



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

<https://doi.org/10.24833/2687-0126-2023-5-3-11-25>

JOURNALISM'S POWER OF DISCOURSE: BE IT THROUGH A PERISCOPE OR KALEIDOSCOPE

Zahra Sadat Roozafzai

ACECR Institute of Higher Education

(The Islamic Republic of Iran)

Zahra80r@gmail.com

Abstract: The present research paper delves into the power of journalism's discourse through a comparative analysis of literary and non-literary journalism. Drawing on the metaphorical imagery of periscopes and kaleidoscopes, the study aims to explore how journalism's discourse shapes readers' perceptions and interpretations of events, blurring the line between reality and fiction. The paper adopts a qualitative research approach with a phenomenological design. Through in-depth analysis and interpretation, the study examines the power of fictional and non-fictional journalism, drawing upon the concept of metaphor to describe how the discourse of journalism operates. The research questions are explored within the frameworks of Post-Truth, Linguistic Relativism, and Transcendentalism to gain a comprehensive understanding of the power inherent in these two genres of journalism. The empirical material for this research comprises a wide range of literary and non-literary journalistic texts, including articles, news reports, and narrative journalism pieces. Additionally, scholarly works discussing the impact of journalism's discourse on readers' perceptions are included to provide a holistic view of the subject. The study reveals that journalism's discourse, whether in literary or non-literary form, holds a double-edged power over readers' minds. Utilizing the metaphorical comparison of periscopes and kaleidoscopes, the research highlights the relative and manipulative nature of journalistic language. Moreover, the power of literary journalism, bolstered by imaginative and creative writing techniques, exerts a profound influence on shaping readers' worldviews. The research emphasizes the significance of understanding journalism's power in shaping public opinion and perception. While acknowledging the complexity and nuance of this phenomenon, the study underscores the need for continued research to gain further insight into the workings of journalism's discourse in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

Keywords: literary and non-literary journalism; journalism's discourse; post-truth; Post-Modernism; linguistic relativism; transcendentalism.

How to cite this article: Roozafzai Z.S. (2023). Journalism's Power of Discourse: Be it Through A Periscope or Kaleidoscope. *Professional Discourse & Communication*, 5(3), pp. 11–25.
<https://doi.org/10.24833/2687-0126-2023-5-3-11-25>

1. INTRODUCTION

The post-truth era which is one of the features of Post-Modernism has some realizations in many different aspects of life. Post-truth was even the word of the year in 2016 announced by Oxford Dictionaries, defined as “Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief” [Flood, 2016]. Where objective facts, accurate information, valid accounts, and veracity are fading, where personal belief and individual interpretation and narration gain more weight than they would, it creates a sense of scepticism and even disorder. Collins [2019, p.15] also states as follows:

In the middle of 2016, the presidential campaign of Donald Trump generated some journalistic and political interest in the concept of ‘post truth’, not least due to his unexpected success in obtaining the nomination of the Republican Party to take on Hillary Clinton. The notion of post-truth politics, as we shall see, had been slowly gaining some journalistic traction when it became attached to Trump’s supposedly visceral, simplistic and demagogic style of campaigning. This roughly coincided with the culmination of the EU referendum campaign in the UK, the result of which led UK political commentators to suggest that post-truth politics had been imported from the United States. A related term – ‘fake news’ – has similarly emerged to describe more prosaically the biased and distorted information that is arguably part of the post-truth phenomenon.

Propora and Sekalala [2019, p. 938], also, in their study entitled “Truth, Communication, and Democracy”, after their definition of truth as “an ontologically objective reality” with a “critical realist in nature”, and exploring “presuppositions of epistemic rationality, doxastic voluntarism, and ontological realism” provide a “critical-realist take on the resolution of truth debates and an affirmation of truth as a democratic value” and outlined “the breakdown of the concept and practice of truth and deliberative democracy before and during the age of Trump and the treatment of truth by the profession of journalism as well as the academic discipline of journalism studies”. On the other hand, having accepted relativism as a fact, it may not necessarily be the cause of chaos and confusion. It creates disorder and distrust when it goes to the extreme; otherwise, ‘moderation is the best’, be it even relativism. Flis [2010] also discusses the two sides of Relativism in the two extremes of the postmodern philosophical thoughts in France (Lyotard) and Germany (Habermas). She states: “If Habermas... sees the postmodern as a chaotic, catastrophic era, a retrograde phase of the modern age (of reason), Lyotard, on the other hand, recognizes in it a possibility for the expression of democracy, freedom, and humanism” [Flis, 2010, p.37].

In the meantime, the chaotic world of post-modernism paves the way for some professions and practices to “fish in troubled water”, one of which is journalism. Journalism is a strong hand which can take the possession of power exclusively or also give voice to the more quiet or interest-bearing groups and parties. About the critical stance and power of journalism, Alawad and Kambal [2018, p.17] contend as follows:

The means of communication are the essential elements in organizing the processes of relationships between individuals and groups, and they are, in fact like mirrors that reflect the realities of the societies and the countries, and when the originations, societies, countries, and the cultures, have become the subject to be covered, then, here appears the worry and fear that indicates the danger of these means, and their powerful effect...

