)

4.2.2.1. Transitivity Analysis. Drawing on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the opening clause of this extract realises a mental process "see." The senser of this process is the pronoun "we" and the phenomenon is "starving babies, children too weak to stand." Starvation is placed in the circumstance of location (place), "in Gaza," and is further framed through the circumstance of cause (reason), "because of a catastrophic failure of aid." Agency is further abstracted through this causal circumstance that may ideologically silence Israeli responsibility for producing famine.

The second clause shifts to a verbal process actualised in the verb "discussed," where "I" is the sayer and "with President Trump" is the circumstance of

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accompaniment (comitative). The deictic "this" makes the crisis unspecified verbiage, instead of identifying it as "this famine," "starvation in Gaza," or "this humanitarian catastrophe." This deictic decision brings about ambiguity, thereby creating strategic silence. This silence might implicitly limit the emphasis on famine as the main ethical issue and the attribution of direct responsibility for starvation.

The subsequent clause realises the material process "are mounting" in which "we" (the speaker and Trump) serve as the actors and "a major effort" serves as the goal. Then, this is reinforced by the circumstance of cause (purpose), "to get humanitarian supplies back in." This is a formulation that puts the UK and the US in the moral position of providers of relief and not in the position of dealing with the famine or blaming the responsible actors.

The following clause actualises the relational process "remains," with "our goal" as the token and "a safe and secure Israel" as the value. This is substantiated by "alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state," which is realised as a circumstance of accompaniment (comitative). This construction is typified by continuity and steadiness. It is, however, an expression of diplomatic balancing that prefigures Israeli security at the cost of Palestinian stability, internalising famine into an abstract two-state structure.

Similarly, the next clause realises a relational process, "is." It constructs "our message to the terrorists of Hamas" as the carrier and "unchanged and unequivocal" as the attribute. This phrasing indicates an ideology of shifting the ethical emphasis to a direct attack on Palestinians/Hamas. Silence can be discursively prolonged by foregrounding Hamas as the primary issue while possibly evading the Israeli role.

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Lastly, the series "they must ... release ... sign up ... disarm ... accept" realises a set of material processes that are strongly modalised. The repeated pronoun "they" functions as the actor, assigning Hamas goals such as "all the hostages" and "a ceasefire." The statement that "they will play no part in the government of Gaza" further excludes Hamas from the political future of Gaza. This concentration accumulates responsibility onto Hamas, thereby conceivably evading Israeli responsibility through displacement. No equivalent material obligations are imposed on Israel to prevent the blocking of food, regulate crossings, or address conditions of starvation. This omission may function as discursive silence. Therefore, famine is represented as suffering rather than the outcome of attributable action.

4.2.2.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Based on van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the expression "a catastrophic failure of aid" principally realises the euphemism strategy, thereby possibly constructing evasion. The "failure" implies that starvation is more of a technical failure rather than a politically produced condition, which reduces moral blame. The vagueness strategy is also actualised by this formulation, in that there is no description of who did not provide aid, or of what actions caused the breakdown. The crisis is thereby presented as an emerging situation and not a long-term process.

The following clause is based on the dramatisation strategy. The physical images such as "starving babies" and "too weak to stand" create vulnerability as emotionally desperate and extreme. This type of affective framing is indicative of empathy with the potential to lead to the formation of moral responsibility as the suffering becomes morally indisputable. Thus, this structure can be used to further the agenda of the speaker. Nevertheless, the implication strategy is also realised in the

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discourse in the context of that agenda, as the suffering is clearly defined, but the causality and responsibility are not.

The mention of "President Trump" indicates the authority strategy, which provides political weight through elite authority. It also functions as an indirect support for the claim as the statement gains added credibility by mentioning his name. The situation description strategy is further reinforced by the temporal marker of "yesterday," which implies urgency and involvement. This may contribute to the construction of moral responsibility by positioning this suffering as an issue that is discussed at the leadership level. However, this framing recontextualises famine as an issue of diplomatic organisation rather than a question of political accountability. Hence, this seems to sustain discursive silence by highlighting leadership without specifying Israeli agency.

The inclusive pronoun "we" realises the positive self-presentation strategy, positioning the in-group as morally responsible actors. The intensified expression "major effort" approaches the hyperbole strategy, as action is characterised as extraordinary and moral responsibility is apparently constructed. The expression "back in" implies that humanitarian supplies have been previously withheld. However, the responsible agent for the restriction is not nominated, and this arguably sustains evasion, foregrounding the rescuer while backgrounding Israeli responsibility.

The combination of "a safe and secure Israel" and "a viable and sovereign Palestinian state" realises consensus as the key strategy and gives the impression that it is a balanced two-state position. This is supplemented by the reasonableness strategy that constructs the speaker as moderate. However, this framing ideologically

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enacts the distancing strategy, which could entail silence, as starvation is not referred to through causal language such as restriction or siege. Instead, it is generalised into diplomatic lexis such as "viable" and "sovereign." This framing can facilitate ideological evasion through equilibrium that absolves Israel of responsibility.

Finally, the definition of Hamas as "terrorists" leads to the major strategy of categorisation, which places Palestinian actors as not belonging to the in-group of the speaker. It is also a sign of inbuilt judgement because the word itself is an evaluative one. This reinforces the negative other-presentation strategy, in which Hamas is framed as the main cause of the issue. This structure seems to build moral responsibility by placing the speaker in the position of an ethical duty to fight terrorism. The repeated imperatives "must immediately release ... sign up ... disarm ... accept" activate the burden strategy, with the burden of the solution exclusively on Hamas. This framing may ideologically perpetuate silence by potentially implying that Hamas is the instigator of Israeli actions. Meanwhile, Israel stands as a safe and secure entity through "safe and secure Israel," rather than an accountable aggressor in the creation of starvation.

4.2.2.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Within Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the nomination strategy establishes a moral in-group through the repetition of the words "we," "I," and "our." This is evident in "we see," "I discussed," "we are mounting," "our goal," and "our message." This repetition puts the speaker in the role of a manager of the humanitarian crisis. The location of victimhood is presented as "in Gaza" and the cause is "a catastrophic failure of aid." Hamas is singled out as the "terrorists," which is an explicit out-group. Israel, however, is not nominated as an actor in the starvation scene but as a security referent in "safe and secure Israel." In

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political terms, this nomination trend may be taken to show strategic prudence to prevent risk to the UK interests with Israel.

This reasoning is also supported by the predication strategy, in which Palestinian civilians are depicted as extremely vulnerable by using structures such as "starving babies" and "children too weak to stand." This framing portrays them as undisputed victims. Israel is justified with the terms "safe and secure," and Palestinian statehood is promoted to the status of diplomatic abstraction by the inclusion of "viable and sovereign." Hamas is negatively attributed using the criminalising word "terrorists" and exclusionary positioning in "play no part in the government of Gaza," which defines it as an inappropriate government.

Humanitarianism and security topoi are included in accordance with the argumentation strategy. Humanitarian urgency is framed using embodied signs such as "starving babies" and "children too weak to stand," and commitment claims such as "mounting a major effort." This construction seemingly positions the speaker as a morally responsible individual. At the same time, strong pressure is directed at Hamas through deontic modality in "they must ... release ... sign up ... disarm ... accept." This activates the security topos, in which terrorism is positioned as the major obstacle, reframing the causes of starvation in Gaza.

