

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Media

The Israeli Palestinian Crisis in two American Mainstream Newspapers between October
2023 and September 2024

Salla Jalkanen

Master's Thesis

Language Specialist Degree Programme, Department of English

School of Languages and Translation Studies

Faculty of Humanities

University of Turku

April 2025

The originality of this thesis has been checked in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system using the Turnitin Originality Check service.

Master's Thesis

Language Specialist Degree Programme, Department of English

Salla Jalkanen

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Media: The Israeli Palestinian Crisis in Two American Mainstream Newspapers Between October 2023 and September 2024

Number of pages: 69 pages, 9 pages in appendices

This thesis studies the discourse on the Israeli Palestinian crisis for a year after the October 7th attacks by the Palestinian Hamas-organization on Israel in two major US online newspapers. The study was conducted by using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis to see how the current conflict in Gaza is represented in American newspapers. The aim of the study is to find out what kind of bias is present in the news, how the liberal and conservative sources differ in this sense and if attitudes have shifted during the year following the start of the current conflict in Gaza.

A total of 22 news articles were retrieved from the online versions The New York Times and The New York Post. The analysis was done by reading the articles and applying methods of Three-Dimensional Framework in accordance with the three dimensions of discourse introduced by Fairclough: texts, interaction and social context. Accordingly, the three stages of the analysis were description, interpretation and explanation. For the description stage, words used for Palestinians and Israelis and the actions taken by each side were analyzed. Modality was the grammatical point that was examined. In the interpretation stage, the intertextuality was analyzed to reveal what kind of news sources each newspaper used. In the final stage, explanation, the results of the first two were put in their larger social context to explain them.

The analysis of wording and intertextuality revealed that The New York Post, a conservative-leaning newspaper, reported from a more Israel-positive point of than The New York Times, a liberal-leaning newspaper, which at times was more critical of Israel. No diachronic changes in the attitudes were found in the research. The study concludes that newspapers have the power to shape the public opinion on groups of people, which is why they should be mindful of how they represent especially oppressed groups.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Studies, critical linguistics, Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model, discourse analysis, news discourse, newspapers, Palestine, Israel

Table of contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Background	7
2.1	Theoretical Background	7
2.1.1	CDA	7
2.1.2	News Media Discourse	12
2.1.3	Previous Research on CDA and News	13
2.2	Israeli Palestinian Background	16
2.2.1	History	17
2.2.2	Current Situation	20
2.3	U.S Newspapers	24
2.3.1	The New York Times	24
2.3.2	The New York Post	25
3	Materials and Methods	26
3.1	Materials	26
3.2	Methods	27
4	Description	30
4.1	Wording	30
4.2	Grammar	39
5	Discussion	42
5.1	Interpretation	42
5.2	Explanation	45
6	Conclusion	58
	References	60
	Primary Sources	60
	Secondary Sources	62
	Appendices	70
	Appendix 1. Abbreviations and Tables	70
	Appendix 2. Finnish Summary	72

1 Introduction

The Israeli Palestinian crisis has been increasingly reported on the news after the October 7th attacks on Israel by the Palestinian Hamas organization in 2023. The United States, a long-time ally of Israel, has been heavily involved in the retaliation attacks and collective punishment Israel has launched on the population Gaza since then. For example, the President of the United States at the time, Joe Biden, has vowed his unwavering support for Israel and in August 2024, the US approved of a weapons deal worth 20 billion US dollars with Israel. The US has also been tightly involved in ceasefire negotiations between Israel and Hamas. This close relationship between Israel and the US that has been present since the foundation of the former is why this thesis focuses specifically on American newspaper reporting.

While the current conflict in Gaza has been on the news especially since October 7th 2023, the Israel Palestine crisis is much older than that, and is by no means a conflict between two equal opponents: Israel's military power is significantly larger than that of Hamas (Brennan 2023), which was formed as a resistance movement in response to the Israeli occupation (Pearlman 2011, 101). Furthermore, the relationship between the two nations is largely defined by systems of oppression, such as apartheid. Therefore, the situation is built on inherently unequal power relations, which is why Critical Discourse Analysis was chosen as the larger framework for this thesis. The history and current situation between the two nations involved shall be introduced more in depth and detail later, along with a brief explanation of the governance of each state.