A survey called 'The Power of Journalism' implemented in Norway and Sweden, 2018, about the role and power of journalism in the target society revealed that generally both the general public and officials admit the great power and importance of journalism in both countries and a little bit more in Sweden. Robinson et al. [2018] in their book "The Power of Journalists", which is a collection of essays by four journalists about the power and role of the media in a dialogue held in 2016 by Westminster Abbey Institute, discusses the role of a journalist as a truth reflector and fact interpreter. Yet he states that "there is a common view, not only among those in public life, that the media are not part of the company of those seeking to serve the common good; rather, are they its enemy" [Robinson et al., 2018, p. 5]. Leppänen et al. [2015, p. 1] also study the roles of normativity and authenticity in various social media practices and state that "we need to investigate in what particular ways and under what conditions authenticity is made locally meaningful, and how it is oriented to, indexed and communicated to in linguistic and semiotic action and interaction, as well as how local practice draws on and contributes to discourses on and related to authenticity."

Matthew d'Ancona, a highly regarded political commentator, also states "Post-truth is the declining value of truth as society's reserve currency, and the infectious spread of pernicious relativism disguised as legitimate scepticism» [D'Ancona, 2017, p. 2]. Regarding not the quality, but the phenomenon of truth in relativistic postmodernism, Flis [2010] contends that "in postmodern times, not only fiction (and fictionality) but also the fact (and factuality) have been called into question. The nature of truth, any truth whatsoever, has been put on trial" [Flis, 2010, p.179]. Moreover, linguistically, it can be discussed that the integrationist view of language holds that there is a context-dependent link between language as a sign-making and sign-interpreting system and the time-embedded and actual individual's experience [Pablé, 2010]. As Pablé [2019, p. 72] contends "there are no dialogical signs, only personal ones", and Pablé, Haas & Christe [2010], who agree with the contextual nature and usage of language and disapprove of the myth of language as a 'fixed-code', skepticise the degree of the amenability of language to scientific and reliable description; it is thought-provoking to doubt the accuracy and credence of a journalist's or a narrator's release.

Furthermore, Chen [2018], in her interview with Alex Rosenberg the author of the book "How History Gets Things Wrong: The Neuroscience of Our Addiction to Stories", explains the way Rosenberg experiences and explicates how history gets things wrong as follows:

I myself am the victim of narrative. I love narrative. It's the only thing I read, and it's fantastically seductive. When I say "narrative," I don't mean a chronology of events; I mean stories with plots, connected by motivations, by people's beliefs and desires, their plans, intentions, and values. There's a story.

The problem is, that these historical narratives seduce you into thinking you really understand what's going on and why things happened, but most of it is guessing people's motives and their inner thoughts. It allays your curiosity, and you're satisfied psychologically by the narrative, and it connects the dots so you feel you're in the shoes of the person whose narrative is being recorded. It has seduced you into a false account, and now you think you understand. The second part is that it effectively prevents you from going on to try to find the right theory and correct account of events. The third problem, which is the gravest, is that people use narratives because of their tremendous emotional impact to drive human actions, movements, political parties, religions, and ideologies. Many movements, like nationalism and intolerant religions, are driven by narrative and are harmful and dangerous for humanity.

His argument for the fallacy of narratives in the field of neuroscience lies on the side of the theory of mind. Rosenberg contends that «we're hardwired to have the theory of mind — basically trying to read and guess other people's emotions — and that makes narratives enjoyable even if they're wrong or impossible to prove» [Chen, 2018].

Literary journalism by definition is neither traditional journalism nor fiction. It is a form of non-fictional (can be factual though hardly so) narrative with the stylistic techniques of fictional narratives. Whitt [2008] claims that focus as an element of literary journalism is in the hands of those who are influenced by institutions rather than the institutions themselves. Herman & Chomsky [1988] in their essay «Propaganda Model», excerpted from «Manufacturing Consent», state that “in countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a state bureaucracy, the monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite” [Herman & Chomsky, 1988]. Chomsky, furthermore, proposed ten strategies employed by the media to manipulate the readers' mind [Le Demeuze in *Medicina Generale*]. However, Sylvain Timsit claims that “the document was first published in French in 2002, with the original title «Stratégies de manipulation» on the website syti.net [Sylvain Timsit, 2002]. The origin of the false attribution to Noam Chomsky” [WikiMANNia (December 14, 2015)].

Documentary Narratives as a form of literary journalism are referred to by Flis [2010] as an expert and professor of literary journalism to “various types of fact-involving stories, ranging from the highly factual or objective accounts to the considerably more fictional and subjective pieces... with extra-textual epistemological implications» [Flis, 2010, p. 11]. She asserts that “reality-based topics and documentary narratives have been greatly popular and demanded among readers. Many contemporary readers seem to prefer realism over romanticizing, for nonfiction writing gives them fairly easy access to the pleasure of facts, as well as to the message of the story” [Flis, 2010, p. 195]. As a result, it is simply imaginable how deep and broad could be the writings of literary journalists, especially documentary narratives, and how huge the power its authors would gain from them. Furthermore, in line with a key tenet of transcendentalism, which emphasizes that institutions corrupt the innocence and purity of individuals, as well as their inherent nature, as discussed in Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay “Self-Reliance” (1841), the American transcendentalist philosopher, poet, lecturer, and essayist who led the transcendentalist movement in the mid-19th century. In alignment with the concept of self-reliance and intuition, which will be further discussed in the section titled “Transcendentalist Journalism,” the influence of institutions, particularly news and narrative journalism agencies, in reflecting or manipulating the truth and reality is a significant and undeniable issue. So the question is how truthful, real and factful the documentary narratives and

literary journalism are. Are they just reflecting the facts and truth to the readers? A saying from Joseph Campbell wittingly answers the question: “Myth is much more important and true than history. History is just journalism and you know how reliable that is” [Quotefancy].