The speaker adopted the voice of a crisis manager through elite alignment within the perspectivisation strategy in "yesterday I discussed this with President Trump." This indicates privileged access, urgency, and control at the level of decision-making. Contextually, the mention of the US President by the UK leader, rather than other potential actors, may indicate strategic alignment. Such reference can be understood as a repetition of a similar pattern of silence and evasion in

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condemning Israel. It possibly reflects the UK-US alliance and their preference to act in a similar strategic orientation. Moreover, direct criticism of Israel might be considered as risking UK interests with the US. In this respect, the two-state line "our goal remains" incorporates a moderating diplomatic view which strengthens this stance.

In the intensification and mitigation strategy, intensification is expressed in the lexical choice of "catastrophic" and embodied images of collapse, which heighten emotional intensity. This is further reinforced through deontic pressure on Hamas "they must ... release ... disarm ... accept," which presents Hamas as the main barrier to the crisis in Gaza. Mitigation, in turn, operates through abstraction and omission. Famine is described as "aid failure," while Israeli involvement remains unarticulated and is further obscured by foregrounding responsibility on Hamas.

4.2.3. Analysis of Extract (8)

On 22 September 2025, French President Emmanuel Macron delivered a speech at the UN podium. It was presented at the High-level International Conference on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. The statement, released by the *Présidence de la République*, articulated the position of France on the situation in Gaza and the two-state settlement. In this speech, the President said:

Nothing, nothing justifies continuing the war in Gaza any longer. Nothing. On the contrary, everything calls for the war to be brought to a definitive end now ... To save lives. The lives of Israeli hostages who are still being detained in atrocious conditions. The lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians wracked by hunger, suffering, the fear of death, and grief over their loved ones. To save all lives. Because for two years now, it is the denial of one

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another's humanity and the sacrifice of human life that have prevailed. Yes, since 7 October, what has been denied is one another's lives. (Présidence de la République, 2025, para. 9)

4.2.3.1. Transitivity Analysis. Following Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the clause construes the relational process "justifies." In this process, "continuing the war in Gaza" functions as the carrier of unjustifiability. The urgency is intensified by the circumstance of extent (duration) "any longer" and moral rejection is further reinforced through the repetition "nothing, nothing." However, the actor is erased, possibly maintaining a strategic silence, in which the war and its famine-inducing effects are ideologically removed and disconnected from Israeli policy.

In the second clause, the verbal process of demand "calls for" is realised. The sayer is made universal with the term "everything," which makes necessity self-evident and non-negotiable. The verbiage "the war to be brought to a definitive end" and the circumstance of location (time) "now" emphasise urgency. However, the passive of the material verb "to be brought" again removes the agent responsible for ending the war. In light of this, the purpose clause "to save lives" increases the urgency even further and legitimises the demand by the material process "save" in a humanitarian context.

The relative clause that follows also specifies the referent "lives." It fulfils a material process through "are still being detained," in which "Israeli hostages" are the goal. The actor is missing grammatically, thereby potentially allowing indirect denunciation of Hamas. The circumstance of manner (quality) "in atrocious conditions" seems to construct moral responsibility by foregrounding the misery of the Israeli hostages.

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The subsequent clause follows the same pattern. The goal is "Palestinian civilians," whereas the actors are depoliticised forces, namely "hunger, suffering, the fear of death, and grief." The material process "wracked" implies materialised affliction, which can serve to construct silence. This is because famine is admitted, but the responsibility of Israel for restricting food and aid is not expressed. In the repeated construction "to save all lives," the material process "save" is employed with the further extension of universality by the quantifier "all." However, it also minimises asymmetry by making hostages and Gaza starvation a part of the same humanitarian context.

The next clause actualises the relational process "is." The token "it," indicating the continuous war between Israel and Palestine, is linked with two values, namely "the denial of one another's humanity" and "the sacrifice of human life." In this regard, "have prevailed" is a material process, which implies dominance. The circumstance of extent (duration) "for two years now" is used to extend the crisis. However, the participants are not actualised as political entities but as moral categories. This abstraction substitutes agency and redefines famine as a human failure in general rather than a disaster that has a political basis. Moral responsibility seems to be expressed through rejection of the humanitarian situation, and concrete accountability is obscured. Finally, the circumstance of location (time) is realised through "since 7 October." The token "what has been denied" actualises the relational process "is," in which the actor is obscured through the passive structure "has been denied." "One another's lives" functions as the value that constructs mutual denial, thus diffusing blame and diluting ideological attribution.

4.2.3.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Drawing on van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the discourse seems to build moral responsibility and

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urgency by the strategy of repetition. "Nothing, nothing ... nothing" constructs an absolute rejection of any justification for continuing the war "any longer."

Nevertheless, it also fulfils the implication strategy as "continuing the war" is condemned, but the actor is not specified. The major strategy that is employed to strengthen the urgency is hyperbole since "everything" demands "a definitive end now." This stance is made to be universally self-evident and plausible. However, accountability is not specified, so the distancing strategy is implemented in a way that strengthens the call without blaming. This may construct evasion through anticipating the remedy instead of attributing responsibility.

The actor description strategy is used as a key mechanism to create empathy. The association of "Israeli hostages" with "atrocious conditions" increases moral judgement, whereas the accountable actor remains unidentified. The number game strategy actualised through "hundreds of thousands" and the victimisation strategy realised through "wracked by hunger ... fear of death ... grief" exacerbate the suffering of Palestinians. Such linguistic decisions equalise the suffering, divert the focus from Gaza, and create the image of Israel as the victim. The implication strategy is also realised. The ideologically important phrase "since 7 October" invokes the inference that the subject of the action implied is Hamas, but it is not stated directly.

The repetition strategy is predominantly achieved through the refrain "to save lives ... to save all lives," and the generalisation strategy is strengthened through the general quantifier "all." This is supported by the comparison strategy, which equalises the suffering of Israeli hostages and the Palestinians in Gaza. Despite this balanced framing, it potentially creates silence since it does not specifically mention Israeli offences that result in Gaza being victimised. This exclusion, in its turn, can also serve as a tactic to avoid directly criticising Israel. At the same time, this arrangement

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contributes to constructing the speaker's moral responsibility as the stated purpose centres on population security and the safeguarding of human life.

Finally, the expressions "the denial of one another's humanity" and "the sacrifice of human life" foreground abstraction. This moralisation of the crisis actualises the situation description strategy, which is strengthened with the time indicator "for two years now." The temporal marker "since 7 October" gives immediacy, and "one another's lives" serves as a sign of reciprocity. In this arrangement, the speaker failed to create an explicit out-group, and he made both parties victims. The repetitive humanitarian language used in the discourse might serve as a discursive practice of evasion. The language can be used to further the speaker's agenda by generalising the Palestinian plight, de-politicising the crisis, and turning the attention away from starvation and the party to blame.

4.2.3.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Within Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the nomination strategy places Gaza in the context of "the war in Gaza" and portrays victims as "Israeli hostages" and "Palestinian civilians." Nonetheless, responsible participants are not specifically identified. Personalisation of hostages is achieved by detention, whereas Palestinians are described by terms such as "wracked by hunger." The reciprocal formulation "one another" further functions to avoid explicit reference to Israel as the actor that defines the situation in Gaza. These linguistic choices can be interpreted as strategic alignment and support for US policy. This context may therefore account for selective actor-naming and constrained attribution of responsibility, thereby generating ambiguity in the attribution of agency and accountability.

