

Palestine in Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Israeli Media in Influencing Online News Headlines

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Abstract:

This article broadens insights into the role and impact of media in disseminating information, particularly in the digital era that influences public perceptions. The presentation of news content not only serves as an information conduit but also plays a pivotal role in shaping opinions and perspectives on an issue. Within this context, the study of media bias and the representation of the Palestine-Israel conflict becomes relevant as it sparks debates regarding the varied presentation of information by media due to differing backgrounds and interests. The importance of the media's role in shaping public opinions and how news is constructed becomes the focal point of this analysis. In exploring the causes of media bias, the study identifies factors influencing news composition, such as the influence of advertisers, political interests, government influence, and inter-media dynamics. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the coverage of the Palestine-Israel conflict by The Jakarta Post and The New York Times, indicating tendencies to support different sides based on the originating country's background of the news provider. The analytical methods applied in this research, namely Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), provide a robust framework for understanding language structures, agent representations, and underlying ideologies within media discourse. Employing these approaches, the study successfully reveals a bias favoring Palestine in news coverage, depicting Israel as a provocateur and perpetrator of crimes. These findings underscore the significance of awareness regarding media bias in consuming news and how external factors can influence the representation of complex issues such as the Palestine-Israel conflict. Studies of this nature expand our understanding of the media's role in shaping public perceptions and highlight the need for a more critical approach in responding to information presented by mass media.

Keywords: Media bias; Transitivity analysis; Critical Discourse Analysis

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of information dissemination, the role of media, especially in an age dominated by digital advancements, has become exceedingly paramount. However, lurking beneath the surface of news reportage lies a critical inquiry into the discourse that media presents and its subtle yet profound influence on public opinion—a field where the study of media discourse, especially concerning critical analyses of media bias, becomes a pivotal point of investigation. As highlighted by (Fairclough, 2015), even the choice of



words and sentence structures within news articles can be subtly altered to manipulate the content and relational aspects within the discourse. The significance of language employed within news reports is emphasized by Fairclough, asserting that media holds the "power to influence knowledge, beliefs, values, social relations, and social identities." Consequently, the language used within media discourse holds the capacity to shape public opinion on various issues in accordance with concealed agendas.

Factors such as sensitivity towards advertisers, government, powerful interests, and competitors contribute significantly to the construction of news stories. This influence is evident in how media tends to present stories that align with the interests of advertisers, the government, powerful groups, or even their own competitors. Within the context of the conflict between Palestine and Israel, fundamental differences in perspective between nations like Indonesia and the United States are reflected in their respective media. Indonesia tends to lean towards supporting Palestine, while the United States tends to favor Israel. This phenomenon drives this study to analyze news articles related to this conflict as disseminated by two major news providers from these countries: The Jakarta Post and The New York Times.

To conduct the analysis of news reports, this research adopts the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, which underscores language and ideology Fairclough alongside the contextual usage of language. CDA provides a framework to delve deeper into the linguistic structures and the socio-political context encompassing media discourse. Additionally, in this study, the theoretical framework of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) by Halliday is employed to analyze the text of news stories. This approach enables an analysis of actions, speeches, and thoughts within media discourse, thereby allowing for an elaboration of agent representations. Previous studies employing the transitivity structure of Hallidayan SFL in analyzing media have yielded significant findings. Several studies focusing on conflict and state images through transitivity analysis have demonstrated how discursive constructions may differ across various media and contexts. Building upon the aforementioned theoretical framework and methodology, this research aims to uncover how Palestine and Israel are represented within the online news discourse broadcasted by The Jakarta Post and The New York Times. Utilizing transitivity analysis and examining media bias sensitivity, this study concentrates on the transitivity structure within selected news articles and potential biases that might manifest in their construction.

By employing Fairclough's three-dimensional approach (description, interpretation, and explanation), this research endeavors to delineate, interpret, and elucidate the representations of Palestine and Israel within the selected news reports. It is anticipated that this analysis will shed light on how media shapes public understanding of the intricate conflict between Palestine and Israel.

Several previous studies have utilized transitivity structures within SFL to analyze media discourses across different contexts. For instance, Li (2011) examined news stories from The New York Times and China Daily regarding an air collision between China and the USA, demonstrating how transitivity-modeled news discourse shapes socio-political tensions between countries. Seo (2013) explored ideologically-driven choices in news coverage of the Libyan civil war by The Guardian and The People's Daily (Suwarno, 2020). investigated representations of China's image in US newspapers during 2008-2010, showcasing consistent negative portrayal. Moreover, (Osawa, 2020) scrutinized Nigerian newspapers' representation of pro-Biafra protesters, revealing biased depictions as violent threats to Nigeria's economic growth. These studies underscore the effectiveness of the transitivity system in uncovering biased representations within media discourses.