The current study has been designed to answer the above question with the scientific research approach. To form, fit, and figure out the question, a Phronetic Social-Science approach was taken. The ancient Greek noun *phronēsis* is generally translated as “practical wisdom”, “practical judgment”, “common sense”, or “prudence” [Aristotle, 2004]. In Aristotle’s words, *phronesis* is an intellectual virtue, “constructed based on a contextual knowledge”, “action-oriented and capable of action with regard to things that are good or bad for man”, “interactively constructed”, and is based on certain values [Cairns & Śliwa, 2008]. According to Flyvbjerg [2001, p.140], the researches conducted in this approach are means

to clarify and deliberate about the problems and risks we face and to outline how things may be done differently, in the full knowledge that we cannot find the ultimate answers to these questions or even a single version of what the questions are.

So, perhaps this is why it’s referred to as the Phronetic Iterative Analysis approach in qualitative research methodology. This nomenclature may stem from the inherently indefinite nature of this research approach, which involves conducting repetitive yet distinct research tasks and designs. According to Prof. Bent Flyvbjerg (2016), a recognized and distinguished expert in this field, making a phronetic research question needs some guidelines as follows:

The principal task for phronetic research is to clarify values, interests, and power relations as a basis for praxis. The point of departure for such research can be summarized in four value-rational questions, which researchers ask and answer for specific problematics in their fields of interest.... the primary purpose of phronetic social science is not to develop theory (though it may be done), but to contribute to society’s practical rationality in elucidating where we are, where we want to go, and what is desirable according to diverse sets of values and interests. The goal of the phronetic approach is to add to society’s capacity for value-rational deliberation and action.

Tracy [2020, p.37] also accepts and assumes some measures for phronetic research questions like the available study. She postulates that “qualitative methods are especially suited for examining phronetic questions about morality and values. Social action is always changing; therefore, contextual explanations and situated meanings are integral to ongoing sensemaking”.

Therefore, based on the literature review, and experts’ and practitioners’ views, works and theories about the journalism’s power of discourse over readers, and in forming their viewpoint. The present study tries to describe the concept, construct and working mechanism of literary and non-literary journalism using the language of metaphor; and then it has made an attempt to explain how this power and mechanism are accounted for by resorting to Post-Modernism, Post-Truth, Relative Linguistics, and even further explain the journalism’s power of discourse in transcendentalism to outline it in both directions (vertical and horizontal) to give an additional perspective to this phenomenon, i.e. journalism’s power of discourse. So, in short, the research questions of the present study are what the discourse of journalism and the power of journalism’s discourse are, and how they work.

2. METHODOLOGY

The current article is a qualitative research in the phenomenological design which discusses the power of fictional and non-fictional journalism separately, refers to the “one rich and wide-reaching element of language” (Underhill, 2011, p. 17), i.e. metaphor, to describe what and explain how the discourse of journalism, both literary and non-literary journalism, works; delineate its mechanism of action and instrumentation through comparing them to kaleidoscopes and periscopes and to reveal what their working mechanism looks like and how it works. Moreover, this study aims to address research questions within the framework of Post-Truth and Linguistic Relativism while incorporating Transcendentalism to review and argue how the power of these two genres of journalistic discourse can be explained.

The world is made up of phenomena, and phenomenology is literally defined as the description of events, experiences, concepts, and situations. There are times when we are aware of the phenomena which surround us, but not fully conscious of them. So, phenomenological research needs to be conducted in order to discuss and clarify the topic(s) to raise the readers’ consciousness. According to Astalin [2013, p. 2], “phenomenological research will not necessarily provide definitive explanations, but it does raise awareness and increases insight about the phenomena”. Chall [2019, p.19] generally defines journalistic discourse as “a communicative act of particular linguistic phenomenon that requires some special norms and reflects on social, cultural, political, ideological aspects. Thus, it is regarded as a specialized discourse.” As such, the present study is to examine and explain the power of journalism, gained by virtue of practising the manipulative and journalistic discourse, within the framework of Post-Modernism and Transcendentalism.

3. METAPHORS

As Underhill [2011, p.17] maintains “all of our concepts are framed within metaphorical terms”. The current study deploys the figurative device of metaphor to describe literary and non-literary (traditional) journalism from a different lens of transdisciplinary discourse. Astalin (2013) also conforms to Ricoeur’s [1975] view on metaphors and contends that «metaphor acts within context, not (as is usually believed in philosophy and rhetoric) by importing one trait or quality from a literal to a figurative context. ... It harnesses the meaning attributed to a term within a given context” [Astalin, 2013, p. 36]. For instance, an article by Smith-Merry [2013] is entitled “Reciprocal Instrumentalism: Scotland, WHO Europe, and mental health”. The main part of the heading, “Reciprocal Instrumentalism”, gives a sense of interaction and movement (“reciprocal”) to a philosophical approach (“instrumentalism”). Moreover, adding the subheading “Scotland, WHO Europe, and mental health” to the notion of instrumentalism gives a sense of the tool to a country (Scotland), an organization (WHO Europe) and a condition (mental health). So, metaphors, especially conceptual metaphors, juxtapose two contexts, in general, and can be employed for a new, live and sharper presentation and understanding.