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Hostages are foregrounded in "atrocious conditions" through the predication strategy. In the meantime, Palestinians are represented by cumulative forms of affliction through "hunger, suffering, the fear of death, and grief." The conflict is then moralised at an abstract level through "the denial of one another's humanity" and "the sacrifice of human life." In this sense, the blame is redirected towards the outcomes, while perpetrators remain unnamed. This symmetry thus renders Israeli responsibility in Gaza less explicit. This caution is potentially linked with the sustained relations of France with Israel. In this regard, criticising Israel would be dangerous to the interests of France with Israel and constrain its capacity to act as a mediator.

The argumentation strategy mobilises the topoi of injustice, urgency, and humanitarianism to justify the termination of the war. The repetition "nothing ... nothing" activates the topos of injustice (no justification is left). The formulation "everything calls for" activates the topos of urgency for an immediate end to the war. The construction "to save lives" triggers the topos of humanitarianism by listing two groups of victims to legitimise the proposed action.

Through the perspectivisation strategy, the speaker constructed a neutral humanitarian equilibrium, in which he matched the victims who are "Israeli hostages" and "Palestinian civilians." This is further reinforced by the closing clause "to save all lives." Nevertheless, Israeli people are still foregrounded by the use of "hostages," preceding Gaza starvation in the discourse. This sequence may reflect broader European sensitivities regarding antisemitism. Direct criticism of Israel can be perceived as sensitive within discourses of antisemitism and community security. The inclusion of Palestinian suffering may also function to maintain domestic balance, where visible pro-Palestine segments exist. Nonetheless, the speaker's position seems to remain subtly asymmetrical. Israel occupies the initial position within the life-

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saving frame, and the crisis is anchored to the specific temporal marker "7 October," which could contextually foreground Hamas-related actions. There is no equally specific event or policy marker for the role of Israel in Gaza starvation, thereby rendering accountability less explicitly foregrounded. Hence, silence, evasion, and bias are plausibly constructed by the speaker.

In line with the intensification and mitigation strategy, intensification is realised in "definitive end now," the repetition of "nothing" and "to save," as well as the accumulation of affective expressions. Mitigation, in turn, operates through passivisation in "has been denied" and the reciprocal formulation "one another's lives." This construction discursively disperses blame and may function to mute Israeli responsibility for starvation in Gaza.

4.2.4. Analysis of Extract (9)

During the signing of a peace agreement regarding Gaza at Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 13 October 2025, German Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz delivered a press statement. The statement, issued by Federal Government of Germany, addressed the German position on starvation in Gaza. In his statement, the Chancellor stated:

The war in Gaza has been brought to an end. That is good news ... after the barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023. It has been possible to end the conflict, at least for today. ... We now all hope ... stability and peace to the region — including lasting coexistence between the Palestinians and the State of Israel. The Federal Republic of Germany and the German Government stand by Israel's side. That has always been the case, and it will always remain so. ... Germany will do its part ... for the people who are still living there to be provided with adequate medical care ... a roof ... water ... medical assistance. (Federal Government of Germany, 2025, paras. 1, 6, 8)

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4.2.4.1. Transitivity Analysis. Drawing on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the first clause realises the material process "has been brought to an end." The war is constructed as the goal, and the actor is entirely omitted by an agentless passive. The setting of the war is located "in Gaza" by the circumstance of location (place). In this respect, the grammatical omission of the actor may function to reinforce discursive silence. This is because the clause does not identify the actor responsible for ending the war or for sustaining the conditions that contributed to famine.

The clause "that is good news" realises the relational process "is." In this process, "that," referring to the ending of the war, is the carrier and "good news" is the attribute. This evaluation may be interpreted as contributing to discursive evasion, since the speaker to some extent evaded the question of Palestine and hunger in Gaza by foregrounding the perceived resolution of the war. Such evasion is further reinforced by the circumstance of location (time) "after the barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023." It depicts Hamas as the party that initiated the war rather than Israel. Moral responsibility is seemingly created by this framing through the moral condemnation of Hamas as a source of terrorism.

The following clause realises the relational process "has been," where "it" functions as the carrier and "possible" as the attribute. No agency is provided because the speaker did not specify an actor for the material process "end." "At least for today" functions as the circumstance of extent (duration), indicating that the end of the war is not definitive, but uncertain, temporary, and unstable.

The clause "we now all hope ... stability and peace" enacts a mental process, "hope." "We" functions as the senser and "stability and peace" function as the

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phenomenon. In addition, urgency is indicated through the circumstance of location (time) "now." In shifting to emotional discourse, the speaker divested the discourse of obligation and substituted commitment with an expression of moral stance. The non-finite clause "including lasting coexistence between the Palestinians and the State of Israel" involves the relational process "including." Such a process joins "the Palestinians" with "the State of Israel" by the circumstance of accompaniment (comitative). This abstraction may function to sustain evasion of highlighting the source of the Gaza crisis because specific forms of Palestinian suffering such as famine, hunger, and disease are balanced with those of Israelis.

The following clause realises the material process "stand by" to underline the German alignment with Israel. "The Federal Republic of Germany and the German Government" function as the actor while "Israel's side" functions as the goal. As a material process, "stand by" construes this alignment as actionable and practical support instead of sympathy, thereby prioritising loyalty instead of addressing starvation. The subsequent formulation "has always been ... will always remain so" realises a relational process, which is grammatically reinforced by the temporal adverb "always." This adverb carries an ideology that German support for Israel is more permanent and unconditional.

"Germany will do its part" realises a material process in "will do," whereas "Germany" functions as the actor, while "its part" functions as an indeterminate goal. Such vagueness functions strategically because it expresses responsibility without specifying political actions, such as demanding the opening of borders or breaking the siege. Hence, it can function as evasion of acting against Israel. The formulation "for the people who are still living there to be provided with ... water ... medical care" positions "the people" as receivers of aid. This arguably constructs the speaker's moral

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responsibility. The discourse may tend to sustain silence, as famine is framed as need management rather than a crime, in which its accountable perpetrator has to be held responsible.

4.2.4.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Within van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the statement "the war in Gaza has been brought to an end" and the assessment "that is good news" primarily realise the situation description strategy. The construction "has been brought to an end" employs the vagueness strategy, as it does not specify the actor responsible for terminating the war. This ambiguity also realises the implication strategy, as accountability remains unspecified in the clause. The "good news" assessment also appears to generate silence, as starvation is not foregrounded through explicit reference.

In the subsequent clause, the actor description strategy is foregrounded by the reference to "the barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023." This is reinforced by the negative other-presentation strategy, which is expressed in terms of "barbaric" and "terrorist" that are highly evaluative and make Hamas the main out-group. This emphasis realises the implication strategy, contributing to discursive evasion, since foregrounding Hamas indirectly shifts attention away from the Palestinian crisis that criminalises Israeli practices.