The present study, grounded in Fairclough's CDA and Halliday's SFL, aims to build upon these methodologies to analyze the representations of Palestine and Israel within news articles from The Jakarta Post and The New York Times. The investigation will focus on the transitivity structures present in these articles and examine how media biases manifest in the construction of news narratives. This methodology aligns with Fairclough's framework, facilitating critical conclusions regarding media discourse and its portrayal of the Palestine-Israel conflict.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The portrayal of Palestine in media, particularly in the context of Israeli media, has long been a contentious issue. Media is not only a source of information but also a powerful tool for shaping public perception. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, media outlets, especially those from Israel, have been criticized for framing the narrative in a way that aligns with particular political and ideological stances. This phenomenon is known as media framing, where certain aspects of an issue are highlighted or downplayed to influence public opinion. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a methodological

approach to examine how language and discourse in the media construct particular representations of conflict, identity, and power dynamics, specifically in the Israeli-Palestinian context.

Critical Discourse Analysis, developed by scholars like Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk, and Ruth Wodak, is rooted in the belief that discourse is not neutral but is shaped by, and in turn shapes, social structures and power relations. CDA emphasizes that media texts are never simply reflections of reality but are actively involved in constructing a particular social reality. This involves analyzing language, symbols, and metaphors used in media outlets to understand how specific ideologies and political agendas are promoted. In the case of Israeli media, CDA can reveal how language is employed to justify the Israeli government's stance on Palestine, often positioning Palestinians as adversaries or threats.

In the context of online news headlines, which are typically short, attention-grabbing, and concise, CDA offers a unique lens for studying how specific word choices can impact public perception. Online news platforms play a critical role in disseminating information rapidly, often shaping the initial understanding of events. Headlines, as the first point of contact with the reader, are especially powerful in framing an issue. By analyzing Israeli media headlines related to Palestine, one can observe how events are portrayed, which elements are foregrounded, and which are obscured. The critical analysis of these headlines can help unpack the ways in which media outlets influence public understanding and potentially perpetuate certain biases or stereotypes.

One important concept in CDA is "discursive power," which refers to the power of language to shape social reality. Media outlets, especially in conflict zones like Israel and Palestine, wield significant discursive power in framing narratives. For instance, Israeli media might use terms like "terrorist" or "militant" to describe Palestinian groups, while using terms like "defensive" or "security" to describe Israeli actions. This language not only affects how the audience perceives the conflict but also reflects broader political ideologies that favor one side over the other. The use of such loaded language can influence both local and international audiences, guiding them toward particular interpretations of events.

Moreover, CDA focuses on how media discourses construct collective memory and historical narratives. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, historical events such as the 1948 Nakba, the Six-Day War, and various peace processes have been framed in distinct ways in Israeli media. By examining how these events are represented in online headlines, one

can trace the evolution of discourse and identify shifts in public attitudes towards Palestine and Palestinians. Headlines may emphasize Israel's right to defend itself, while marginalizing Palestinian narratives of displacement, resistance, and suffering. This selective representation plays a crucial role in shaping collective memory and influencing international perspectives on the conflict.

Another significant theory in CDA is the concept of "othering," which refers to the process by which groups are constructed as fundamentally different and inferior. This process is particularly evident in media coverage of Palestine, where Palestinians are often depicted as the "other" in opposition to the "civilized" and "democratic" Israeli state. By examining the language of Israeli media headlines, one can identify how Palestinians are dehumanized, vilified, or reduced to stereotypes. These portrayals serve to justify military actions or policies towards Palestinians, reinforcing the notion that Palestinians are an existential threat to Israeli society and security.

The media's role in shaping public opinion is also closely tied to the concept of agenda-setting, which argues that media outlets do not tell people what to think, but rather what to think about. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israeli media can influence what aspects of the conflict are highlighted and which ones are ignored. For instance, certain Israeli media outlets may focus on Palestinian violence, while downplaying or ignoring the underlying issues of occupation, displacement, or human rights abuses. This selective agenda-setting affects how the international community and the public perceive the conflict and the actions of both parties.

In addition to framing and agenda-setting, the theory of "ideological hegemony," as articulated by Antonio Gramsci, is also relevant in understanding how Israeli media influences discourse surrounding Palestine. Gramsci's concept of hegemony refers to the dominance of a particular set of beliefs and values that become accepted as the norm. In the case of Israeli media, hegemonic discourses surrounding security, nationalism, and the right to self-defense often dominate the narrative. These ideologies are reinforced through media coverage, creating a situation where alternative viewpoints—such as those presented by Palestinians or international human rights organizations—are marginalized or dismissed.