Critical Discourse Analysis studies the inseparable relationship between power and discourse (Fairclough 2002; Wodak 2001a). This thesis studies the language used in American liberal and conservative newspapers and aims to uncover bias in the reporting through implicit and explicit stance and attitude expressed in the language, and to see if and how it has changed in the course of the twelve months since Hamas launched its attack on Israel. While I acknowledge, that the conflict between Palestinians and the state of Israel did not suddenly start with the October 7th attack, in this thesis I choose to focus on the news reporting following this specific event due to its current significance. By doing so, this thesis also examines how the events following October 2023 have affected the discourse surrounding the Palestinian people, their resistance against Israel and the collective punishment of them on behalf of Israel, as well as if attitudes have since shifted, while keeping in mind the historical

context of the conflict and the power imbalance inherent to it. Using Critical Discourse Analysis, more specifically Fairclough's (1989) Three-Dimensional Framework, the three research questions I aim to answer are:

1. What kind of political stance and attitude is explicit or implicit in the language used by American news?
2. How do these stances and attitudes differ between conservative and liberal sources included in the dataset?
3. How have these stances and attitudes changed in the eleven months following the October 7th attack?

In this context, 'stance' refers to the ideological position that a writer takes in relation to their propositions (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 33). The stance in a text may be that of the individual writer, or it may represent the stance of the institution or group they write for, in this context, the newspapers (ibid.). In this thesis, to reveal bias and attitude, the textual features of wording and grammar, as well as intertextuality will be analysed and then discussed and explained in their larger social context. The hypothesis is that due to the alliance between Israel and the United States, a pro-Israel stance will be present in the conservative American news sources. It is also expected that especially in the more liberal sources, a more neutral, or even Israel-critical stance is on the rise, since Israel has been the target of a lot of international criticism. This is due to its army killing civilians, including children, in large numbers and preventing humanitarian aid from entering the Gaza strip, as reported for example by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (Reuters 2024).

The newspapers chosen as primary sources for the data are The New York Times and The New York Post. By focusing on the textual elements and intertextuality of the articles, it is to be expected that The New York Post as a conservative news source reports from the point of view of Israel, using words and grammar where Palestinians are aggressors, while the Palestinian point of view is expected to be more salient in The New York Times reporting. In CDA, discourse shapes perceptions, which is why it is important to reveal and criticize biased news discourse, as they have the power to influence public opinions on groups of people. The newspapers and how they were chosen for analysis shall be introduced better in subsequent chapters.

The thesis is structured as follows: first, in the background section, theoretical background of the thesis shall be introduced, along with previous research conducted on similar topics. Brief introductions on the history and current situation in Palestine will also be provided, as well as very brief explanation of the ways American news media operate, and the newspapers analyzed in this thesis. The materials and methods and the framework used for the research will be introduced in section 3.1 and 3.2, after which the results will be presented and discussed in sections 4. and 5. Conclusions will then be drawn in the final section of this thesis.

For research integrity reasons, it should be noted that the author is and has long been a supporter of the Palestinian liberation and critical of the state of Israel, which in turn affects the point of view through which the topic is discussed in this thesis. However, despite being strongly critical of Israel, which is classified as a Jewish nation-state (Fuchs and Navot 2023), the author does not subscribe to any antisemitic ideologies. Any critical viewpoints expressed in this thesis are aimed at the reporting on the conflict as well as at the involved governments, and not at any ethnicities, nationalities or religions, or the people representing them for that matter. Furthermore, the purpose of this thesis is not to attack specific journalists or other people, or excuse war crimes and civil casualties by either side, and such events are not the main focus of this study, but shall nevertheless be discussed, when needed, with dignity. Lastly, the terminology used about this topic can be problematic in nature. While this study does not claim to be completely objective, as such is not entirely possible, the author does not want to play into any sort of agenda that ignores the effect of decades of settler-colonialism, apartheid, white supremacy and other intersecting forms of oppression that have shaped the volatile nature of Israeli Palestinian relations.