Therefore, the figurative device of metaphor was employed in this study to address both descriptive and explanatory questions. This usage aligns with The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar (p. 77) on comparison:

In comparative clauses introduced by *than* or *as*, whatever is represented by the adjective, adverb etc. that functions as the comparative element is sometimes called the standard of comparison, and the basis of comparison is whoever or whatever is being compared in the comparative clause. Thus in *Pete is happier than Paul*, the standard of comparison is happiness and the basis of comparison is Paul.

In the current study, the subject of comparison is the power of literary and non-literary journalism's discourse, the basis of comparison are periscopes and kaleidoscopes. The standard of comparison is the unreal / less real, subjective / less objective, manipulative / less artless, relative / less independent nature, essence, and appearance of both the power of journalism's discourse and the mechanism of periscopes and kaleidoscopes. Thus, to describe the nature, essence, and appearance of the power of journalism's discourse the aforementioned metaphorical comparison will be employed. Moreover, to explain the nature, essence, and appearance of the power of journalism's discourse, Post-Truth, Post-Modernism, Pluralism, and Relative Linguistic Relativism will be utilized as the framework. Thereafter, to give an additional and further perspective to the afore-discussed nature, essence, and appearance of the power of journalism's discourse; that same nature, essence, and appearance of the power of journalism's discourse will be discussed within the framework of Transcendentalism.

4. PERISCOPE

Periscopes are basically composed of two mirrors parallel to each other at the 45° angle that create an indirect line of sight. A periscope, symbolizing non-literary (traditional) journalism or journalists, consists of two plane mirrors. The first mirror is positioned near the object(s), while the second is situated close to the viewer's eye. The first mirror is the eye, faculty and perception of the journalist and the second is his/her pen, production and hand, and the observable image is his/her writing product. As cited in Flis [2010, p. 188], storytelling is a transformation of reality via «someone's eye and hand» [Wolk, 2007].

Thus, the real object passes through two mirrors and changes into an image of the object so that it could reach the viewer and be visualized by the viewer's brain and perceived by his/her mind. Expectedly, in its multi-stepping journey from a real object to the perceived image of the object, the light reflected from the real object undergoes many fractions and refractions. It is the mechanism of story-telling.

The first image of the real object is inverted, reverted, and rotated sometimes to be perceived by the viewer. Likewise, the truth, the fact, and the reality, each of which has a different meaning, denotation and connotation, are in the hands of journalists. They can either be highly devoted to representing the real source object, event, phenomenon, etc., or they can deviate significantly from them on the continuum of truth fidelity. In both scenarios, the image conveyed to the viewer is crafted by the journalist. In the first scenario, the deviation is considered standard, akin to the standard deviation in mathematics. It is naturally occurring due to the inherent variability of human perspectives and is thus acceptable within the frameworks of Relativism and Postmodernism, as previously discussed. In the second scenario, however, the journalist intentionally exploits their position and influence to manipulate readers' emotions and thoughts in favour of institutional or sociopolitical interests through their writing.

As the frame of journalism is the production of the verbal mode of discourse, in addition to the sociopolitical concerns, areas of Linguistics, more specifically Linguistic Relativism, can be at issue in the present study. A person's worldview is shaped by two primary cognitive processes: perception and thinking, which predominantly occur during the course of language and thought. They are the two potent forces which have mutual influences on each other in different degree values based on different theories and hypotheses of linguistic relativity, developed by such researchers as Boas [1911], Boroditsky [2001], Herder [1977], Humboldt [1841], Levinson [1996], Stokhof [2003]. Linguistic Determinism, the strong version of linguistic relativity, on the one hand, proposes that language and linguistic structures constrain and confine the users' thoughts, and consequently the social reality [Wilson, 2015]. On the other hand, Whorf-Sapir's Linguistic Relativism states that language influences, not determines, the users' view of the world [Beek, 2006].

Moreover, the impact and connotation of words are not absolute but relative depending on the context. For example, the word 'freedom' would differ in America and some communist countries in the 1960s and 1970s. Whereas in America this notion refers to the freedom of speech and expression in sociopolitical debates and economy, in socialist countries it refers to the freedom of having equal rights in life's necessities and social welfare like home, job, and education [Underhill, 2011]. 'The Muslim Veil' can be another example. Salton [2014] discusses the socio-political differences in wearing Muslim Veil clothing between the USA and France as follows:

The USA and France are often perceived as having different if not antipodal, legal and political systems. At first sight, the treatment of the Muslim veil at school confirms this impression, for this piece of clothing is seen in the USA as a private symbol of religious devotion and benefits from the protection of the First Amendment, whereas the same item is regarded in France, after March 2004, as a threat to the idea of French secularism ('laïcité') and is prohibited in all public schools [Salton, 2014, p. 1].

Now, referring to the vigorous effects and causal relationships of language and thought, and their infinite productivity, which is a characteristic of the human language in various contexts, the power of journalism, as a practice of language in literary and non-literary discourse in the pluralistic, post-truth presentation of reality can be more conceivable. Aligned with the 'media logic' defined by Hearn-Branaman [2018] as "the assumptions and processes for constructing messages within a particular medium. ... The rules or "codes" for defining, selecting, organizing, presenting, and recognizing information as one thing rather than another" (cited in [Wilson, 2019]); language and discourse can be a tool at the service of media logic. The way journalists define and touch, for example, the word 'freedom,' must be different in different settings in history to create a worldview. 'Freedom' is not just a property of the real world out there. It is a mental concept and thought product as well. In reporting and narrating a single event, journalism can make even adverse world views of positive or negative hues using linguistic tools and rhetorical devices in diverse orientations relating to its socio-politico-economic inclinations. Deploying figurative or non-figurative, ironic or non-ironic speech, rhetorical or non-rhetorical devices, clear or vague, positive or negative, lexico-grammatical structures, semantic-pragmatic expressions and sociolinguistic variations in their interpretations and productions will influence the readers' thought varyingly and, as a result, create different worldviews.