In the meantime, the euphemism strategy is realised in the expression "at least for today." This partial celebration is not a sign of peace, but indicates a normalisation of ongoing war. The speaker did not refer to a definite conclusion of the war, but rather framed it as temporal suspension, thereby limiting the scope of the resolution. The speaker further employed the euphemism strategy, which minimises the extent of starvation through the use of the word "conflict" that avoids addressing the issue

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explicitly. This type of lexicon may serve as a means of discursive evasion. It can be used to advance the speaker's agenda as a means of slightly redirecting the focus away from the Palestinian crisis and redefining famine as an abstract state. Consequently, this leads to obscuring Israeli responsibility.

The framing "we now all hope stability and peace" is empathetic in the sense that it contains the verb "hope," which is employed inclusively, and primarily indicates empathy. This allies the speaker with generalised concern. It seems moral, but it is not really obligatory. The consensus strategy is fulfilled through the markers "we" and "all." Yet, urgency is also implied by the temporal adverb "now," but mainly as emotional rather than imperative. Consequently, moral responsibility appears to substitute the action demanded. The reasonableness strategy is mainly activated by the clause "including lasting coexistence between the Palestinians and the State of Israel." The comparison strategy is also consistent with this construction, which involves pairing. The word "coexistence" transforms the narrative of starvation into future diplomacy and the combination balances unequal power relations.

In the clause "the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Government stand by Israel's side," the positive self-presentation strategy is employed to build self-legitimation and to establish institutional power. It assigns loyalty to Israel as a national value by placing Israel as the in-group. The construction "that has always been the case, and it will always remain so" principally employs the repetition strategy, and the adverb "always" shows permanence. This permanence can be a source of structural evasion as Israel is depicted as a safe partner instead of being an accountable actor. Through the implication strategy, the speaker could imply an unconditional position, whereby Germany will always be on the same side as Israel.

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This configuration would justify his silence and evasion about Israeli violence in Gaza and the details of Palestinian plight.

Finally, humanitarianism is activated in the form of the humanitarianism strategy through "Germany will do its part ... adequate medical care ... a roof ... water ... medical assistance." This framing takes this support to a more concrete level. Nevertheless, it may be a way of building up silence, since causality is not clearly expressed, and the agent of deprivation is not directly identified. At the same time, the target recipient is subject to interpretation, as the Palestinians are not explicitly referred to in the formulation "for the people who are still living there." The sources of misery are also not clearly stated. This vagueness supports silence, since words such as "siege," "starvation," or "famine" are evaded.

4.2.4.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Following Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the nomination strategy forms a moral narrative by using words such as "good news" and the sentence "the war in Gaza has been brought to an end." The temporal frame is pegged to "after the barbaric terrorist attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023." This positions Hamas as the main out-group, and prefigures it as the initiating actor with the term "barbaric terrorist attack." Gaza is positioned as a conflict space, "the war in Gaza," rather than a site of humanitarian crisis, while "Palestinians" appear primarily within a formula of coexistence. Israel, on the other hand, is built up as a secure ally, "the State of Israel," and as an object of loyalty in "Germany ... stand by Israel's side." This position can be viewed as institutional alignment and limitation of explicit criticism, thus restricting the explicit attribution of starvation responsibility.

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The predication strategy maintains asymmetry by criminalising Hamas through expressions such as "barbaric terrorist," while positioning Israel in terms of permanence and protection in "stand by Israel's side" as well as "always ... will always." Palestinians are indirectly represented as beneficiaries within the projected hope for "lasting coexistence." They are subsequently constructed as humanitarian objects, "people ... provided with medical care ... a roof ... water," which places them as passive victims, as opposed to political actors. Suffering is not expressed as political conditions, but as service-needs. Within the historical context, this predication may be reasonably attributed to the historical guilt of Germany and its sensitivity to charges of antisemitism, encouraging protective language about Israel. Even the minimal humanitarian compassion towards Palestinians is presumably framed in terms of fulfilling the human-rights expectations and domestic pressures without direct political criticism.

Within the argumentation strategy, the topoi of peace and humanitarianism are combined. The formulation "it has been possible to end the conflict, at least for today" appeals to temporariness, thereby reducing the expectations and normalising a state of instability. The listing "medical care ... roof ... water ... medical assistance" signals humanitarian responsibility and assistance, positioning Germany as a provider of aid. However, such a frame links the war to the attack by Hamas while excluding Israel from the causal chain, thereby allowing humanitarian assistance to substitute for political responsibility.

Through the perspectivisation strategy, the speaker adopted a stabilising and managerial voice, "that is good news ... we now all hope ... Germany will do its part." This framing positions Germany as a crisis manager with an apparent orientation towards moral responsibility. The collective "we" contributes to the

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construction of consensus, while also obscuring agency, since the war appears to have ended without explicit attribution of responsibility, as "has been brought to an end" suggests. This position tends to maintain silence about Israeli responsibility by employing evasive strategies while sustaining a cooperative stance, "coexistence between Palestinians and the State of Israel." This restraint in perspective can be interpreted as indicative of strategic relations of Germany with Israel, where overt criticism would jeopardise its interests with Israel and its credibility as a mediator.

Lastly, the intensification and mitigation strategy is clearly realised in this discourse. Intensification is most evident in "barbaric terrorist attack," which strongly criminalises Hamas. It is further reinforced by "stand by Israel's side" and "always ... will always," which intensify and absolutise German loyalty. Mitigation, in turn, is realised in "at least for today" and the passive "has been brought to an end," which obscures agency and avoids explicit reference to Israel as a violent party. This is further reflected in "the people who are still living there," where Palestinians are not directly mentioned and the suffering is reframed as service needs in the form of "medical care ... a roof ... water ... medical assistance." Even the word Gaza is not repeated and is replaced with the ambiguous locator "there" when referring to the "people who are still living there."

4.2.5. Analysis of Extract (10)

On 24 September 2025, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni delivered a speech at the 80th United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York. The speech, issued by the Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers, outlined the Italian official position on global conflicts, with particular reference to the war in Gaza. In her speech, the Italian Prime Minister asserted:

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Hamas took advantage of the weakening of this architecture to launch its attack against Israel on 7 October 2023. ... That attack ... drove Israel to ... a legitimate reaction, because every State and every people has the right to defend itself. ... We will not join those who place all the responsibility for what is happening in Gaza on Israel, for it was Hamas that started the war. It is Hamas that could bring Palestinians' suffering to an end, by immediately releasing all the hostages. It is Hamas that seems to want to prosper on the suffering of the people it claims to represent. ... The children of Gaza ... are seeking responses that can improve their situation, and this is what we are working on. (Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers, 2025, paras. 9, 12, 15)

4.2.5.1. Transitivity Analysis. Based on Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, the verb "launch" is a material process. The actor is "Hamas," and the goal is "its attack," thereby construing violence as a discrete event. The circumstance of location (time) "on 7 October 2023" establishes a temporal point of origin, thereby limiting the historical scope of the conflict. Previous conditions are backgrounded, such as blockade, deprivation, and famine. The dated attack grammatically localises agency in Hamas as the initiator of the war and Israeli responsibility is not specifically mentioned. Such framing can serve to create strategic silence, hence making Israel reactive, but not structurally complicit.

In the second clause, the verb "drove" fulfills a material process, whereby "that attack" is the actor while "Israel" is the goal. This arrangement places Israel in a defensive and reactive posture, thereby leading to its legitimisation. The phrase "a legitimate reaction" serves as a moralisation in advance of Israeli violence. This is further reinforced by the following clause, which realises a relational process of possession in "has." The carrier "every State and every people" is highly generalised, and "the right to defend itself" is the attribute.