2 Background

In section 2.1, the theoretical background used for the thesis will be introduced, along with some theory related to news media discourse specifically, as well as some earlier CDA studies pertaining to CDA on newspapers. In 2.2, the history and current situation of the Israeli Palestinian crisis will be explained to further understand the context of this thesis. Finally, in section 2.3, brief introductions into the US news media and the two newspapers analyzed in this thesis will be given.

2.1 Theoretical Background

This section will introduce the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis, news discourse and some earlier, related studies.

2.1.1 CDA

This subsection delves more into the theory and practice of Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter CDA). First, some key concepts will be introduced. CDA has evolved from Critical Linguistics, which was developed in the 1970s (Paniagua et al. 2007, 5) but they are also often used interchangeably (Wodak 2001a, 1). Nowadays, Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) is also used. It has its roots in classical rhetoric, sociolinguistics and text-linguistics, as well as pragmatics and applied linguistics (Weiss and Wodak 2003, 11; Wodak 2001a, 3).

The term discourse can take several different definitions. One simple definition of it is used in their book on CDA by the Bloors: “all the phenomena of symbolic interaction and communication between people, usually through spoken or written language or visual representation” (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 1–2). In contrast, in some cases discourse can refer to spoken interaction alone, as indicated for example again by Bloor and Bloor (2007, 6) and Fairclough (2002, 3). However, Fairclough, too, offers a more common definition of discourse as “extended samples of either spoken or written language” (2002, 3). Fairclough (2002, 3) and the Bloors (2007, 7) both also state, that in some cases, discourse can also refer to communication in specific, often institutional contexts, such as legal discourse. However, for the purposes of this thesis, the definition of discourse as fundamentally all symbolic human interaction and communication, whether in spoken or written format, is the most fitting.

Discourse is often ideological in nature, and several researchers have introduced the idea of discourse being in fact a crucial component of ideology (Fairclough 2002, 30). Ideology can be defined as “meaning in the service of power” (Thompson 1990, 7). Pennycook writes that discourses can be understood as “akin to the concept of ideology” (1994, 127), to the extent that they are inherently “linked to power, embedded in social institutions, and produce ways of understanding” (ibid.). Therefore, everything can be understood as ideological.

To understand any particular discourse, we need to understand its context. The term context can take different meanings, but as stated by van Dijk, it refers generally to the “[social situation] of language use in general, or to the specific situation of a given (fragment of) text or talk” and in everyday discourse it most often refers to the political, geographical or historical situation or background (2009, 2). In his view, it may also be understood more specifically as pertaining to the verbal context when it comes to the study of language discourse, taking into account “preceding or following words, sentences, speech acts or turns within a discourse or conversation” (ibid.). This is also referred to as the co-text. On the other hand, in relation to language and discourse, context can also refer to the more general, context of language use, as in the social situation, or to the specific situation in time of the talk (or text) (ibid.). This thesis is concerned with both meanings of context in the field of linguistics.

As explained by Bloor and Bloor (2007, 5) language plays an integral role in influencing how we live and think, and according to Fairclough (2002, 1) language also plays a large role in social change. Further, Fairclough argues that discourse not only represents and reflects social entities and relations, but they also “construct or ‘constitute’ them” (2002, 3). CDA is concerned with phenomena related to language and social issues and is therefore “interested in the way in which language and discourse are used to achieve social goals and in part this use plays in social maintenance and change” (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 2) and, as stated by Timke, CDA “allows for a close reading of the nuances of language in targeted materials that communicate certain messages about a specific topic” (2023, 710). In addition, CDA is specifically concerned with “institutional, political, gender and media discourses [...] which testify to more or less overt relations of struggle and conflict” (Wodak 2001a, 2–3) and the concepts of power, history and ideology are indispensable in CDA. Discourse is therefore ideological and intrinsic of power, and CDA is interested in how it is used to achieve certain goals.