Larsen and Figenschou [2019, p. 5463] also analyzed meta-journalistic and media critique discourse in the case of extremist voices and boundaries of public debates. Their study indicated how ironically and manipulatively “[the] editorial legacy media invite a broad meta debate, but control and define the debate by positioning themselves as defenders against extremism, evoking normative ideals of the role of journalism in a democracy and foregrounding the preventive, clarifying, and cohesive effects of including extremist voices”.

From myriads of interpretations of an event, the reader receives the one narrated by the journalist. There could be as many narrations and interpretations as the number of people seeing an event, as the ‘dialogism’ of Bakhtin [1999; 1981], cited in Flis [2010], indicates the “infiniteness and the impossibility to determine ultimate ... meanings” [Flis, 2010, p. 48]. Now, it is the journalist who takes one meaning of his/her choice, favour and faculty; and with his/her pen power takes control of the readers’ mind.

In the confederation of literary journalism scholars, gathered from across the globe in Minneapolis, Nicholas Lemann emphasized the important social function and public and political significance of journalism and insisted that when journalists dubiously “harness their fiction to the booster rocket of truth claims” they diminish the credibility of all non-fiction [Roiland, 2015]. He continues:

Journalism is the only profession in the United States to enjoy constitutional protection. Consequently, what counts as journalism has material, legal significance. Beyond historical and linguistic accuracy, it is important to understand what these labels mean because journalistic genre classification played a role in “the only US Supreme Court case that directly addresses the First Amendment dimensions not just of altered quotations but of narrative technique in journalism” [Roiland, 2015, p.74].

All said, it is unfair to believe that journalism and the press are enjoying the freedom they need to have, and are under no pressure or threat. Ponce [2015], in his written testimony on the state of press freedom in the Americas, states that “press freedom in the Americas faces a more severe and diverse set of challenges than at any point in the last five years. Journalists are under threat from both state and non-state actors, whether in the form of laws that restrict press freedom, government censorship, political persecution and harassment, or violent attacks” [Ponce, 2015, p. 9]. There are also plenty of memorable male and female journalists who fought for human rights, justice and humanity and were murdered, such as Regina Martínez, Rubén Espinosa, Pineda Brito, Miroslava Breach [Pastrana, 2017].

5. KALEIDOSCOPE

The basic and simplest system of a kaleidoscope is a two-mirror system kaleidoscope in a triangular arrangement where two sides are mirrors in a mathematical formula for the folds and points of the angles, and the third side is blackened. This mirror setting causes multiple refractions of light which, in turn, makes the viewer not able to see the real object(s).

Thus, a kaleidoscope is a mirror-based instrument functioning with multiple reflections of images from a real object. Mirrors, do not essentially reflect the absolute truth, which is completely accepted and acknowledged in the Relativism of Postmodernism, discussed earlier, because of the

(re)fractions of light and delusions of eyesight. Likewise, Flis [2010] cites a quote from Harold Pinter in his Noble lecture (2005) and states that “when we look into a mirror we think the image that confronts us is accurate. But move a millimetre and the image changes. We are actually looking at a never-ending range of reflections” [Flis, 2010, p. 178].

Like a periscope, a kaleidoscope is composed of two mirrors too. But, unlike a periscope, the mirrors are arranged to function simultaneously rather than sequentially. One mirror is the perception of the writer / literary journalist / narrative journalist of the event. The other is the literary and fictional devices of aesthetics. The created image is the product of literary journalism. A colourful image presented to the reader (viewer) from the multiple refractions of light between two mirrors back and forth, forms the object in the kaleidoscope. So, the narrative journalist has two hands of power: the power of writing and the power of literary and stylistic devices.

One of the strong faculty powers in writing, in general, and in literary journalism in particular, is imagination. As Morton [2018] in her study “The Role of Imagination in Literary Journalism” asserts “the imagination is indeed a key component of literary journalistic practice”, and further – “practitioners and theorists alike can benefit from a deeper understanding of its role in the representation of reality” [Morton, 2018, p.1]. She continues that “in recent times ‘imagination’ has been widely acknowledged by scholars as having a key role in journalism practice.” She also quotes Michael Schudson [1995] and states «No reporter just ‘gets the facts.’ Reporters make stories... It cannot be done without play and imagination,” and that “description is always an act of imagination.”

Flis [2010] also provides an example of a truth-relativism documentary, fiction from Joe Sacco, the author of a comic book series called “Palestine” (1996) and “Footnotes in Gaza” (2009) based on which two albums were published. She asserts that

“It [*Footnotes Album*] consists of a multitude of individual truths/testimonies that are filtered through Sacco’s journalistic and artistic lens. In neither of these two albums (nor in any of his other books) does Sacco claim to be a ‘neutral’ observer. He makes it clear that he is part of the story and that the events affect him... The element of the narrator’s immersion into the subject matter, which is an essential element of literary journalism, is surely present, as are the writer’s/artist’s personal experiences and observations” [Flis, 2010, p. 192].