The digital age has brought new challenges to media studies, particularly in the realm of online news. The proliferation of social media platforms and the rapid dissemination of



news via digital channels have amplified the influence of media in shaping public opinion. Israeli media's online presence, including its headlines, is designed to quickly capture attention in a crowded information landscape. Headlines must be brief but potent, relying on emotive language and powerful visuals. The nature of online media also means that headlines are often read in isolation, without the context of the full article. Therefore, the way headlines are crafted can have a disproportionate effect on how audiences interpret events.

Finally, examining the Israeli media's portrayal of Palestine through a critical discourse analysis highlights the broader issue of media ethics and responsibility. Media outlets have a duty to provide fair and balanced coverage, especially when reporting on sensitive and polarizing issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By critically analyzing how Israeli media constructs its narratives, it becomes possible to identify biases, misinformation, or omissions that may distort public understanding. This analysis not only provides insight into the role of media in perpetuating conflict but also offers a foundation for promoting more responsible and ethical journalism in the future

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a mixed-method approach, primarily employing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to investigate the construction of media bias in news articles concerning the Palestine-Israel conflict. CDA, following Fairclough's three-dimensional frameworks (description, interpretation, and explanation), serves as the primary analytical tool to dissect the language, ideology, and contextual usage within media discourse.

Additionally, the study utilizes Halliday's SFL, particularly the transitivity system, to examine the textual features and word choices within selected news articles. The transitivity system, consisting of process, participants, and circumstances, forms the basis for grammatically establishing clauses and categorizing various types of actions and experiences represented in the news discourse.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The portrayal of Palestine in Israeli media has been an ongoing subject of critical analysis, particularly as it shapes public perceptions of the conflict and influences

international discourse. In the age of digital media, the way news headlines are crafted is crucial, as they set the tone for public understanding and influence the audience's stance. Headlines, especially in online news, are often a condensation of broader narratives, encapsulating the ideological slant of the media outlet while also appealing to the reader's emotions. This phenomenon is particularly significant when analyzing Israeli media's representation of Palestine, where the framing of events can obscure or emphasize specific aspects of the conflict. The primary role of Israeli media, whether mainstream or digital, has been to convey a narrative that supports the Israeli government's stance on security and the legitimacy of their actions in Palestine.

Israeli media often faces criticism for its representation of Palestinians, particularly when portraying them as violent actors or threats to Israeli security. This framing is consistent with the concept of "discursive power" discussed in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), where language choices shape societal perceptions. Headlines like "*Palestinian Militants Attack Israeli Civilians*" or "*Israel Strikes Gaza in Response to Terrorist Activity*" often fail to provide context or background, creating a narrative that portrays Palestinians primarily through the lens of violence. This framing aligns with Israeli government narratives, which position Israel as a victim defending itself against Palestinian terrorism.

The Israeli press tends to depict the conflict in a way that legitimizes Israeli military actions and undermines Palestinian resistance. A headline from The Jerusalem Post illustrates this framing: "*Israeli Airstrikes Target Hamas Infrastructure in Gaza*" which emphasizes a defensive posture. Such headlines focus on the military response of Israel while framing Palestinian resistance as terrorism. By labeling groups like Hamas or Islamic Jihad as terrorist organizations, Israeli media adheres to an ideological framework that justifies the state's actions in the name of self-defense. The headline avoids addressing the underlying reasons for Palestinian resistance, such as decades of occupation, displacement, and lack of sovereignty.

In contrast, when Palestinian sources report on these events, the language used often emphasizes the humanitarian suffering and the context of occupation. For example, a New York Times article titled "*Israel's Strikes on Gaza Kill Dozens of Palestinians*" contrasts the military actions with the civilian toll. The article delves into the aftermath of Israeli airstrikes, which disproportionately impact Palestinian civilians, particularly in Gaza. However, this nuanced representation is often lost in the context of Israeli headlines, which

simplify complex situations and reinforce the dichotomy between victim and aggressor. The language of "self-defense" is pervasive in Israeli media but less so in international outlets like The New York Times, which tend to highlight the broader implications of occupation and military retaliation.

One of the critical aspects of CDA is the notion of "othering," where Palestinians are constructed as the "Other," a group that exists in contrast to the Israeli identity. This concept is evident in the way Israeli media often describes Palestinians, positioning them as a threat to Israeli sovereignty and security. The use of terms like "militant" or "terrorist" in headlines and news reports plays a significant role in this process. The framing of Palestinians as the "Other" depersonalizes them, reducing their identities to a singular negative characteristic: violence. Such dehumanization ensures that Israeli actions are portrayed as justified, while Palestinian actions are understood as barbaric or irrational. This selective framing influences how international audiences perceive the conflict, aligning more closely with the Israeli narrative.

