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## Deconstructing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Online News Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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### Abstract

This study aims to find the representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict presented in Al-Jazeera News and BBC News. The data for this study were words and sentences that represent how Al Jazeera News and BBC News reported the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Fairclough's three-dimensional model is used to analyze the data, focusing on the text itself (description), the ways it is produced and consumed (interpretation), and the broader socio-cultural context (explanation). The findings of this study showed that Al Jazeera and BBC News represent the Israeli-Palestinian conflict differently. BBC News represented Hamas as the main actor in the October 7 attacks in Israel and Israeli citizens and soldiers are depicted as victims. Al Jazeera, on the other hand, depicted Hamas as the party responding to Israel's conspiracy against Palestinians, emphasizing a moral commitment to avoid civilian harm and blaming Israeli soldiers and police for civilian casualties. These differences reveal how cultural and political contexts influence media narratives, shaping public understanding of complex global conflicts.

**Keywords:** Al Jazeera news, BBC news, critical discourse analysis, Palestinian-Israeli conflict

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## 1. Introduction

Opinions and understanding of society where information technology has penetrated the dimensions of daily life are currently increasingly influenced by the media. For many people, the media is a source of information. Happer and Philo (2013), stated that the media is crucial for informing the public about global events, especially in areas where they lack direct knowledge or experience. Then, Rizova and Panayotova (2021), said that foreign conflict news media coverage influences how the general public perceives the origins, outcomes, and importance of international conflicts, as well as where diplomatic and government resources may be distributed.

Media has the power to direct the flow of information, which allows them to not only sway readers or listeners but also mold their understanding of the information presented. Apart from having power over the flow of information, the media often presents news from a certain ideology or point of view, which can have an impact on how society views a problem. Cho et al. (2021), stated that biased information and thus biased media, particularly social media, may extend a flawed view of the situation or even worse, grow the problem driven by prejudice. Therefore, people must acquire the skills to read and critically interpret news coming from the media. Pratiwi and Widhiatama (2023) noted that critical thinking is a way of human thinking that involves clear reasoning and specific goals. Thus, it is important for someone to acquire the skills to read and interpret news coming from the media critically.

In order to uncover the meaning and bias underlying the news media, a certain method is needed. According to Fairclough, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of critical social science that aims to explain the issues that people face in specific social contexts and provide resources that people can use to address and resolve those issues (Amoussou & Allagbe, 2018). "Discourse Analysis" is an applied linguistics field that examines the use of language in interactions between speaker and listener or writer and reader (Anwar et al., 2020). Lubis et al., (2023), said that critical discourse analysis has a tendency to be aware of society's language ideology. Understanding the relationship between language and ideology in media discourse allows us to examine more closely the impact and consequences of mass media influence on the formation of public opinion and understanding.

Currently, the conflict between Israel and Palestine is the main focus of online news. According to Zghoul (2022), the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has two main narratives, namely the return of the Jews to their ancestral land and the creation of Israel in 1948 as an Israeli narrative, as well as the expulsion and exile of Palestinians, which is called the "Nakba" from the Palestinian side of the narrative. The conflict between the two has been going on for decades and is known globally, this conflict has attracted world attention and has been widely discussed. Long-standing historical, sociocultural, and religious divides between the two countries are the foundation of the complex Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Rizova & Panayotova, 2021). Therefore, the media raised it as the main news because it had prominent

news value, and also because this conflict was not an ordinary incident, this conflict claimed many victims, because of the great interest shown by many audiences and the emotional bond felt by readers and viewers.

However, each media has its perspective in presenting news about this conflict to the public which will influence their perspective. As said by Roy (2012), one of the powerful institutions that could influence social identity, knowledge, beliefs, and values is media companies. This is in line with the research objective which aims to represent the media about the Israeli and Palestinian conflict.

### ***1.1. Research question***

The media plays a significant role in shaping public perceptions of international conflicts. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has been going on for generations, is framed differently across the international media. Two such powerful news sources are Al Jazeera and BBC News; both are influential sources, each reflecting different regional and cultural perspectives. How these two outlets represent the conflict can help uncover the impact of language and framing on public perception. This brings the authors to the main research question: How was the Israeli-Palestinian conflict represented in Al-Jazeera News and BBC News?