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This general framing is supported by the subsequent clause, which construes the relational process "will not join." The carrier "we" is marked by dissociation, while "those who place all the responsibility ... on Israel" functions as the attribute. Through this relational process, the speaker showed that he did not agree with others who blame Israel for the current situation in Gaza. Responsibility is reattributed to Hamas through the circumstance of cause (reason), "for it was Hamas that started the war." In this sense, attention is consequently redirected away from the situation in Gaza. With these three consecutive clauses, the speaker might have ideologically produced evasion through absolving Israel. This is instead of engaging with Palestine and famine, identifying accountable actors, or proposing concrete solutions.

The following clause involves the relational identifying process "is," whereby "Hamas" is the token and the value is "the one who could bring suffering to an end." It grammatically presents Hamas as the only moral agent. "By immediately releasing all the hostages" functions as a circumstance of manner (means), thereby conditionally linking the alleviation of Palestinian suffering to the actions of Hamas. It further establishes Hamas as the initiating actor of the war through foregrounding the problem of hostages as an unmotivated action. This may thus evade explicit criticism of Israel.

The repeated verb "is" functions as a relational process of identification. In this regard, the token is constructed as "Hamas," and the value is "the one who seems to want to prosper from the suffering," which consolidates responsibility. The mental process "seems to want" and the material process "prosper" construct Hamas as exploitative. Such framing may escalate blame and border on incitement against Hamas, while Israeli agency remains unarticulated. Therefore, recurrent relational processes of identification solidify responsibility on Hamas. They position it as a

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source of negative consequences affecting both itself and Palestinians, including conditions such as famine. This organisation may be interpreted as sustaining strategic silence and avoidance of Israeli responsibility.

In the last sentence, "seeking" is a verbal process, with "the children of Gaza" placed in the position of sayers, who seek assistance. In comparison, "are working" realises a material process, which foregrounds "we" as the actor (Italy). This contrast can thus be interpreted as constructing moral responsibility, positioning Italy as an ethical responder who puts the calls into action.

4.2.5.2. Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies. Following van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, the polarisation strategy is realised in the discourse through the selective description of actors. Hamas is ideologically positioned as the initiating out-group actor with the constructions "took advantage," "launched its attack," and "started the war." Conversely, Israel is concurrently redefined as an in-group member that is influenced and forced. Israeli actions are not independently foregrounded, but are instead framed within a causal context, such as "that attack ... drove Israel." This framing constructs Israeli actions as reactive and necessary. This configuration can be interpreted as strategic silence about Israeli violence and the nature of its response. The phrase "a legitimate reaction" functions as a form of legitimation, constructing Israeli violence as lawful and justified. The norm expression strategy also reinforces this in the universalised claim that "every State and every people has the right to defend itself." This formulation frames the position as a self-evident moral norm.

Through recurring refusal in "we will not join those who place all the responsibility ... on Israel," the hyperbole strategy is realised through repetition with

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responsibility constantly shifted onto Hamas. This exaggeration may indicate a pro-Israeli ideological orientation. At the same time, it may function to enact evasion through the marginalisation of the Palestinian historical context that differentiates between aggressor and victim role.

The repeated construction "it is Hamas that" realises the repetition strategy, which progressively intensifies the attribution of blame and shifts responsibility predominantly onto Hamas. Hamas is thus not only placed in the position of being militarily guilty but also morally discredited. The dramatisation strategy is realised by the linguistic formulation "seems to want to prosper from the suffering." Such a strategy frames Palestinian suffering as a resource that is instrumentalised by Hamas rather than as an outcome of policy. This kind of framing thus increases blame and leaves Israeli responsibility unarticulated. It is possible that the speaker deliberately named the actions of Hamas and remained silent on Israeli acts. This seemingly avoids responsibility through the justification of an undefined "reaction." This arrangement may eventually construct strategic silence.

The discourse is based on the humanitarianism strategy, which could establish moral responsibility by speaking about Palestinian civilian suffering instead of indicating political responsibility. In this respect, the speaker addressed abstract victims, "the children of Gaza," and mentioned their plight using the ambiguous wording "their situation," which is quite an abstract construction. This substitutes the explicit mention of starvation and pre-empts ethical action by introducing it with "this is what we are working on." There are no direct references to terms such as "Palestine," "famine," and "blockade." This discriminatory humanitarian discourse may contribute to the silence about starvation. It is more inclined towards absolving Israel of condemnation, thus potentially promoting the speaker's agenda.

4.2.5.3. Discourse-Historical Approach. Within Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA, the nomination strategy builds Hamas as the key party to blame. Hamas is repeatedly described as an invader through "launched its attack" and "started the war" and as a morally unworthy actor through "seems to want to prosper on the suffering." It is also framed as a possible saviour with "could bring Palestinians' suffering to an end." Israel, on the other hand, is not even nominated as an active agent, but is just positioned as an impacted party, which is allegedly being "driven" to a "reaction." Interestingly, Israeli actions and "reaction" invoked to justify them are not directly mentioned. In the political context, this reserved nomination may not go against the stances of Western powers especially the US, which have a tendency to silence Israeli accountability. This can, in turn, safeguard political alignment and strategic interests.

Through the predication strategy, Hamas is depicted as strategic and purposeful in inflicting harm, as reflected in "took advantage," "started the war," and "seems to want to prosper on the suffering." However, Israeli actions are presented as legal and necessary by means of "a legitimate reaction" and "the right to defend itself." Palestinian suffering is downgraded to the abstract "their situation," thereby evading the direct mention of words such as "famine," "starvation," or "blockade." Contextually, this type of calibrated predication can be indicative of strategic caution. Criticising Israel directly supposedly puts the interests of Italy with Israel at risk.

Through the argumentation strategy, the topoi of legality and morality are mobilised. The legality topos is fulfilled in the statement "every State and every people has the right to defend itself," thus legitimising the actions of Israel. The topos of morality is triggered in the argument that suffering would be relieved "by immediately releasing all the hostages." With such a formulation, the burden of moral responsibility is placed on Hamas.

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As part of the perspectivisation strategy, the seeming defence of Israel is motivated by prudence. Any open condemnation of Israel can be seen as prejudice or even antisemitism in some political contexts in the West. The speaker also used a humanitarian perspectivisation, anticipating the interest in "the children of Gaza ... are seeking responses that can improve their situation." This construction frames a moral position of responsibility and concern. This is presumably meant to enable the speaker to defuse any criticism that may arise from pro-Palestinian groups in Italy, without making direct accusations against Israel.

Finally, the intensification and mitigation strategy operates effectively in the discourse. Realisation of intensification is achieved by the repetition of blaming Hamas and absolution of Israel in expressions such as "launched its attack," "started the war," and "seems to want to prosper on the suffering." All these cumulatively add to moral condemnation of Hamas. Mitigation, in turn, operates through the abstraction of Israeli actions into a generalised and unnamed "reaction," and the reduction of starvation to the vague expression "their situation."