According to Weiss and Wodak (2003, 10), communicative actions, such as text or speech, i.e. discourse, can even reproduce systems, and therefore, consequentially, also have the potential to reproduce struggle and conflict. In other words, language holds power and can be used to uphold or challenge systems. According to Pennycook (1994, 121), Critical Discourse Analysts aim to go beyond linguistic description to try to explain and to show how social inequalities are reproduced and reflected in language and to therefore find ways to change the social inequalities they find through their work. According to Bloor and Bloor, the understanding that discourse is ingrained in power and control is in fact crucial in CDA (2007, 4). Therefore, critical discourse analysts must realize that discourse is not born in a vacuum and can be used to wield power and even create it. Furthermore, it is essential for critical discourse analysts to also acknowledge their own bias and position. This is further explained by Bloor and Bloor (ibid.), who state that as critical discourse analysts are not aiming for complete objectivity, as such is deemed impossible, they can often hold the same or similar beliefs as the participants of the discourse being analysed, which is why they are required to be aware and critical of their own position and roles in society in respect to the topic, and make it clear in their research. CDA was chosen as the framework for this thesis, because this research aims to uncover bias and, therefore, use of power in news media, and is concerned with systems of oppression and injustice.

People tend to become so used to structures, customs and events, that they do not find them to be out of the ordinary, and thus they become normalized (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 5). In other words, people might not question the status quo even in systems of oppression. Fairclough (2003, 14) explains that ideologies in text are often implicit suggestions, in other words, normalized. Therefore, ideological values can become the norm in texts, and so it is important for critical discourse analysts to try and look at these normalized customs, events and values from new perspectives and even be critical of them, especially in cases of suspected injustice. Van Dijk explains that new racism can be embedded everywhere, for example in everyday conversations and news articles, yet it is just as, if not more effective in marginalizing ethnic minorities as 'old' racism, because it is so normalized (2000, 34). Bloor and Bloor stress the importance of making strange, as in looking at events, customs and structures from an outside perspective, which is how we can question and challenge normalized customs and structures (2007, 5). This means, that thinking critically of even things we deem normal is essential if we want to fight systems of injustice such as racism. Further, Fairclough stresses the importance of a critical method when conducting discourse analysis, because "[r]elationships

between discursive, social and cultural change are typically not transparent for the people involved” (Fairclough 2002, 9), and being critical involves becoming aware of and unveiling these hidden connections for others to see as well.

In *Orientalism*, Said (1978) introduces *othering*, which refers to the way westerners express their views and understanding of the world outside the western world. This idea of *the other* creates a division between *us* and *them*, and the way these categories are classified is connected to the way power is divided in this manner (Sanz Sabido 2015, 202). Wodak also emphasizes “the discursive construction of ‘us’ and ‘them’ as the basic fundamentals of discourses of identity and difference” (2001b, 73). The idea of people outside the non-western world being somehow *other* distances western people from their lived experiences and therefore normalizes any injustice they may face. This becomes especially relevant in the context of this thesis, when we look at how violence against Palestinians is discussed in news media.

As established, CDA is generally concerned with social issues. Therefore, while this thesis focuses on the linguistic aspects of CDA, as mentioned earlier, the field is multidisciplinary in nature, as stated for example by Bloor and Bloor (2007, 2) and Weiss and Wodak (2003). Because of this, CDA shares some interests with other fields concerned with social structures and groups, as well as fields interested in human behaviour and cognition (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 2), but, as Fairclough (2002, 2) states, linguistics has gained more influence in social sciences and the boundaries between disciplines have become fuzzier in recent decades. According to Weiss and Wodak (2003, 12), as well as Wodak (2001a, 2), CDA has no single, unified theory or research methodology, and according to the Bloors, CDA draws a lot of its methods from sociolinguistics and literary theory, among other disciplines such as philosophy of language and communication, especially conversational maxims and speech act theory (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 2). Van Dijk stresses the importance of “a multidisciplinary theory of context as a basis for the theory of discourse, interaction and communication” (2009, 1). Related to CDA, Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is concerned with the social context in language and is interested in language beyond the micro level of words and sentences (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 2).