### ***1.2. Theoretical framework***

#### ***1.2.1. Critical discourse analysis***

Wodak and Meyer (2015) argued that the terms Critical Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are frequently used interchangeably. However, CDA is now preferred to the terms formerly known as CL. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an analytical approach that examines how language works in social and political contexts to establish, maintain, or challenge power and ideology. Thus, this method is highly applicable for studying the relationship between language and power, particularly when examining discourse in the media, politics, and educational settings. In conclusion, CDA is an analytical approach that studies how language influences power and ideology in social and political contexts, especially in media, politics, and education.

Fairclough (1992), coined the term 'critical' to describe the discovery of hidden relationships and causal factors. For example, offering support to people who may be negatively impacted by change. In this case, we need to avoid viewing discursive change as a linear, top-down process. Because the structure of texts and the order of discourse are still debated, people may accept or reject changes coming from above or they may choose to comply with them (Fairclough, 1992). To sum up, being "critical" entails exposing hidden details and supporting those who are negatively impacted by change. People can reject, adjust to, or accept changes in discourse; it is not a straightforward top-down process. Instead, there is conflict in the way texts and discourse are structured.

According to Van Dijk (2001), critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a subfield of discourse analysis research that focuses on how language and discourse in social and political contexts are used to enact, reproduce, and resist social power abuse, dominance, and inequality. Critical discourse analysts take a clear stance in their quest to comprehend, reveal, and ultimately combat social inequality through such dissident research.

Wodak and Meyer (2015), stated that CDA is concerned with examining the power dynamics of dominance, discrimination, and control as they are expressed in language, both in transparent and opaque structural relationships. In other words, CDA aims to critically investigate social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized, and so on through language use or discourse.

In summary, it should be noted that while Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is currently preferred, Critical Linguistics (CL) and CDA are frequently used interchangeably. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) method looks at how language functions in social and political contexts to create, uphold, or subvert power and ideology. It is particularly pertinent to the media, politics, and educational fields.

### ***1.2.2. Critical discourse analysis of Norman Fairclough***

From the explanation above, CDA can be interpreted as a method that looks at how language functions in a social and political context to create, uphold, or subvert power and ideology. Fairclough (2010), viewed discourse practices as mediating the relationship between texts and social practices: on the one hand, the processes of text production and interpretation are shaped by and help shape the nature of social practices; on the other hand, the production process forms and leaves 'traces' in the text, and the interpretation process operates based on 'gestures' in the text. Thus, the relationship between text and social practice is dynamic and influences each other. Then, according to Fairclough (2010), discourse analysis has three dimensions or aspects, the first is spoken or written language texts, the second is an example of discourse practice involving the production and interpretation of texts, and the third is part of social practice.

#### ***1.2.2.1. Text (Description)***

Fairclough (2015) defined description as a stage related to the formal properties of a text, such as vocabulary, grammar, coherence and structure. Rubing and Sandaran (2023), stated that vocabulary is crucial in conveying ideology because it highlights the metaphors and meanings in a text. Grammar checks sentences for their relevance and themes, while coherence shows how well the parts of a text fit together. In English grammar, there are nine parts of speech, namely, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, articles, and interjections (Suhrob & Vasila, 2022).

In the description stage of this study, the representation of actors in each media would be analyzed as seen from their vocabulary and pronouns which are part of grammar. Eijck and

Kamp in Sari and Pranoto's article stated that representation in discourse is an intention to convey another meaning from a natural language text that is further from the pure reality of the text (Sari & Pranoto, 2021). This refers to the depiction of social practices by actors through a text (Evayani & Rido, 2019). Sari and Pranoto (2021), concluded that representation can arise because there is always a tendency for newspaper publishing companies for problems, groups, or certain parties related to it, and that has become something that cannot be avoided.