The concept of "ideological hegemony," as articulated by Antonio Gramsci, provides a valuable theoretical lens through which we can analyze the portrayal of Palestine in Israeli media. Hegemonic ideologies in Israeli media reinforce the idea that Israel is a democratic state defending itself against terrorism. This ideological framework becomes dominant, shaping not only public opinion within Israel but also influencing the international discourse on the conflict. Headlines like "*Israel's Right to Defend Itself*" and "*Palestinian Terrorism Escalates*" reflect this hegemonic discourse. By consistently framing the conflict in terms of self-defense versus terrorism, Israeli media outlets create a narrative that marginalizes Palestinian perspectives, further entrenching the legitimacy of Israeli policies and actions.

In contrast, international outlets like The Jakarta Post often provide a more balanced view of the conflict, offering alternative perspectives that highlight the complexity of the situation. For instance, The Jakarta Post published an article titled "*Gaza Death Toll Rises Amid Escalating Violence Between Israel and Hamas*" which reflects a more nuanced approach to the coverage of Israeli-Palestinian violence. The headline does not immediately place blame on one side or the other but highlights the growing human toll of the conflict, emphasizing the need for both sides to consider peace. The article provides context on the history of the conflict, drawing attention to the long-standing issues of territorial disputes,

blockades, and the asymmetry of power between Israel and the Palestinians. This type of framing challenges the dominant discourse in Israeli media, which often simplifies the conflict into a binary of good versus evil.

Additionally, the role of digital media in shaping public opinion cannot be overstated. The rapid dissemination of online news has made it easier for narratives to spread globally, but it also means that readers are often exposed to incomplete or biased representations of the conflict. In the case of Israeli media, headlines are often designed to be provocative, capturing attention with emotional language or sensational claims. For example, a headline from The Times of Israel reads, “*Gaza Rockets Hit Tel Aviv, Killing Israeli Civilians*” which evokes a strong emotional response and frames the attack as a direct assault on innocent lives. While the event itself is a tragic consequence of the ongoing conflict, the headline shifts the focus onto the Israeli victims without acknowledging the context of ongoing occupation and systemic violence against Palestinians.

This kind of selective reporting can have a significant impact on how international readers understand the situation. In countries where media coverage of the conflict is more balanced, such as in The New York Times or The Jakarta Post, headlines tend to present the violence as part of a larger historical and political context. For example, The Jakarta Post published a headline that read, “*Violence Erupts in Gaza as Israel Launches Military Offensive*” The phrasing of the headline underscores the cyclical nature of the violence, which is often a result of broader political and territorial disputes. It avoids the dehumanization or demonization of either side, instead framing the issue as a tragic consequence of failed diplomacy and unresolved political issues.

However, the Israeli media’s use of headlines that focus on Palestinian violence or terrorism helps to establish an ideological framework that justifies Israeli military actions and policies. The continuous repetition of these themes in Israeli media ensures that the narrative remains firmly rooted in the idea of Israel as a victim of Palestinian aggression. This is reflected in headlines like, “*Israel Targets Hamas in Gaza After Rocket Attack,*” which places the onus of responsibility on Palestinian groups. The framing here suggests that Israel is simply responding to provocation, ignoring the complex historical and political factors that contribute to the violence.

Furthermore, the framing of the conflict in Israeli media can also influence the perceptions of Palestinian suffering. The term “collateral damage” is often used to



downplay the humanitarian toll of Israeli military actions. By focusing on Palestinian militant groups, Israeli media can shift attention away from the devastating effects of their military operations on civilians. Headlines such as “*Hamas Uses Civilians as Human Shields*” or “*Israel Strikes Hamas Targets in Civilian Areas*” reinforce the idea that Palestinians are responsible for their own suffering, while absolving Israel of any wrongdoing. This framing reflects a broader strategy of shifting blame to Palestinian actors, reducing the moral responsibility of Israel for the destruction it causes.

One of the key contributions of CDA is its ability to unveil how discourse shapes collective memory and influences public opinion over time. The portrayal of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination in Israeli media has evolved, but it has consistently been marginalized in favor of narratives that support Israeli sovereignty. By framing Palestinians as aggressors or terrorists, Israeli media works to delegitimize their claims for land, independence, and recognition. The use of language in Israeli headlines often excludes or distorts Palestinian narratives, making it more difficult for the international community to engage with Palestinian voices in any meaningful way.