Shaping discourse shapes perceptions. One important aspect related to CDA is the different meanings a word can have in its context, and the significance of word choices writers make; connotation refers to the “emotional charge of [a] word” (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 129), while

denotation refers to a meaning close to the dictionary definition of it (ibid.). Especially relevant to this thesis is the Bloor's example of this with the words 'freedom fighter' and 'terrorist': people tend to assign labels, such as terrorist, to other people or events according to their personal bias (ibid.). For example, someone might be labelled as a terrorist by one group of people, while being described as a freedom fighter by another. It all lies in the position of the speaker, the framing of the situation and the societal and historical power structures. In the context of this thesis, Palestinians who resist the Israeli occupation are often collectively referred to as terrorists, while they themselves as well as the supporters of their resistance would be more inclined to refer to them as freedom fighters instead. Similarly, Fairclough (2002, 31) also explains, that words can change meanings depending on who uses them. In other words, one word can have a very different connotation if someone conservative uses it than when someone who holds liberal values does.

Framing is another central concept in CDA, because the way we look at the world, i.e. how things are framed, carries messages which then become normalized (Bloor and Bloor 2007, 13). However, *frames* can be culture-specific, and just like values, they vary a lot, and they affect the ways in which people view identity, authority and social groups (ibid.). As Fairclough explains, (2003, 4), in any representation, there is a choice of what to exclude and what to include, and what is brought to the foreground and what is left in the background. With these choices, it is possible to influence how events and people are represented in media, for example. Fiske (1994, 6–7) stresses the role of discourse, especially public discourse, in shaping not only perceptions, but for example political and social relations. Furthermore, he states the following:

The struggle over whose discourse events should be put into is part of the reality of the politics of everyday life. The discursive patterns of domination, subordination, and contestation are where the weaving of the social fabric is politicized. (Fiske 1994, 7)

This explains the politics and power inherently related to whose events we report on and believe. As such, it is the ones holding the power, who get to have their stories told, and it is the job of a critical discourse analyst to bring the stories of those under subordination, domination and contestation to light.

CDA has garnered some criticism, too. Alastair Pennycook criticizes CDA/S (1994; 2021), while acknowledging that it is useful for developing awareness of how discourse is connected to power and the importance of background knowledge and larger contexts. He argues that it

should be used with caution due to its reductionist and deterministic nature (1994, 133), and outlines Foucauldian approaches over Anglo-American approaches, as the latter are more akin to applied linguistics (1994, 127–133).

2.1.2 News Media Discourse

In his book on media and discourse, Norman Fairclough talks about the power of media in shaping knowledge, beliefs and values (2003, 2). Fairclough stresses the role mass media has in shaping the system, which it in turn operates in and is therefore also shaped by (2003, 12). He continues by raising concern for the power mass media holds by choosing how to represent different power relations of class, race and gender, and other social groups (Fairclough 2003, 12). In *Language and Power*, Fairclough (1989, 49) discusses the hidden nature of power relations in mass media, such as newspapers. One reason for this is one-sidedness of media discourse in comparison to face-to-face discourse. Another reason is, that in discourse tailored to the masses, the producers of the discourse cannot shape their contributions according to specific readers or listeners as they go (ibid.). Therefore, media producers exercise power over media consumers, since they have the power to decide what is discussed and how (Fairclough 1989, 50). Even though nearly all media outlets claim to be objective, Yu and Zheng state that “news report inevitably conveys its author’s and country’s ideology, which can be used to distort facts and influence readers’ attitudes towards certain social event and other countries” (2022, 349).

As was stated in the previous section, discourse is often understood as a crucial part of ideology. Furthermore, when it comes to media discourse, Fairclough explains that media language is ideological in nature and has particular ways in representing different social relations, identities and the world (2003, 12). In other words, journalists and media outlets have the power to choose how to present not only events, but also groups of people in their reporting, and in that way, shape attitudes towards, for example, marginalized groups of people. This in turn affects how said minorities might be treated in society. Fairclough, who also subscribes to Thompson’s idea of ideology as “meaning in the service of power” (1990, 7), explains that ideologies in texts are usually implicit assumptions – that is, they are not explicitly stated, but assumed true – and these assumptions can reproduce unequal power relations (Fairclough 2003, 14). Therefore, language used in news media has the power to make assumptions, which either maintain or challenge existing norms and power relations.