Then the lexical choice that contains bias from each media would also be analyzed. The Oxford Dictionary defines bias as a strong feeling in favor of or against one group of people, or one side in an argument, and it is often not based on fair judgment. Lexical and vocabulary are the same thing, Crystal (2008), stated that lexical refers to the vocabulary of a language. A similar definition was also put forward by Brown and Miller (2013), that lexical is the vocabulary of a language and its study. Rubing and Sandaran (2023) noted that journalists can choose their lexical when creating news, and that lexical choice reflects individual preferences. Then, the use of contrastive conjunctions which indicate opposite sentences and pronouns which are part of grammar would also be examined. According to Winasis (2022), the types of contrastive conjunctions are as follows, though, although, even though, yet, but, however, despite, etc.

#### ***1.2.2.2. Discourse practice (Interpretation)***

Fairclough (2015), defined interpretation as the study of the relationship between text and interaction, with the text being viewed as both a resource and the end result of a production process. The relationship between the discourse and its creation and consumption should be interpreted during the interpretation stage. Handayani et al. (2018), stated that at this stage, discourse is not only seen as text, but also as discursive practice. This means that apart from analyzing language features and text structure, other factors such as speech acts and intertextuality also need to be considered. In short, in the analysis of the meso-structural dimension, discourse processing is interpreted, including the process of disseminating and using discourse, media profiles, editorial procedures, and the way media workers produce texts.

#### ***1.2.2.3. Socio-cultural practice (Explanation)***

Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context, specifically the social determination of production and interpretation processes, as well as their social consequences (Fairclough, 2015). Sociocultural practices describe the forces that exist in society to interpret and spread dominant ideologies to society (Handayani, et al., 2022). Norman Fairclough created three levels of analysis in Sociocultural Practice, namely situational, institutional, and social.

This explanation stage is associated with the dimension "sociocultural practice," or more specifically, "discourse as social practice." In order to completely explain the relationship

between the social-cultural context and the creation and consumption of texts, elements like ideology or power are taken into consideration at this point. The three steps are actually closely related to one another; none of them is necessary. By combining the three steps one after the other, the analysis of the news discourse can reveal hidden knowledge about linguistic, intertextual, and social factors. Three steps of analysis based on Fairclough's theory could be seen in the picture below.

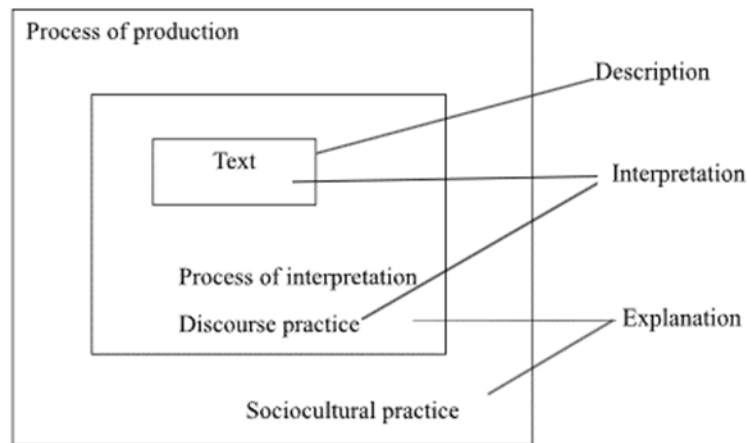


Figure 1. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

Numerous research has been done on specific representations; one such study looked into how the government was portrayed in *The Jakarta Post* and was carried out by Sari and Pranoto (2021). The findings of this study showed that *The Jakarta Post* supported the protesters while portraying the government negatively. Text analysis shows that *The Jakarta Post* emphasized President Jokowi's important role in passing, delaying, and rejecting the bill. In discourse practice, *The Jakarta Post* often used indirect sentences to defend its point of view and did not fully represent the truth. In socio-cultural practice, it was revealed that chaos occurred because several community demands were not responded to by the government.