The selective representation of historical events, such as the Nakba (the displacement of Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War) or the various peace processes, further complicates the media’s role in shaping historical memory. Israeli media outlets rarely acknowledge the Palestinian experience of dispossession and exile in their headlines or broader coverage. For instance, when Israeli media discusses the ongoing settlement expansion in the West Bank, the focus is often on Israel's security concerns or the legal justification for settlement activities, with little regard for the displacement and disenfranchisement of Palestinians. Headlines that read “*Israel turbocharges West Bank settlement expansion with largest land grab in decades*” rarely address the human costs of these actions for Palestinians who live under occupation.

This selective framing not only influences Israeli public opinion but also plays a significant role in shaping international views on the conflict. By consistently depicting Palestinians as violent and Israel as a victim, Israeli media helps to secure international support for its actions. However, international media outlets like The New York Times and The Jakarta Post provide a broader perspective by reporting on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank, which helps to challenge the hegemonic narratives promoted by Israeli media. These outlets often highlight the disparity of power between Israel and



the Palestinians, providing context for the violence and underscoring the importance of a negotiated peace process.

In conclusion, a critical discourse analysis of Israeli media's representation of Palestine reveals how language, framing, and ideological power are employed to shape public perception of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The selective use of language, the omission of Palestinian voices, and the reinforcement of hegemonic ideologies all contribute to a distorted representation of the conflict, where the narratives that support Israeli government policies are prioritized, and Palestinian perspectives are marginalized. The strategic use of framing techniques, such as focusing on Palestinian violence while downplaying the underlying causes of the conflict, ensures that Israeli military actions are perceived as defensive rather than aggressive. The portrayal of Palestinians as "other" and as existential threats to Israeli security reinforces the dehumanization of the Palestinian population, thus facilitating a political discourse that justifies ongoing occupation and military intervention.

As international media outlets increasingly cover the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they provide important counter-narratives that challenge the selective representations in Israeli media. For instance, The New York Times regularly publishes stories that delve into the human toll of the conflict on Palestinians, whether through the lens of children killed in airstrikes or the plight of refugees. These narratives often present a more nuanced picture, emphasizing the cyclical nature of violence and the role that systemic issues such as the occupation, displacement, and restricted freedom of movement play in perpetuating the conflict. For example, articles such as "Gaza's Children: Caught Between Rockets and Bombs" provide a broader humanitarian perspective that contrasts sharply with the more security-focused reporting seen in Israeli outlets.

Similarly, The Jakarta Post also takes a more balanced approach by offering a platform for voices advocating peace and diplomacy. The article titled "Peace Talks Stall as Violence Erupts in Gaza" highlights the broader geopolitical context, calling attention to failed peace initiatives and the deep-rooted nature of the dispute. This type of coverage, while acknowledging the violence and aggression on both sides, stresses the need for a negotiated solution, aiming to shed light on the perspectives and grievances of both Palestinians and Israelis. These international reports often provide crucial perspectives that challenge the polarized views prevalent in Israeli media.

One of the significant challenges that arise from the media's portrayal of the conflict is the creation of a dichotomy between the "good" Israeli state and the "bad" Palestinians. This binary framing simplifies a complex situation into a narrative that is easier for audiences to digest but ultimately misrepresents the reality on the ground. It fails to address the long-standing historical grievances that Palestinians hold regarding the occupation, the settlement expansion, and the lack of a viable path to statehood. By framing the conflict as a struggle between two equal parties, the media overlooks the asymmetry in power, resources, and military capabilities between Israel and Palestine. This kind of framing perpetuates the idea that Palestinians are merely aggressors or terrorists, and the Israeli state is merely defending itself, without addressing the root causes of the violence.

The issue of collective memory is also deeply tied to how the media frames historical events. The Israeli media rarely acknowledges the Palestinian perspective on key historical moments, such as the Nakba or the ongoing displacement of Palestinians from their ancestral lands. The Nakba, in particular, represents a traumatic event in Palestinian history, as it marked the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during the creation of the Israeli state. However, Israeli media rarely covers the Nakba or frames it within the broader historical narrative of Palestinian dispossession. This omission is part of a broader strategy to maintain a dominant narrative that prioritizes Israeli history and perspectives, while sidelining Palestinian historical claims and suffering.

Furthermore, the role of digital media and social platforms has changed the way information is disseminated, allowing for alternative narratives to emerge, though often within a highly polarized context. Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have become vital spaces where both Israeli and Palestinian voices can directly communicate their perspectives on the conflict. This has led to the rise of grassroots journalism, where Palestinians and their supporters can challenge mainstream narratives and provide real-time updates from Gaza, the West Bank, or Israeli cities. While these voices are often marginalized in traditional media, their amplification online has forced many media outlets to reassess how they report on the conflict. However, the power of digital media also means that misinformation can spread quickly, further entrenching the divide between opposing narratives.