Regarding Documentary Novels as a form of literary journalism, Flis [2010] opens a chapter from an Iranian author Mas’ud Zavarzadeh and cites “the non-fiction novel is the ‘fiction’ of the metaphysical void” [Flis, 2010, p. 84]. She regards Factual Fiction as the ‘Fourth Genre.’ She depicts the narrative territory of factual fiction as a space between ‘Life Writings’ (facts), including “memoirs, (auto)biographies, travel books, historical narratives, and journalism» and ‘Fiction Narratives’ (fiction), including “realistic, naturalistic, and postmodern (metafictional) novels” [Flis, 2010, p.85]. She refers to facts as ‘news articles, biographies, autobiographies, and various types of historical accounts’ when she writes that “some narratives are reportorial, documentary, and clearly refer to facts” [Flis, 2010, p. 11].

Therefore, the kaleidoscope of the literary journalistic power has even more paint and hue to colour the truth and realities of the world and the events behind the scenes because the beauty and aesthetics make the reader not only believe the news but also take pleasure from it as it is indicated in a saying from Evan Davis, which reads: “We evidently are quite happy to believe untruths.”

Furthermore, Kant, as an example representing the school of transcendentalism, which will be discussed in the next section, believed in understanding the nature of reality through an investigation of the thought processes rather than the objects of sensory experience [Webster's New World College Dictionary, 2014]. The key idea is that to comprehend the nature of reality, one must first scrutinize and analyze the reasoning process that governs the nature of our experiences. In doing so, we can justify the intuitive and self-reliant essence and appearance of journalism's discourse. It's also important to note that political and institutional facets of journalism have historically battled against censorship and fought for freedom of expression. Efforts to promote freedom of the press and journalism have been established. For instance, in 2002, Silvio Berlusconi received the ironic "censorship award" for implementing unprecedented censorship powers and for combining the concerning amalgamation of media, government, and an individual in the role of prime minister [Wells, 2002].

6. TRANSCENDENTALIST JOURNALISM

Transcendentalism was first a philosophical movement in the 19th century, which originated in the United States and served as a reaction to Rationalism and Intellectualism. Departing from the history of transcendentalism, the core of this thought is the credence of and faith in intuition and subjective interpretation and the interest in divinity. With a fine juxtaposition of this view to either literary journalism, which is a river of art, or non-literary (traditional) journalism, which is also a trench of art, referring to the title and content of Weber's [1974] book called "The Reporter As Artist: Readings on the New Journalism Controversy", power of journalism is like the power of divinity from above, which is encompassing and penetrating. In addition, it certifies the exertion of the subjective interpretation and (post-) truth, pluralistic reporting by journalists as inspired by art, the art of manipulation, in varying degrees.

The subjectivity accountability and intuition highlighted in transcendentalism are also in line with a technical term in narrative, especially in narrative journalism, called 'mini-narrative'. Grand narrative is a term proposed by Jean-François Lyotard (1979), referring to the totalitarian, stable, ordered, and universal scheme of narrative in the cultural, historical, social, etc. knowledge account and experience explanation of a nation, state and world which has been widely criticized in the world of unstable, pluralist, provisional, situational, temporary and relative postmodernism [Lyotard, 1979]. So, a mini-narrative, which deals with subjective truth, self-reflexiveness, and contingency, has been introduced and advocated for as the counter practice of grand narrative and journalism. Likewise, as one of the core values of transcendentalism is the intuitive perception of reality, it encourages the subjective, plural and individual interpretation considerably. It is what the essence of journalism is. Morton [2018, p.3] maintains that «modern, passive journalism» is not practised in fact and postulates that "in recent times "imagination" has been widely acknowledged by scholars as having a key role in journalism practice". The artful definition of Journalism by G. Stuart Adam [1993] also reveals the streaks of art, imagination and subjectivity in journalism when he, as an educator of journalism, writes that journalism is "a form of expression that is an invention. . . . a creation—a product of the Imagination..." (cited in [Morton, 2018, p.4]).

Based on the tenets of transcendentalism, humans and human nature are good and innocent. It is different institutions, such as religious and political institutions, that corrupt the human nature. So, they must have a power of corrupting the purity of human nature. Besides, as the nature of the news agencies and journalism's discourse is political, the (horizontally) manipulative power of

journalistic politics, is added to this (vertically) corrupting power of news agencies, and both of them are in the hands of journalism's discourse. Respectively, in other words, (literary and non-literary) journalism, has not only the power to manipulate their readers' minds on a smaller scale and synchronacy but also, has the corrupting power of human nature on a larger scale and diachrony. In addition, it is notable that literary journalism's discourse is more powerful in this matter because it has more instruments, such as literary and figurative devices.

7. CONCLUSION

When one is reading literary and non-literary stories it is like viewing the world through a kaleidoscope and periscope. Thus, the readers must be ready to think the way the writers see the world. In either instrument, in the power game and power relations, it is the journalism's discourse that is above the readers' minds and views. Be it a periscope or a kaleidoscope, journalism has a double-edged power. It can reflect the objects (events) in the spectrum of light reflections between relatively real or reversely unreal and give a trans- and supra-scientific power. The power of journalism is both across and above the readers' mind and nature, both in horizontal and vertical directions. Either case can be, in turn, bitter or favourable.