Heni and Chandra (2022) examined how Fox News (American) and Detik.Com (Indonesian) report on Palestinian-Israeli conflicts. The data were collected from four Fox News and Detik.com news articles published from May 15 to May 31, 2021. The study's findings suggest that the two media's portrayals of the Israeli and Palestinian conflicts differ from one another. Articles on Fox News portray Palestine, and particularly Hamas, as terrorist organizations, and mention the US government's support for Israel. On the other hand, Israel is portrayed as the attacker and Palestine as the victim in articles on Detik.com.

Amer (2022) examined how the BBC and the New York Times reported on Israel's assault on Gaza in May 2021. Amer looked at the primary subjects and linguistic devices used by the two powerful media outlets to characterize Israeli and Palestinian actors and their violent

acts, as well as how this coverage helps to shape a specific ideological interpretation of the events. Through the conflation of two main topics in their representation of the Israeli onslaught on Gaza, the results demonstrate that the two media outlets primarily served Israel's interests and justifications at the expense of the Palestinian narrative and rights.

## **2. Method**

In this study, the authors used a qualitative descriptive study with a CDA approach. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative methods use text and image data, have distinct steps in data analysis, and employ a variety of designs. Descriptive qualitative is relevant to CDA theory because it thoroughly describes and explains the content of the texts, as well as the relationship between the texts and the context or discourse. The data for this study were words and sentences that represent how Al Jazeera News and BBC News reported on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The authors chose Al Jazeera News and BBC News because of their global influence and different perspectives. Al Jazeera represents a Middle Eastern view, while the BBC offers a Western perspective. Both media outlets extensively report on the Palestine-Israel conflict, thus enabling analysis of how news framing and cultural context shape public perception.

Data collection was carried out using non-participant observation methods and note-taking techniques to systematically analyze media coverage of the October 7 attacks in Israel. This method allowed the authors to observe how events were conveyed without directly influencing their content. By not being involved in the production of the news, the authors were able to maintain objectivity and focus on how the media framed the conflict.

The article selection procedure ensured that the articles matched the research topic. First, the authors searched for articles from the Al Jazeera and BBC News websites on the October 7 attack incident falling within the time frame of October 2023 to January 2024. This time frame is likely the best representative of the assault's preliminary and evolving media coverage. The authors then compiled and recorded the headlines and content of each article, ensuring they noted relevant information. The procedure resulted in a fairly organized and transparent record for further examination by Fairclough's three-dimensional model in analyzing the data. Fairclough's three-dimensional model looks into language, discourse, and social context, helping one to develop how public understanding would be shaped through contemporary framing.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### ***3.1. Finding***

In this research, the authors used 2 news articles, the first article was taken from Al Jazeera English News and the second article was taken from BBC News. All of the taken articles have related topics, namely the Palestinian and Israeli conflict, specifically on the October 7 Attack in Israel. The title of the selected news article can be seen as follows.

Table 1. Headlines of the news articles

No	Titles	Media
1.	Hamas says October 7 attack was a 'necessary step', admits to 'some faults'	Al Jazeera News
2.	Hamas attack shocks Israel, but what comes next?	BBC News

### 3.1.1. Textual analysis description

#### 3.1.1.1. Actor representation

There was a difference in actor representation between online news articles on Al Jazeera and the BBC. In a BBC online news article, Hamas was the actor responsible for the October 7 attacks in Israel and also carried out attacks on Israeli civilians. This can be seen from the following data.

##### Data 1

*They have held Israeli towns and army posts under siege for hours, killed many people and taken away an unknown number of Israeli civilians and soldiers to hold as hostages in Gaza. (BBC News)*

##### Data 2

*"They were going tree by tree and shooting everywhere. From two sides and I saw people were dying all around." (BBC News)*

The pronoun 'they' in the data above refers to the Hamas group. As can be seen from the two data from BBC News above, Hamas was described as a powerful perpetrator of attacks because it is capable of killing, attacking trees, and taking Israeli civilians and soldiers' hostage. Meanwhile, Israeli civilians and soldiers are the victims.