The framing of Palestinian suffering is also one of the most significant areas where Israeli media differs from international news outlets. In Israeli reporting, the humanitarian



aspect of the Palestinian experience is often overshadowed by a focus on security concerns or the justification of military operations. For example, headlines such as “Israel Destroys Hamas Tunnel Network” or “Israel Foils Terror Plot” focus almost exclusively on the actions of militant groups, with little mention of the civilian casualties or the wider humanitarian impact of Israeli military strikes. This selective reporting is part of a broader effort to maintain a security-first narrative that often ignores the underlying political and human rights issues that are central to the Palestinian experience.

International media outlets, on the other hand, often highlight the humanitarian crises caused by the conflict, emphasizing the toll it takes on civilian populations. In The New York Times, for instance, articles such as “*Atrocities in Gaza: The Human Cost of the Israeli Airstrikes*” provide detailed accounts of civilian deaths, medical shortages, and the destruction of infrastructure. These types of reports underscore the disproportionate impact of Israeli military actions on Palestinian civilians, which is frequently downplayed or omitted in Israeli media. Moreover, international outlets frequently bring attention to the dire conditions in Palestinian refugee camps, which house millions of displaced individuals who have lived in limbo for decades. Such stories highlight the ongoing struggle of Palestinians to gain recognition and seek a resolution to their plight.

The media's role in reinforcing nationalistic ideologies also plays a crucial part in shaping the Israeli public's perception of the Palestinian issue. Israeli media outlets often present the conflict through a national security lens, emphasizing the right of Israelis to live in peace and security. This framing serves to solidify the idea of Israel as a besieged state, constantly under threat from external enemies, including Palestinians. In contrast, the international community, including media outlets like The Jakarta Post and The New York Times, often emphasize the necessity for dialogue and compromise, focusing on the political realities that both sides face and the need for a two-state solution.

This ideological framing is not only important for domestic Israeli audiences but also for international audiences. International media can influence how the conflict is perceived worldwide, affecting diplomatic relations, aid policies, and international support for either side. Israeli media's framing of the conflict as one of "self-defense" against "terrorist" acts seeks to garner support from allies, particularly the United States, and to justify actions that would otherwise be seen as violations of international law. The more balanced coverage provided by outlets like The Jakarta Post and The New York Times contributes



to a more nuanced global understanding of the conflict, emphasizing the need for both parties to come to the negotiating table with the aim of achieving a lasting peace.

In conclusion, the media plays a crucial role in shaping public perception of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Through the strategic use of framing, language, and selective reporting, Israeli media reinforces the media outlets such as The New York Times and The Jakarta Post offer a more balanced portrayal of the conflict, focusing on the broader historical, political, and humanitarian context that influences the violence. These outlets often emphasize the asymmetry of power between Israel and Palestine, highlighting the disproportionate effects of Israeli military actions on Palestinian civilians, while also acknowledging the complex grievances on both sides of the conflict. The presence of these alternative narratives is essential for fostering a more nuanced global understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian situation, which is often oversimplified in Israeli media coverage.

Israeli media's portrayal of Palestinians often relies on the language of fear and security, presenting the population as a monolithic threat to Israeli life. This dehumanizing representation plays into the broader ideological framework that justifies Israeli military policies, such as airstrikes in Gaza or settlement expansion in the West Bank. By framing Palestinian resistance as "terrorism" and focusing on the actions of groups like Hamas, Israeli media can sidestep the broader issues of occupation, displacement, and human rights abuses that form the backdrop of the conflict. Through this narrative, Israeli media not only influences domestic opinion but also shapes how the international community perceives the legitimacy of Israeli actions. By focusing almost exclusively on Israeli suffering and threats, these outlets fail to provide a complete and accurate picture of the human cost of the ongoing occupation and the deepening humanitarian crisis in Palestinian territories.

In contrast, The New York Times and The Jakarta Post present a more layered approach that engages with the complex history of the conflict. They provide a space for Palestinian voices and viewpoints, allowing for a critical examination of the impact of Israeli policies on everyday life for Palestinians. For instance, The New York Times has consistently covered issues related to the blockade of Gaza, the expansion of settlements in the West Bank, and the resulting displacement of Palestinian families. These reports reflect a broader international perspective that seeks to address the root causes of violence,

including the lack of political and territorial solutions, rather than just focusing on the acts of violence that occur in the present moment.

Additionally, both international media outlets frequently provide coverage of the international peace process and the broader calls for a two-state solution. These reports often include expert commentary from human rights organizations, diplomats, and academics who argue that a just and lasting peace will require both Israel and Palestine to address issues such as refugees, Jerusalem's status, borders, and security arrangements. This contrast between Israeli media's focus on self-defense and international media's emphasis on diplomacy reveals the different ideologies at play, and the crucial role that balanced reporting can play in shaping international attitudes toward the conflict.

