

Considering a long lasting debate on the extent of Israel-critical media coverage in Germany, this study discusses the relevance of consonant biased news reports for the super-individual construction of reality. It uses the cognitive-linguistic approach of the text-world model (TWM) to point out possible effects on the mental representation of the individual reader. Previous media analyses of Middle East reports are characterized by a marginalisation of implicit evaluations, an exclusion of commenting texts and a fixation on periods of escalation. So far, the terms (*mono-*)*perspective* and *verbal evaluation* are inadequately taken into consideration. Therefore, in this study these terms are linguistically defined and their implicit und explicit realisations in text are illustrated.

Taking into account this theoretical background, linguistic methods und descriptive tools, widely ignored by communication sciences so far, are integrated in a qualitative and quantitative content analysis. This two-step-analysis examines the perspective and evaluative tendencies of the reporting about the Middle East conflict by German quality press (FAZ, SZ, ZEIT; WELT, NÜRNBERGER NACHRICHTEN, FOCUS UND SPIEGEL) in the period from 1-12-2009 till 31-3-2010. By selecting this widely non-escalation period, the current study clearly differs from previous approaches. The perspective and evaluative patterns depicted on 24 prototypical texts of the sample are quantified as following:

Journalists focus on aspects related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and negative or ambivalent events. Media Coverage is multi-perspective in a large part. However, in one third of all texts a mono-perspective is prevalent. The Palestinian point of view is significantly more often reflected in these articles. Thereby, Israeli are portrayed considerably more often as aggressor than Palestinians (5 : 1). Likewise, the obligation to act and ability of conflict resolution are asymmetrically scattered, these requirements are significantly more often (five times) attributed to the Israeli protagonists. In average both conflicting parties reach the same negative evaluative stance, but the amount of evaluation is clearly unbalanced: Negative evaluations of the Israeli are dominant. Overall, a dual double-standard is obvious: Israel is criticized more often and more vehement and the demand of action is exclusively directed to Israel. Moreover, journalists respond to Israeli politics by emotional distance and rejection.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its entirety is rarely evaluated, but if so, then consistently negative. Positive changes and efforts for peace are ignored or even downgraded from a paternalistic point of view (skepticism-perspective). Instead of appreciating the non-escalation period, media construe a permanently proceeding escalation (escalation-perspective). Despite a general sensitivity, anti-Semitic stereotypes and arguments are verbalized in a few commentary articles.

In the given corpus, a widespread one-sided representation of Israel as aggressor, unwilling to solve the conflict, is evident, while the incapability of Hamas and Palestinian politics is excused and the terroristic threat to Israel is widely ignored or perspectively veiled.