4.3. Findings

This section provides the findings of the current study through answering the three research questions proposed in CHAPTER ONE. These questions are answered in separate sections. The findings are further shown in numerical form through Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 that show the frequency of the identified linguistic elements and discursive strategies in the analysis. This is followed by a discussion of these findings. The research questions of the study are the following:

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1. What transitivity patterns are employed by selected Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their responses in 2025 to the starvation crisis in Gaza?
2. Which ideological-rhetorical strategies are used by particular Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in these responses?
3. How are discourse-historical strategies utilised by specific Arab and Western leaders to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in these responses within historical and political contexts?

4.3.1. Findings of Research Question 1

The analysis of the selected data indicates that Arab and Western leaders employ systematic transitivity patterns to grammatically and ideologically constitute silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their speeches on starvation in Gaza. These patterns operate through process types, participants, and circumstantial components.

At the level of process types, material processes stand out as the most prominent among the identified process types, particularly in humanitarian situations (see Extracts 1 and 6). Through these processes, the leaders position themselves as overt actors in the provision of aid, thereby linguistically constructing moral responsibility by foregrounding humanitarian assistance. By contrast, relational processes, also frequently employed in the leaders' speeches, frame starvation as a continuous state (see Extracts 2 and 8) rather than as a material action with a specified actor. This grammatical structure constitutes silence, since Israeli actions in Gaza are not highlighted through material processes with an accountable actor.

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Regarding the participants, famine-related clauses display various types of participants with specific emphasis on four, namely, actor, goal, carrier, and attribute. The actor is the most analytically significant and is frequently omitted through passivisation, abstraction, nominalisation, or vague causation (see Extracts 4 and 7). In this regard, Israel does not appear as an actor in the clauses about starvation, while Arab and Western leaders are positioned as humanitarian or diplomatic actors (see Extracts 3 and 9). Furthermore, responsibility is shifted to international entities or Hamas (see Extracts 2 and 10). The leaders' humanitarian involvement is often foregrounded as the goal of material processes. Meanwhile, the crisis is constructed as the carrier in relational processes, with attributes that characterise its conditions. This patterned erasure and selective activation result in evasion, as they take the focus away from Israeli agency at the level of the grammatical representation.

Of the circumstantial types, the most salient are location and extent, which situate starvation within a wider conflict context (see Extracts 5 and 8). By foregrounding circumstantial details rather than material processes that produce famine, the role of Israel is not grammatically foregrounded and responsibility is consequently diffused across the discourse.

Altogether, these transitivity patterns make it clear that silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are not coincidental but rather grammatically designed to keep Israel protected from accountability on the linguistic level.

4.3.2. Findings of Research Question 2

The analysis shows that Arab and Western leaders included in this study use a variety of ideological-rhetorical strategies, with vagueness, implication, positive self-presentation, victimisation, euphemism, and repetition being the most prominent.

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These strategies operate discursively to constitute silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in their responses to starvation in Gaza. In doing so, the speakers advance ideologically driven political agendas, which aim to avoid direct criticism of Israel or the attribution of responsibility.

Through the vagueness strategy, starvation is never nominated and presented with abstract terms that attempt to downplay its deliberate nature and avoid framing it as a result of Israeli actions. Regarding the implication strategy, indirect language is used to avoid explicitly identifying Israel as the source of famine (see Extracts 1 and 9). As a result, starvation is discursively framed as a humanitarian situation rather than a politically produced act, thereby creating strategic silence.

The positive self-presentation strategy emphasises humanitarian agency and backgrounds the causes of starvation in Gaza. The leaders underscore their humanitarian activities or support efforts (see Extracts 3 and 10). In doing so, they linguistically construct moral responsibility through verbal commitment without necessarily engaging directly with the role of Israel in creating deprivation.

The victimisation strategy further influences the representation of the suffering. The humanitarian salience of the crisis is enhanced by an emotional appeal to vulnerable civilians, where Palestinians are represented as an in-group that is worthy of sympathy (see Extracts 2 and 7). Meanwhile, the euphemism strategy is used to soften the description of starvation. Institutional or procedural linguistic constructions represent deprivation without explicitly stating that Israel has caused the famine (see Extracts 5 and 8). The out-group is either unnamed or linked to Hamas. This generates evasion, since attention is diverted either through humanitarian

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sympathy or through shifting responsibility to other actors or abstract notions of international legitimacy.

The repetition strategy consistently emphasises moral self-justification and at the same time diverts focus to other themes such as national generosity, humanitarian aid, or the personal concerns of the speakers (see Extracts 4 and 6). This strategy does so instead of focusing on the causes of starvation, providing solutions, or calling for serious action and intervention.

As a whole, these ideological-rhetorical strategies illustrate how silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are discursively regulated through humanitarian language, which conveys concern and at the same time obscures political accountability.

4.3.3. Findings of Research Question 3

The analysis reveals that Arab and Western leaders examined in this study employ discourse-historical strategies such as nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivisation, and intensification/mitigation. These strategies are used to construct silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in the leaders' responses to starvation in Gaza within historical and political contexts.

Through the nomination strategy, actors are selectively included or excluded through specific lexical choices (see Extracts 5 and 7). Responsibility for starvation is usually backgrounded by the use of generalised expressions that do not explicitly name the actor involved in restricting access to food, whereas other actors, such as the international community and Hamas, are more explicitly nominated. These selective

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processes of naming and omission discursively constitute silence as Israel is not presented as accountable for causing starvation in Gaza.

Through the predication strategy, evaluative language foregrounds humanitarian vulnerability through the sympathetic characterisation of Palestinian civilians. Negative qualities are assigned either to vague actors or specifically to Hamas (see Extracts 2 and 9), whereas the Israeli contribution to the creation of starvation remains linguistically uncharacterised. This results in asymmetrical attribution that produces evasion.

Through the argumentation strategy, justificatory topoi shape the discursive rationalisation of responsibility (see Extracts 1 and 10). The humanitarian topos focuses on providing assistance and support to Palestinians rather than addressing the causes of deprivation. The balancing topos, meanwhile, equates Palestinian and Israeli suffering, thus hiding the asymmetric nature of the violence and minimising the accountability of Israel.

Similarly, the perspectivisation strategy constructs leaders as responsible actors through institutional voices that highlight humanitarian dedication and diplomatic involvement. This constitutes a linguistic expression of moral responsibility without directly attributing blame to Israel or committing to take concrete actions to stop the crisis (see Extracts 4 and 6).

Finally, the intensification and mitigation strategy functions as a discursive process that controls the intensity of evaluation (see Extracts 3 and 8). Humanitarian concern over the Palestinian plight is heightened by emotionally charged language, and softening constructions blur the processes through which Israel limits access to food and creates famine conditions in Gaza.

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Within broader historical and political contexts, these discursive strategies reflect broader diplomatic and political restrictions. Such linguistic restraint on the part of the leaders serves to preserve diplomatic, political, economic, and security interests with Israel and Western alliances, particularly the US as the major ally of Israel. Simultaneously, the mention of Palestinian suffering functions to mitigate potential domestic criticism of complicity with Israel by showing humanitarian concern.

All these discourse-historical strategies demonstrate that silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are systematically established on the basis of the strategic use of language, which is in turn influenced by wider political and diplomatic contexts. Within such contexts, the humanitarian concern is foregrounded and Israeli responsibility for the current crisis in Gaza is backgrounded.