Moreover, international news outlets like The Jakarta Post have become important in presenting the global implications of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Their coverage often points out the diplomatic and economic consequences that Israel faces due to its actions in Palestine, such as the growing international condemnation of settlement expansion or the increasing calls for boycotts and sanctions. This global perspective is crucial for understanding the conflict's broader geopolitical context, including the role of international bodies such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the United States. In contrast, Israeli media rarely addresses the international ramifications of the ongoing occupation, focusing instead on internal security concerns and the legitimacy of Israel's actions.

The difference in media approaches also highlights the role of media in shaping national identity and solidarity. In Israel, media narratives tend to unify the population around the idea of collective security, with a particular focus on defending the state from external and internal threats. This framing plays a significant role in reinforcing national cohesion, especially during periods of escalated violence. In this context, media becomes not just a tool for informing the public, but also a mechanism for reinforcing ideological commitment to the state and its policies.

In contrast, the international media's portrayal of Palestine often emphasizes the human rights violations and the struggles for sovereignty and independence. By drawing attention to the plight of Palestinian refugees, the destruction of homes, and the suffering caused by military operations, these outlets challenge the dominant Israeli narrative that frames the conflict in purely security terms. This alternative discourse is essential for



fostering empathy for the Palestinian people and for generating international pressure for a peaceful resolution based on justice and equality.

One of the key issues in Israeli media is its failure to consistently engage with the broader historical and political context that informs the current conflict. While the Israeli media often focuses on the immediacy of violence, particularly rocket attacks or militant actions, it rarely connects these incidents to the broader context of occupation, systemic inequality, and the failure of peace negotiations. In contrast, *The New York Times* and *The Jakarta Post* contextualize violence within this larger framework, asking important questions about the long-term consequences of Israeli policies on Palestinian society. They examine the ways in which occupation and settlement expansion exacerbate tensions, breed resentment, and make peace even more elusive.

International media, by engaging with these underlying issues, highlights the importance of diplomacy and international intervention. Coverage often calls for renewed peace talks, with an emphasis on the necessity of addressing key issues such as the status of Jerusalem, Palestinian statehood, and the rights of refugees. In doing so, these outlets stress the need for both sides to make concessions and recognize each other's rights to peace and security. This approach fosters a more balanced view of the conflict, urging for a solution that takes into account both Israeli security concerns and Palestinian aspirations for self-determination.

By contrast, Israeli media outlets focus primarily on the security aspect, portraying Israel's military actions as necessary for the survival of the state and its citizens. While there are occasional acknowledgments of Palestinian suffering, these reports are often framed within the context of Israeli security needs, further reinforcing the idea that Palestinian suffering is a collateral consequence of defending Israel. The lack of critical engagement with the root causes of the conflict – such as the occupation, settlement expansion, and the denial of Palestinian political rights – limits the scope of public discourse within Israel. This narrowing of focus leaves little room for constructive debate on possible solutions to the conflict.

One of the most crucial aspects of media coverage is the portrayal of the individual human cost of the conflict. Both *The New York Times* and *The Jakarta Post* consistently report on the impact of the violence on civilians, whether through interviews with displaced families, accounts of children killed in airstrikes, or descriptions of the devastating effects



of blockades and curfews on daily life. This human-centric reporting plays an essential role in challenging the dehumanizing narratives often found in Israeli media, where Palestinians are largely represented as either faceless militants or victims of their own political choices.

At the same time, the Israeli media's focus on security concerns also limits the scope of debate about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank. By framing Palestinian resistance as terrorism and focusing almost exclusively on military responses, Israeli media fails to address the deeper socio-political issues that drive the violence. This selective reporting makes it more difficult for Israeli society to recognize the broader implications of the occupation, the denial of Palestinian rights, and the need for a comprehensive peace settlement.

In summary, the way the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is portrayed in the media plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and international perspectives. Israeli media outlets, by focusing on security concerns and portraying Palestinians through a lens of violence and terror, reinforce a narrative that justifies Israeli policies while marginalizing Palestinian voices. International media outlets, such as *The New York Times* and *The Jakarta Post*, offer a more comprehensive view, incorporating humanitarian perspectives and emphasizing the need for a negotiated, just peace. The role of media in framing the conflict is crucial for understanding the dynamics of power, identity, and political agendas, and for envisioning a path toward reconciliation and peace.