##### Data 3

*With this latest operation, Hamas seems keen to burnish its credentials once again as a militant organisation. Its charter remains **committed** to the destruction of Israel. (BBC News)*

The use of the word 'committed', which means being willing to work hard and give time and energy to something according to the Oxford dictionary, gives the picture that Hamas was an active actor as a militant organization that really wants Israel's destruction. From these data it can be seen that in the BBC News report, the actor's representation was directed at Hamas. Hamas is described as a violent militant group that can kill and shoot Israeli civilians, and also hopes for Israel's destruction. Meanwhile, the Israeli side is portrayed as the victim here.



Unlike BBC News, Al Jazeera has a different representation of actors. In an Al Jazeera online news article, Hamas said that carrying out attacks on Israel was their response to all Israeli conspiracies against the Palestinian people. According to the Oxford dictionary, the word conspiracy itself means a secret plan by a group of people to do something dangerous or illegal. This can be seen from the following data.

Data 4

*...Hamas said it was “a necessary step and a normal response to confront all Israeli **conspiracies** against the Palestinian people”. (Al Jazeera News)*

Data 5

*The group said that avoiding harming civilians “is a **religious and moral commitment**” by fighters of Hamas’s armed wing, the *Qassam Brigades*. (Al Jazeera News)*

Data 6

*“Many Israelis were killed by the **Israeli army and police** due to their confusion,” it added. (Al Jazeera News)*

From data 5 and 6 it can be seen that Hamas denies attacking and harming Israeli civilians because this is contrary to its religious and moral commitments. Hamas also said that the parties responsible for the killing of Israeli citizens were the Israeli army and police themselves.

It could be concluded that in the Al Jazeera news article the actor responsible for the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7 was Israel. It is said that Hamas has only responded to Israeli conspiracies so far, so here it is depicted that the victims are Palestinians who have been suffering for years. The statement that there was confusion on the part of the Israeli police and army added that the party responsible for the killing of Israeli civilians was the Israeli police and army themselves.

### **3.1.1.2. The use of contrastive conjunction**

Contrastive conjunctions are conjunctions that connect two opposite sentences. This means that the relationship between the first and second sentences is different or contradictory. The authors found the use of contrastive conjunctions in Al Jazeera online news articles. Only one contrastive conjunction was found as follows.

Data 7

*The Palestinian group Hamas has said there were “faults” in the October 7 attack it led on southern Israel, **but** claimed its fighters only targeted Israeli soldiers and people carrying weapons. (Al Jazeera News)*

The contrasting conjunction “but” here indicates that, although Hamas admitted responsibility for the attack, they claimed that their targets were only Israeli soldiers and people carrying weapons. This contrasts with Hamas's admission of guilt and claims that those who should have been the targets of attacks were not civilians but Israeli soldiers and people carrying weapons. In a BBC News online news article, the authors also found the uses of contrastive conjunctions. This can be seen as follows.

Data 8

*Tensions had recently risen in the Gaza Strip, **but** the conventional wisdom was that neither Hamas, the Islamist group which governs there, nor Israel wanted an escalation. **Instead**, Hamas had been planning a sophisticated, coordinated operation. (BBC News)*

The contrastive conjunction “but” highlights the contradiction between rising tensions and the view that neither side desires escalation. In the second sentence, the use of the word “instead” adds contrast by stating that Hamas had a different plan than expected, because Hamas instead planned a coordinated operation.

### 3.1.1.3. Lexical choice

From the two selected articles, the authors found that several lexical choices expressed the bias of news media. A more detailed explanation can be seen as follows.

#### *The Word ‘Fighters’*

In Al Jazeera News, Hamas is often equated with the word ‘fighters’. According to the Cambridge dictionary, the word ‘fighter’ means someone who fights in a fight or physical fight against an opponent, continues to try hard, and does not give up easily when faced with difficult circumstances. From this explanation, it can be seen that in Al Jazeera's view, Hamas is viewed positively, they are depicted as fighters who do not give up easily even though the circumstances are difficult. This can be seen from the following data.