Table 4.1

Frequency of Halliday's (1994) Transitivity Patterns in the Analysis of Arab and Western Leaders' Speeches

Halliday's (1994) Transitivity Patterns	
Analytical Categories	Frequency
1. Processes	
1.1. Material	33
1.2. Relational	31
1.3. Mental	8
1.4. Verbal	6
2. Participants	
2.1. Actor	24
2.2. Goal	21
2.3. Carrier	18
2.4. Attribute	12
2.5. Token	10
2.6. Value	10
2.7. Senser	8

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2.8. Phenomenon	8
2.9. Sayer	6
2.10. Verbiage	5
2.11. Receiver	4
3. Circumstances	
3.1. Location	14
3.2. Extent	10
3.3. Cause	8
3.4. Manner	5
3.5. Accompaniment	3
3.6. Contingency	1
3.7. Role	1

Note. Prepared by the researcher based on the analysis.

Table 4.2

Frequency of van Dijk's (2006) Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies in the Analysis of Arab and Western Leaders' Speeches

Van Dijk's (2006) Ideological-Rhetorical Strategies	
Strategies	Frequency
1. Vagueness	7
2. Implication	7
3. Positive self-presentation	7
4. Victimisation	6
5. Euphemism	6
6. Repetition	6
7. Negative other-presentation	5
8. Dramatisation	5
9. Number game	4
10. Situation description	4
11. Reasonableness	4
12. Consensus	4
13. Generalisation	4
14. Empathy	4
15. Comparison	4
16. Hyperbole	4
17. Distancing	4
18. Actor description	3
19. Authority	3
20. Norm expression	3
21. National self-glorification	3

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22. Humanitarianism	3
23. Polarisation	3
24. Pseudo-ignorance	2
25. Categorisation	2
26. Burden	2

Note. Constructed by the researcher drawing on the analysis.

Table 4.3

Frequency of Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) Discourse-Historical Strategies in the Analysis of Arab and Western Leaders' Speeches

Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) Discourse-Historical Strategies	
Strategies	Frequency
1. Nomination	10
2. Predication	10
3. Argumentation	10
4. Perspectivisation	10
5. Intensification and mitigation	10

Note. Made by the researcher in the light of the analysis.

4.4. Discussion

Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 illustrate the prevalence of linguistic, ideological, and contextual features in the speeches analysed. They show the systematic production of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility in the examined discourses of Arab and Western leaders about the Gaza starvation crisis.

Within Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, material processes (33) are the most frequent processes employed in the analysis. They are often used through passive constructions that do not encode Israel as the agent of action and construct silence on the grammatical level. The second most recurrent processes are relational

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processes (31) that reformulate the crisis as a natural state of affairs rather than a causal effect. This creates structural evasion by undermining the connection between the siege of Israel and the starvation of Palestinians. Mental (8) and verbal (6) processes occur much less frequently, as explicit judgement and direct attribution can be politically risky. In addition, a reduction of these processes does not allow for clear accountability to be linguistically coded.

On the participant level, the most prominent elements are actor (24) and goal (21) as they foreground Arab and Western leaders as humanitarian actors. Therefore, they build moral responsibility via aid, while Israel is excluded from the clauses related to famine. Carrier (18) and attribute (12) are often used to represent a shift to descriptive states as opposed to causation. Token (10) and value (10) are equally distributed as they abstract the crisis through relational processes, replacing accountability with moral values. In the same way, sensor (8) and phenomenon (8) occur with equal frequency, emphasising the leaders' emotional involvement rather than material action. Furthermore, the minimal use of sayer (6), verbiage (5), and receiver (4) suggests that there is a conscious limitation of accountable speech.

At a circumstantial level, the most salient is location (14) since it situates starvation in a wider conflict context, rather than offering causation. Extent (10) normalises the situation of starvation in Gaza through temporality, while cause (8) disperses responsibility instead of concentrating it. Moreover, manner (5) diverts attention towards institutional mechanisms and conditional Hamas actions, and accompaniment (3) deflects blame for the crisis in Gaza from Israel, distributing it among Palestinians and Israelis. Additionally, the low frequency of contingency (1) and role (1) also constrains explicit responsibility attribution.

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Van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies present the same line of development. Vagueness (7) is one of the most frequent strategies, as the main way of generating silence is avoiding reference to Israel. Equally, implication (7) and positive self-presentation (7) are employed to construct evasion by concentrating on the moral stance of Arab and Western leaders rather than Israeli policy in Gaza. Victimisation (6), euphemism (6), and repetition (6) are used in the same way, as all of them allow readers to be emotionally engaged and maintain the humanitarian framing without incriminating Israel. Negative other-presentation (5) and dramatisation (5) are secondary evasive strategies that divert evaluation to actors other than Israel. The other strategies (4 each) overall support the leaders' credibility and concern. The less frequent strategies (3 and 2 each) are used sparingly because they may lead to explicit accountability. However, they still reinforce the moral responsibility of the leaders without blaming Israel.

Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA validates these patterns by showing that all strategies are equally distributed (10 each). This is because the focus of the model in this study is not on how many times its strategies are used but on how they are used within the historical and political contexts. Building on this, nomination constructs silence by excluding or abstracting Israel, which indicates strategic alignment with Israel and the US. Predication allows evasion either by not assessing Israel or by shifting the blame onto other actors. Argumentation and perspectivisation place more emphasis on procedural reasoning as well as institutional and moral positioning. In the last strategy, intensification emphasises the suffering of the Palestinians, whereas mitigation dilutes allusions to Israel. Collectively, they establish moral responsibility through humanitarian involvement instead of causal accountability.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

5.0. Introduction

This chapter introduces the conclusions based on the findings of the present study. It also provides contributions of the study as well as lists of recommendations and suggestions for further studies that can expand or supplement the current one.

5.1. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the current study, the following conclusions have been reached:

1. Political silence by the selected Arab and Western leaders with respect to Gaza starvation is not a failure of communication, but rather a purposeful linguistic strategy. Through the leaders' speeches, starvation is represented as a state, not an action. The responsible actors are obscured through nominalisation and abstraction, and lexical decisions name abstract actors or Hamas instead of Israel. Silence thus becomes an integral part of the discourse rather than just an incidental omission. What this implies for the understanding of political language is that silence is not only created by what the leaders do not say. Rather, it is generated as a result of the way in which the grammatical and lexical structure of the leaders' discourses organises omission systematically.

2. This study is an example of how evasion can be most effective when it appears to be engagement. In the analysed responses of Arab and Western leaders, vagueness

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strategies and humanitarian topoi substitute for causal analysis, and the suffering of the Palestinians and Israelis is equalised discursively by neutralising the asymmetric nature of the violence. In addition, the leaders are depicted as institutionally engaged diplomatic actors. Such patterns work to systematically divert attention away from Israeli responsibility and towards secondary humanitarian issues, thus creating the impression of accountability that is devoid of substance. Within geopolitical constraints, evasion is not a disruption of political language, but it is the way in which political language is used when direct attribution is not diplomatically viable.

3. As this study shows, moral responsibility is not a political commitment, but rather a discursive construction. Within the discourses of Arab and Western leaders, material processes emphasise the role of the leaders as humanitarian actors while mitigating Israeli restrictions. Intensification increases the suffering of the Palestinians, and positive self-presentation reinforces the leaders' ethically engaged image. The overall impact is that morality is expressed in terms of words, not through policy action. This is a paradoxical situation in which the stronger the humanitarian expression of that concern, the more effective it is to evade the accountability of Israel.

4. Silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are not discrete practices in the examined discourses of Arab and Western leaders, but rather a unified system. When agents are deleted at the grammatical level and the leaders ideologically position themselves through humanitarian strategies, the explicit attribution of responsibility to Israel is minimised. These discursive practices, combined with contextual alignment with Israel and its major ally, the US, create a discourse whereby accountability is not only avoided but structurally excluded. This study concludes that within the discourse on humanitarian crises, language is not separate from politics but rather supports it, serving as the main tool through which the leaders negotiate responsibility. The best

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indicator of that service is the leaders' careful management of what remains linguistically unsaid to systematically safeguard their strategic interests.

5.2. Contributions of the Current Study

The present study has significant implications for the study of CDA, political linguistics, and humanitarian communication. It offers a comprehensive linguistic analysis of political discourse, examining the speeches of particular Arab and Western leaders produced in 2025 in response to the starvation crisis in Gaza. The study demonstrates how language can be used to communicate, build, mask, and negotiate responsibility in the contexts of an acute humanitarian crisis.

In theoretical terms, this study uses three models, namely Halliday's (1994) transitivity analysis, van Dijk's (2006) ideological-rhetorical strategies, and Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) DHA. These frameworks enable the analysis of discourse at the grammatical, ideological, and contextual levels. This methodological triangulation has not been studied extensively in CDA research addressing political responses to humanitarian emergencies, and this study highlights its viability and analytical strength.

Empirically, the analysis reveals that the three aforementioned concepts of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility are not exclusive to either of the two geopolitical groups. Rather, they are employed by both Arab and Western leaders, thereby defying ideas about who evades responsibility more in humanitarian contexts.

Methodologically, the transitivity analysis, the ideological critique, and the examination of the historical and political contexts represent a model that can be applied in further studies on political reactions to other humanitarian crises. This

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framework can be used in a multitude of political or linguistic contexts. Thus, the current study is a methodological contribution to the broader context of applied linguistics and discourse studies.

Finally, the present study uncovers the linguistic processes and mechanisms by which the leaders, both Arab and Western, produce silence and evasion regarding the role of Israel, all in an effort to serve their own interests. It also reveals the way in which the leaders position themselves as morally responsible actors because they emphasise their humanitarian efforts for Gaza. This study adds to the ongoing academic and public discussion on the accountability of international actors, the ethics of political communication, and the impact of language on the formulation or restriction of humanitarian justice.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. CDA researchers are recommended to pursue additional studies of political discourse related to humanitarian crises with the aim of developing a greater understanding of the role of language in shaping the representation of accountability in international politics.
2. Educational and academic institutions are advised to incorporate critical analysis of political language on humanitarian crises in their curricula of linguistics, political science, and media studies.
3. Humanitarian institutions and international organisations are encouraged to examine the use of language in official political speeches during a humanitarian crisis

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to identify discursive tactics of silence, evasion, and moral responsibility, which blur accountability.

4. Media professionals and journalists are recommended to critically analyse the language utilised in political speeches and expose the linguistic techniques that enable leaders to create a moral image and evade political accountability.

5. The readers are urged to pay more attention to political language and to become acquainted with the way in which suffering is recognised and responsibility remains hidden.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on this study, the following topics are suggested for future studies:

١. A Critical Pragmatic Analysis of Arab and Western Leaders' Reactions to the Gaza Starvation Crisis.

٢. A Critical Stylistic Study of Arab and Western Politicians' Responses to the Gaza Starvation Crisis.

٣. A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of the Social Media Communication of Arab and Western Leaders about the Gaza Starvation Crisis.

٤. A Critical Discourse Analysis of Arab and Western Media Coverage of the Gaza Starvation Crisis.

5. A Critical Discourse Analysis of Statements by Humanitarian Organisations about the Gaza Starvation Crisis.

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المستخلص

في السنوات الأخيرة، أصبح الخطاب السياسي يؤدي دوراً متزايد الأهمية في تشكيل الأزمات الإنسانية. وتُعدّ أزمة المجاعة في غزة من أخطر حالات الطوارئ الإنسانية في العالم المعاصر، إذ تتسم بانعدام الأمن الغذائي الحاد وسوء التغذية واسع النطاق نتيجةً لعوامل سياسية وبنوية معقدة. وفي هذا السياق، يسهم الخطاب السياسي في تشكيل تصورات الأزمة من خلال إبراز البعد الإنساني وإخفاء المسؤولية. وعلى الرغم من خطورة الأزمة، لم يحظَ البناء اللغوي للمسؤولية في الخطاب السياسي أثناء الأزمات الإنسانية باهتمام علمي كافٍ. وسعيًا إلى ردم هذه الفجوة، تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى استقصاء كيفية بناء القادة العرب والغربيين المختارين للصمت والمراوغة والمسؤولية الأخلاقية في استجاباتهم لأزمة المجاعة في غزة من خلال الأنماط اللغوية والاستراتيجيات الخطابية. وتتبنى الدراسة نموذجاً انتقائياً يستند إلى تحليل التعددية لدى هاليداى (١٩٩٤)، والاستراتيجيات الأيديولوجية-البلاغية لدى فان دايك (٢٠٠٦)، والمنهج التاريخي-الخطابي لدى رايزغل ووداك (٢٠٠١)، وذلك في إطار التحليل النقدي للخطاب. وباتباع تصميم البحث النوعي، تُحلل هذه الدراسة عشرة خطابات رسمية أُلقيت عام ٢٠٢٥، خمسة منها لقادة عرب وخمسة لقادة غربيين. وأشارت النتائج إلى أن القادة موضع الدراسة وظفوا أنماطاً محددة من التعددية، واستراتيجيات أيديولوجية-بلاغية، واستراتيجيات تاريخية-خطابية لإدارة المسؤولية. وتسهم هذه الأنماط والاستراتيجيات في بناء الصمت من خلال حجب مسؤولية إسرائيل، وممارسة المراوغة عبر صرف الانتباه عنها، وإبراز المسؤولية الأخلاقية من خلال تسليط الضوء على المساعدات الإنسانية التي يقدمها القادة. وفي السياق التاريخي والسياسي، يعكس ذلك المصالح الدبلوماسية والسياسية والاقتصادية والأمنية لهؤلاء القادة مع إسرائيل وحليفها الرئيس، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التحليل النقدي للخطاب، أزمة المجاعة في غزة، الصمت، المراوغة، المسؤولية

الأخلاقية



جمهورية العراق
وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
جامعة واسط
كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية
قسم اللغة الإنكليزية

التحليل النقدي لخطابات استجابات القادة العرب والغربيين إزاء المجاعة في غزة (٢٠٢٥): بناء الصمت والمراوغة والمسؤولية الأخلاقية

رسالة مقدمة

الى مجلس كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية، جامعة واسط
جزء من متطلبات نيل درجة الماجستير - تربية في اللغة الانكليزية وعلم اللغة

من قبل

بتول عماد جاسم

بإشراف

أ.د. مازن جاسم محمد الحلو

محرم ١٤٤٨ هـ

تموز ٢٠٢٦ م