Fortunately, periscopes and kaleidoscopes use plane mirrors, neither converging nor diverging. These mirrors produce the closest image of the objects in front of them. If it were otherwise, linguistic, rhetorical, journalistic, and stylistic devices would amplify the manipulative power of journalism's discourse, potentially transforming Post-Truth into After-Truth.

Referring to the repetitive nature of the Phronetic Iterative Analysis approach, the fact that «we cannot find ultimate answers to these [phronetic] questions or even a single version of what the questions are» [Flyvbjerg, 2016], and the fact that “phenomenological research will not necessarily provide definitive explanations, but it does raise awareness and increases insight about the phenomena” [Astalin, 2013], the answer to the questions of the present study is not an ultimate statement as a result of the current scrutiny and exploration. The answers to the available research questions will give a more fundamental and developed perspective on the power of journalism's discourse. Certainly, further research and answers will be more developed. Srivastava & Hopwood [2009, p.76] also stated that “the role of iteration in qualitative data analysis, not as a repetitive mechanical task but as a reflexive process, is key to sparking insight and developing meaning”. So, further research will deepen our understanding of this global phenomenon.

Conflict of interest

The author states that there is no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Adam, G. S. (1993). *Notes towards a definition of journalism: understanding an old craft as an art form*. Poynter Institute for Media Studies, St. Petersburg.
2. Alawad, M.B., & Kambal, Z.E. (2018). The World-View and its Implications in Media Discourse: Building and Analyzing. *Global Media Journal*, 17 (32), 1-9.

3. Aristotle. (2004). *The Nicomachean ethics* (rev. ed.). In J. A. K. Thomson (Ed.), H. Tredennick (transl.), J. Barnes (introd.). London, UK: Penguin Books.
4. Astalin, P. K. (2013). Qualitative Research Design: A Conceptual Framework. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, vol.2, no.1, 118-124.
5. Bakhtin, M. M. (1999). The Bildungsroman and its significance in the history of realism (Toward a historical typology of the novel). In M. Holquist (Ed.), *Speech genres and other late essays* (pp. 10-59), University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.
6. Bakhtin, M.M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. In M. Holquist (Ed.), C. Emerson and M. Holquist (transl.). University of Texas Press, Austin and London.
7. Beek, W. (2006). Linguistic Relativism Variants and Misconceptions. *Semantic Scholar*. Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Linguistic-Relativism-Variants-and-Misconceptions-Beek/82d71b38b1faddfee77a81e4b6ba64c0514f6752> (accessed: 17 July, 2023).
8. Boroditsky, L. (2001). Does language shape thought? : Mandarin and English speakers conception of time. *Cognitive psychology*, 43, 1-22.
9. Cairns, G., & Śliwa, M. (2008). The implications of Aristotle's phronēsis for organizational inquiry. In D. Barry & H. Hansen (Eds.), *Handbook of new approaches in management and organization* (pp. 318–328). London, UK: SAGE.
10. Chaal, H. (2019). The Journalistic Discourse Translating Strategies: From English into Arab. *World Journal of the English Language*, 9 (2), 19-27.
11. Chen, A. (2018). A philosopher explains how our addiction to stories keeps us from understanding history. October 5, 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.theverge.com/2018/10/5/17940650/how-history-gets-things-wrong-alexrosenberg-interview-neuroscience-stories> (accessed: 10 July, 2023).
12. Collins, J. (2019). The facts don't work: The EU referendum campaign and the journalistic construction of Post-truth politics. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 27, 15-21.
13. D'Ancona, M. (2017). *Post-Truth: The New War on Truth and How to Fight Back*. Ebury Press.
14. Flis, L. (2010). *Factual Fictions: Narrative Truth and the Contemporary American Documentary Novel*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK.
15. Flood, A. (November 15, 2016). 'Post-truth' named word of the year by Oxford Dictionaries. The Guardian. Retrieved from <https://amp.theguardian.com/books/2016/nov/15/post-truth-named-word-of-the-year-by-oxford-dictionaries> (accessed: 19 July, 2023).
16. Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge University Press. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511810503>
17. Flyvbjerg, B. (May 24, 2016). What is Phronesis and Phronetic Social Science? Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-phronesis-phronetic-social-science-bent-flyvbjerg-%E5%82%85%E4%BB%A5%E6%96%8C> (accessed: 10 August, 2023).
18. Forde, K. R. (2008). *Literary Journalism on Trial: Masson v. New Yorker and the First Amendment*. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst.
19. Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. United States: Pantheon Books.
20. Herder, J. G. (1772). *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache, welche den von der Königl. Academie der Wissenschaften für das Jahr 1770 gesetzten Preis erhalten hat* [Treatise on the origin of the language, which corresponds to that of the Royal Academy of Sciences for the year 1770]. Project Gutenberg (in German).