Data 9

*Israeli authorities have accused Hamas **fighters** of committing war crimes during the attack, including torture, rape and mutilation. Hamas has strongly rejected allegations of sexual violence and or mutilation. (Al Jazeera News)*

#### *The Words ‘Militant’ and ‘Terrorist’*

In BBC News, Hamas is often compared with the word ‘militant’. The word militant itself has a negative meaning, according to the Oxford dictionary ‘militant’ means someone who uses, or is willing to use, violence or strong pressure to achieve their goals, especially to achieve social or political change.

Data 10

*Speaking at the start of the offensive, the shadowy Hamas **militant** commander, Mohammed Deif called on Palestinians and other Arabs to join the action to "sweep away the [Israeli] occupation". (BBC News)*

There is also the word 'terrorist' which has a negative meaning. According to the Cambridge dictionary the word 'terrorist' means someone who uses acts of violence, or threats of acts of violence, for political purposes. Thus, Hamas is depicted as a group that carries out violence and threats.

Data 11

*"He wrote to me that the **terrorists** are in the shelter, I see his picture on Telegram from inside Gaza. I still hear bursts of gunfire," she said. (BBC News)*

*The Word 'Judaization'*

There is the word 'judaization' in an Al Jazeera news article. Judaization itself is a policy carried out by the Israeli government to expel non-Jewish religious influence in Jerusalem in order to strengthen Israel's claim to the area (Alquds Jerusalem, 2019). The use of the term "Judaization" carries negative connotations and suggests biased views criticizing Israeli policies.

Data 12

*The report also listed the reasons that led to the attack, citing Israel's campaign of settlements' construction "and **Judaization** of the Palestinian lands in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem", and the killing of thousands of Palestinian civilians from 2000 until this year. (Al Jazeera News)*

The data above also explained that the reason Hamas carried out the attack was in retaliation for the Judaization and murder of Palestinian civilians that had occurred for decades. It can be seen that Israel is portrayed as the guilty one here.

*The Word 'Awful'*

BBC News used the word 'awful' to describe Hamas' attacks on Israel. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, 'awful' means very bad or unpleasant. The word "awful" gives the impression that the incident was so terrible and tragic that it can increase sympathy for the victims on the Israeli side. This can be seen from the following data.

Data 13

*The **awful** drama has played out live on social and mainstream media. (BBC News)*

### **3.1.2. Discourse practice analysis (Interpretation)**

*Al Jazeera English News*

One of the news articles the authors used was entitled " Hamas says October 7 attack was a 'necessary step', admits to 'some faults'", published by Al Jazeera English News and released on January 21, 2024. This international news article discusses conflict and war, reaching a global readership interested in international news and human rights. The purpose of this article was to justify the attacks carried out by Hamas, asserting that they were a normal response to Israel's actions against the Palestinian people. The audience's understanding was influenced by their educational background and political views. In compiling its text, Al Jazeera referred to official Hamas reports, statistical data from the Israeli government, as well as human rights reports.

Al Jazeera's mission is to produce programs that have a journalistic feel and are free from government interference (Powers, 2012). With a wide reach throughout the world and a mission free from government interference, Al Jazeera can become a media that influences public opinion. This can happen because media that does not side with the government is considered more credible and trusted by the public.

#### *BBC News*

The second news article that the authors used in this research was entitled " Hamas attack shocks Israel, but what comes next?". This news article was written by Yolanda Knell and released on 8 October 2023 on the BBC website. This news article examined the long-standing conflict between Israel and Hamas, with particular emphasis on the surprise and intensity of recent attacks. This article could be reached by global readers, especially aimed at readers who are interested or involved in the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The narrative structure and choice of quotations in this article may influence readers' perceptions, potentially generating sympathy for Israel's victims and concern over security failures. Considering that the BBC is the world's leading public service and has a very wide audience reach, there is a big possibility that BBC News can influence public opinion.