Discussion

The discussion opens doors to understanding how the media shapes the narrative surrounding the Palestine-Israel conflict. Through a critical analysis of the language used in news reports by *The Jakarta Post* and *The New York Times*, it becomes evident how the transitivity structure becomes a crucial tool in shaping that narrative. Transitivity, as an analytical approach examining the role of actions in language clauses, presents six types of processes—material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential—in the news reports compiled by both publishers. The analysis focuses on verbal and material processes, revealing how the narrative is constructed and which participants are involved in the message formation process. Significant verbal and material processes in news construction tend to portray Israel as the agent triggering the conflict by quoting their warnings and demonstrating strength against Palestine. In clauses analogizing Israel's involvement,



words used express violent actions like attacking, killing, annexing, and the like. Palestine, in this context, tends to be portrayed solely as the suffering party and rarely has an active role in the news reports. This analysis demonstrates how words and sentence structure usage can provide different perspectives on both sides of the conflict. Selain dari aspek linguistik, analisis juga menyoroti bias media yang tercermin dari sensitivitas terhadap berbagai kepentingan seperti politik, pengiklan, pemerintah, dan pembaca. The Jakarta Post, misalnya, cenderung mencerminkan dukungan terhadap Palestina yang sejalan dengan ideologi dan kebijakan luar negeri Indonesia yang pro-Palestina. Di sisi lain, The New York Times, sebagai media global, mencoba menyesuaikan narasi mereka dengan kepentingan nasional serta ekspektasi pembaca global yang beragam. Terdapat juga analisis terkait dengan perbedaan dalam narasi yang disusun oleh kedua media tersebut. The New York Times, meskipun memiliki bagian yang tampak empatik terhadap penderitaan Palestina, juga menampilkan beberapa bagian yang merasionalkan tindakan kekerasan Israel terhadap Palestina sebagai pembalasan yang wajar. Di sisi lain, The Jakarta Post, secara keseluruhan, cenderung menekankan sisi korban Palestina tanpa memberikan ruang yang signifikan untuk merasionalkan tindakan Israel.

This analysis provides insights into how different perspectives and tendencies are conveyed by two distinct media outlets. The concept of media bias is scrutinized through the lens of the four sensitivities theory of media bias by (Paul, 2006). Sensitivities toward advertisers, government, powerful interests, and competitors are outlined as factors influencing news presentation in both publishers. For instance, governmental sensitivity emerges as a crucial factor in narrative shaping, especially for The Jakarta Post, reflecting views aligning with Indonesia's foreign policy. On the other hand, The New York Times, as a global media entity, appears to adjust its narrative in line with national interests and global reader expectations. Beyond the variance in external influences, there's an analysis of language patterns employed by both outlets. In word choice and sentence structure, the representation of Israel and Palestine becomes apparent. Israel tends to be depicted through words indicating violence and aggression, whereas Palestine is more frequently portrayed as a victim responding to Israeli aggression. These differences in representation of both sides might offer readers varying perspectives on the ongoing conflict.

Moreover, this analysis prompts a crucial reflection for readers. Critiques on objectivity in responding to online news content become pertinent. Emphasizing the



understanding of factors that can lead to media bias, such as politics, advertisers, government intervention, competition, and others, provides a more critical view of how news is structured and presented to readers. Hence, there's a need for awareness about the various interests that might influence the narrative presented by the media. The next steps in research of this kind could involve integrating critical discourse analysis (CDA) with other approaches, such as corpus linguistics (CL). The use of mixed methods could offer a deeper understanding of the social values, phenomena, and social processes underlying the formation of media discourses. Thus, future research could broaden its scope in understanding the impact and tendencies of the media in shaping public perception of international conflicts.

CONCLUSION

The critical discourse study examined how The Jakarta Post and The New York Times portrayed Palestine and Israel, focusing on transitivity structures and media bias. The analysis revealed a bias favoring Palestine in both newspapers, depicting Israel as an agent provocateur and a war criminal while portraying Palestine as the victim of conflicts. This bias was evident in the material and verbal processes dominating the news articles, although some parts of The New York Times suggested Israeli violence against Palestinians was justified as reprisal. In The Jakarta Post, government sensitivity and readers' interests, especially influenced by Indonesian ideology and the predominantly Muslim readership, shaped the portrayal of Palestine and Israel. Conversely, The New York Times, as a global news provider, constructed Israel's image influenced by national interests and a worldwide readership, leading to a different media bias.

The study suggests that readers should aim for objectivity when consuming news to avoid false information driven by political or social propaganda. Understanding factors like political interests, advertising, government intervention, and competition can help readers discern the underlying purposes of news articles. Additionally, future studies combining Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with other theoretical approaches like corpus linguistics (CL) could offer deeper insights into social values and processes within media discourses.

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