21. Humboldt, W.V. (1841-1852). *Gesammelte Werke [Collected Works]*. De Gruyter, Berlin.
22. Leppänen, S., Møller, J. S., Nørreby, Th. R., Stæhr, A., & Kytölä, S. (2015). Authenticity, normativity and social media. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 8, 1-5.
23. Larsen, A. G., & Figenschou, T. U. (2019). Metajournalism and Media Critique: Responses to “Extremist Voices” in the Digitalized News Landscape. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 5463–5482.
24. Le Demenze in Medicina Generale. (n.d.). *Noam Chomsky – “10 strategies of manipulation” by the media*. Retrieved from <http://www.demenzemedicinagenerale.net> (accessed: 13 July, 2023).
25. Levinson, S. C. (1996). Language and space. *Annual review of Anthropology*, 25, 353-382.
26. Lyotard, J. F. (1979). *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Les Éditions de Minuit.
27. Morton, L. (2018). The Role of Imagination in Literary Journalism. *Literary Journalism Studies*, 10 (1), 92-102.
28. Pablé, A. (2010). Language, knowledge and reality: The integrationist on name variation. *Language & Communication*, 30 (2), 109-122.
29. Pablé, A. (2019). Integrating the (dialogical) sign: or who’s an integrationist? *Language Sciences*, 75, 72-84.
30. Pablé, A., Haas, M., & Christe, N. (2010). Language and social identity: An integrationist critique. *Language Sciences*, 32, 671-676.
31. Pastrana, D. (2017). Protection of Journalists Fails in Latin America. *International Press Service (IPS)*. Retrieved from <http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/04/protection-of-journalists-fails-in-latin-america/> (accessed: 10 July, 2023).
32. Ponce, C. E. (2015). *Persecution and Prosecution: Journalists Under Threat in Latin America*. Freedom house, House Foreign Affairs Western Hemisphere Subcommittee.
33. Porpora, D. V., & Porpora, S. (2019). Truth, Communication, and Democracy. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 938–955.
34. Quotefancy. Joseph Campbell Quotes. Retrieved from <https://quotefancy.com/quote/845485/Joseph-Campbell-Myth-is-much-more-important-and-true-than-history-History-is-just> (accessed: 10 August, 2023).
35. Ricoeur, P. (1975) *La métaphore vive [Vivid metaphor]*. Seuil, Paris (in French).
36. Robinson, N., Gibbon, G., Speed, B., & Beckett, C. (2018). *The Power of Journalists*. House Publishing, London.
37. Roiland, J. (2015). By Any Other Name: The Case for Literary Journalism. *Literary Journalism Studies*, 7 (2), 60-90.
38. Rosenberg, A. (2018). *How History Gets Things Wrong: The Neuroscience of Our Addiction to Stories*, MIT Press. Retrieved from <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/how-history-gets-things-wrong> (accessed: 19 July, 2023).
39. Salton, H. T. (2014). The Muslim veil in the USA and France: a comparative analysis of law and policy. *International Journal of Public Policy*, 10 (6), 333 – 367.
40. Smith-Merry, J., Freeman, R., & Sturdy, S. (2013). Reciprocal instrumentalism: Scotland, WHO Europe, and mental health. *International Journal of Public Policy*, vol.9, No.4/5/6, 260 – 276.
41. Srivastava, P., & Hopwood, N. (2009). A Practical Iterative Framework for Qualitative Data Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 76–84. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800107>

42. Sylvain Timsit. (2002). *Stratégies de manipulation*. Retrieved from <http://www.syti.net/Manipulations.html> (accessed: 13 July, 2023) (in French).
43. Tracy, S. J. (2020). *Qualitative Research Method*. USA: Wiley and Sons Inc. Retrieved from https://uswr.ac.ir/uploads/2_57961.pdf (accessed: 19 July, 2023).
44. The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar. Retrieved from [http://apssamba.co.in/pdf/the-oxford-dictionary-of-english-grammar-oxford-quick-reference-2nd_edition%20\(%20PDF-Drive%20\).pdf](http://apssamba.co.in/pdf/the-oxford-dictionary-of-english-grammar-oxford-quick-reference-2nd_edition%20(%20PDF-Drive%20).pdf) (accessed: 10 August, 2023).
45. The Power of Journalism Survey. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.thepowerofjournalism.com/survey/> (accessed: 19 July, 2023).
46. Underhill, J. W. (2011). *Creating World Views, Metaphor, Ideology and Language*. Edinburgh University Press, England.
47. Weber, R. (1974). *The Reporter as Artist: Readings on the New Journalism Controversy* (ed.). Hastings House.
48. Webster's New World College Dictionary. (2014). Houghton Mifflin, Harcourt Publishing Company.
49. Wells, M. (2002). Censorship 'Award' for Berlusconi. *The Guardian*, Friday, March 22. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2002/mar/22/pressandpublishing.broadcasting> (accessed 19 July, 2023).
50. Whitt, J. (2008). *Women in American Journalism: A New History*. University of Illinois Press.
51. WikiMANNia. (December 14, 2015). 10 strategies of manipulation. Retrieved from https://en.wikimannia.org/10_strategies_of_manipulation#cite_note-1 (accessed: 13 July, 2023).
52. Wilson, C. (2015). *Language Files*. The Ohio State University Press.
53. Wilson, M. R. (2019). Media Government Interactions in the United States. *Global Media Journal*, 17-32.
54. Wolk, D. (2007). *Reading Comics*. Da Capo Press, Cambridge, MA.

About the author:

Dr. **Zahra Sadat Roozafzai** holds a Ph.D. in English Applied Linguistics with a focus on TEFL. She also pursues studies in Humanities within an academic context in Europe. She is currently serving as an Assistant Professor at the ACECR Institute of Higher Education in Isfahan, The Islamic Republic of Iran. Her research interests encompass English Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Socio-Cognitive Linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, and TEFL in various contexts and scopes. ORCID: 0000-0001-8376-6818

Received: June 23, 2023.

Accepted: August 2, 2023.