### **3.1.3. Sociocultural practice analysis (Explanation)**

#### **3.1.3.1. Situational context**

##### *Al Jazeera English News*

In the news article entitled " Hamas says October 7 attack was a 'necessary step', admits to 'some faults'" the situation that can be seen is the attack carried out by Hamas on October 7, which they called Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, targeting communities along Israel's southern fence with Gaza. The impact of this attack was that more than 1,139 people were killed, most of them civilians, and around 240 others were taken prisoner. Hamas claimed that the attack was a response to an Israeli conspiracy against the Palestinian people, while Israel accuses Hamas of committing war crimes in the attack. Israel responded by bombing Gaza killing more than 25,000 people, most of them women and children according to the Palestinian authority.

*BBC News*

Situational context explains how the immediate circumstances surrounding the event occurred. In a news article entitled " Hamas attack shocks Israel, but what comes next?", the situation describes a sudden attack by Hamas against Israel on Saturday morning where the previous night many Israelis had gathered to party in the fields near Gaza. This attack launched rockets that reached Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, as well as the infiltration of Palestinian fighters into the southern region of Israel by sea, land and air. It also explained the chaos that occurred on the ground, including attacks on civilians and Israeli military forces, then capturing them as hostages and how the Israeli military responded.

**3.1.3.2. Institutional context***Al Jazeera English News*

In an institutional context, a news article from Al Jazeera English News, Hamas as the ruler of Gaza released a report trying to explain that their attack was a necessary step to counter Israel's actions against Palestine so far. This news also shows how the Israeli government responded with great military force, and accused Hamas of committing atrocities in the attack. Al Jazeera also reported official statistics on casualties in Israel. Over the Israeli attacks the Palestinian authorities and human rights groups accused Israel of committing war crimes in its bombings. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has clearly stated his rejection of an independent Palestinian state, further complicating the dynamics of the conflict.

*BBC News*

In an institutional context, this news article from BBC News highlights how Hamas played a major role in planning this coordinated operation, and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which responded by reinforcing troops, conducting airstrikes and planning ground operations. In this news article the Israeli government and its security agencies are also asked why this attack was not detected sooner and how the response was not fast enough. Additionally, there is also an important role that social and mainstream media play in broadcasting these events live.

**3.1.3.3. Social context***Al Jazeera English News*

The social context shows how the narratives formed by both parties' influence society's norms, values and perceptions. In an Al Jazeera news article, Hamas attempted to influence perceptions by stating that the main target of their attacks was the Israeli military and that if there were civilian casualties, they occurred accidentally or due to chaos. Palestinians are experiencing serious difficulties, both in access to basic needs and health services, as well as freedom of movement, caused by Israel's 17-year blockade on Gaza.

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*BBC News*

The social context in this text shows Hamas' sudden attack on Israel on Saturday morning which caused trauma and fear among Israeli civilians. Many civilians were caught in the attack and panicked while seeking shelter. This is because the slow response by Israeli security forces has sparked public dissatisfaction and deepened fears about the safety of families in the future. This incident has deepened the fears of Israeli citizens who have to face the possibility of losing their loved ones due to the prolonged conflict.

### **3.2. Discussion**

#### **3.2.1. Textual (Description)**

The representation of actors in both media was conveyed differently. Eijck and Kamp argued that representation in discourse aims to convey meaning beyond the actual reality of the text (Sari & Pranoto, 2021). Al-Jazeera tended to depict Palestinians as victims and Israeli actions as aggressive, while the BBC represented Hamas as the aggressor and Israelis as victims. This is in line with the findings of Heni and Chandra (2022), who observed similar biases in Fox News and Detik.com.

Analysis of contrastive conjunctions and lexical choices in selected news articles from Al Jazeera and BBC News reveals how these linguistic elements reflect each media outlet's perspective and ideological bias. According to Winasis (2022), the types of contrastive conjunctions are as follows, though, although, even though, yet, but, however, despite, in spite of, even so, on the contrary, whereas, nevertheless, in contrast. In the Al Jazeera article, "but" contrasts Hamas' responsibility for the October 7 attacks with their claim that they only targeted soldiers and armed individuals. In the BBC News article, "but" contrasts the escalation of tensions in Gaza with the belief that neither side wanted an escalation, and "on the contrary" reveals Hamas' coordinated planning, highlighting that Hamas had a different plan than expected.

The lexical choices made by journalists can reveal underlying biases and perspectives, as they reflect the language used to describe actors and events. Rubing and Sandaran (2023), stated that vocabulary is very important in conveying ideology because it highlights metaphors and meanings in a text. Al Jazeera used positive lexical choices for Hamas and critical lexical choices for Israeli actions, in contrast to BBC News which provided a negative depiction of Hamas and sympathetic language towards Israeli victims. This finding is in line with the theory discussed in the literature review by Wodak and Meyer (2015), which highlights the aims of CDA is to examine power dynamics and public perceptions in media discourse through language used.

#### **3.2.2. Discourse practice (Interpretation)**

Fairclough (2015) defined interpretation as the study of the relationship between text and interaction, with text seen as a resource and outcome of a production process. The

relationship between discourse and its creation and consumption must be interpreted during the interpretation stage.

According to Handayani et al. (2018), discourse should be seen as a discursive practice and text. As seen in the analysis of this study, Al-Jazeera often emphasizes the humanitarian impact of the conflict and highlights the Palestinian narrative in its discourse practices. On the other side, the BBC's discourse practices aim to influence public opinion by increasing sympathy for Israeli victims and emphasizing security issues. This is in line with research by Amer (2022), who found that large media such as the BBC have the power to influence viewers' ideological perceptions of an event through the way they cover it.

### ***3.2.3. Socio-cultural practice (Explanation)***

According to Handayani et al. (2022), socio-cultural practices illustrate the power that exists in society to interpret and disseminate dominant ideologies to the public. Thus, both media outlets used their narratives to reinforce and disseminate their ideological stances and influence public opinion accordingly. BBC News' depiction of Hamas as a ruthless aggressor tended to foster the perception that Israelis are victims, and therefore deserving of international sympathy and support. This is in line with broader Western political views that often support Israel in the conflict. In contrast, Al Jazeera's narrative sought to generate empathy for Palestinians by portraying Hamas' actions as a justified response to Israeli oppression. This perspective resonates with people in the Arab world and those critical of Israeli policies, potentially fostering solidarity with the Palestinian cause and criticism of Israeli actions.

## **4. Conclusion**

This research aims to find how each media represents the conflict between Palestine and Israel, especially the attack on October 7 in Israel. Then summarizes the research findings and discussion, and provides recommendations for future research based on an analysis of the representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Al Jazeera English News and BBC News.

According to BBC News, the attacks were carried out by Hamas, describing civilians and soldiers as the victims of the attack. Words like "militant" and "terrorist" attached an evil connotation to the organization, extended by "but" and "instead," which brought out unexpectedness and disruption in the events. Al Jazeera, on the contrary, showed Hamas as responding to Israeli actions and referred to them as "fighters," which beautifies the image of the movement, while the word "but" describes their argument that their targets are military personnel rather than civilians, while civilian casualties were attributed to the Israeli army and police. These different reports tell us how media framing could create a perception of conflict. In this regard, the research also brings out an important aspect of media bias as well

as target audiences in the way such issues indelibly seep into the public conception of world phenomena.

In conclusion, Al Jazeera and BBC News represent the Israeli-Palestinian conflict differently. BBC News represents Hamas as the main actor in the October 7 attacks in Israel and Israeli citizens and soldiers are portrayed as victims. Al Jazeera, on the other hand, portrayed Hamas as responding to an Israeli conspiracy against Palestinians, emphasizing a moral commitment to avoid civilian harm and blaming the Israeli army and police for civilian casualties. Future research could build on these findings by exploring how media portrayals of a conflict influence public perceptions and by analyzing a wider range of media outlets. Additionally, the limitations of this study, such as its focus on only two news organizations and a specific time period, could be addressed to provide a more complete picture of media bias and how news is presented. By understanding how media frames conflicts, researchers can gain a deeper insight into the relationship between media, public opinion, and international dynamics.

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