What is considered worth reporting is measured by *news values*, a term which can be defined as “properties of events or stories or as criteria/principles that are applied by news workers in order to select events or stories as news or to choose the structure and order of reporting” (Bednarek and Caple 2014, 136). These values, which too are ideological in nature and discursively constructed, are, according to Bednarek and Caple, *Proximity*, *Negativity*, *Eliteness* and *Superlativeness* (ibid.). In summary, *Proximity* refers to ‘nearness’ in the geographical or cultural sense, *Negativity* to the negative aspects of an event, such as death, conflict, disaster, accidents or its negative consequences, *Eliteness* to privileged status and *Superlativeness* means that the more an event ‘is something’, the more newsworthy it is (ibid.). For example, the context of the ongoing Israeli Palestinian conflict, the newsworthiness could be said to be measured mostly in *Negativity*; the death and destruction caused by it usually being the main focus of the reporting.

Fairclough (2003, 4), as well as Bednarek and Caple (2014, 139), discuss the importance of what is backgrounded and what is foregrounded in texts. News values can also be backgrounded and foregrounded. By choosing which news values are worth bringing to the foreground, journalists are exercising their power in creating certain representations. This is why, when analyzing news language, critical discourse analysts should identify how news values are constructed, construed or established through linguistic and other means, such as pictures (ibid.). Furthermore, *perspective* and *causality* are important: news outlets have the power to decide, whose perspective is told, and who is causing what to happen (Fairclough 1989, 51). For example, a piece of news might report that “An Israeli bomb has killed 15 Palestinian children in Gaza” or “15 children dead as a result of a bombing in Gaza”. These headlines, although made-up examples, would paint a very different picture of the same event in regard to who has caused what and to whom.

2.1.3 Previous Research on CDA and News

This sub-section introduces previous research, where CDA methods have been applied on newspaper reporting. Some of the studies briefly introduced here relate to the Israeli Palestinian crisis, but some studies on other topics are also introduced due to their relevance to research methods or other themes, such as the comparison of conservative and liberal newspapers. Previous studies have found proof of racist, xenophobic and/or anti-refugee stance and attitude in western newspapers, and Palestinians specifically have also been shown to be represented negatively in western news media.

Teo (2000) researched the representation of a Vietnamese gang in Australia on two Australian newspapers and found proof, that new, subtle ways of racism manifest themselves in the news discourse of a predominantly white, western society and argues that these racist attitudes are a part of a larger power discourse structure that “disguises dominance in naturalized discourse” (Teo 2000, 8). In other words, Australian newspapers used stereotypes and *othering* to marginalize an ethnic minority. On the other side of the world, but in a western country nonetheless, KhosraviNik (2010, 22–23) studied the representation of RASIM (refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants) in British newspapers from a CDA perspective and found that conservative newspapers were more likely to report on these groups when they were involved in some negative activities. Similarly, in a study by van Dijk (2000), it was found that in British newspapers immigrants are often represented stereotypically as a threat to *us* by being *other* and by breaking laws and norms.

In a more recent study, Ahmed, Abed and Hussain (2022) studied how the Israeli Palestinian crisis is represented in western news discourse by examining a British newspaper, the Independent, and an American newspaper, the Washington Post. They assessed materials from 2001 to 2012, and it was released in 2022, so before the current conflict. Similarly to Teo, who found evidence of *othering* against ethnic minorities in Australian newspapers, the notion of *us vs them* was important in the research by Ahmed, Abed and Hussain (2022), who found that Palestinians are represented overwhelmingly negatively in western newspapers. They concluded that Palestinians are, through explicit and implicit means, represented as terrorists, kidnappers, Islamic militants, suicide bombers and fighters. Both newspapers showed the same bias, so no difference between the US and the UK was evident.

Using van Dijk’s *ideological square*, Amaireh (2023) studied Al Jazeera’s reporting on the 2021 Israel Palestine Crisis. The research concluded that the personal ideologies of Al Jazeera reporters were reflected on in the lexical choices they made in their articles and displayed stance and attitude by framing Palestinians as *us* and Israelis as *them*, as a contrast to for example the findings Ahmed, Abed and Hussein (2022). Further, Palestinians were represented as innocent victims of the occupation, whereas Israelis were framed as racist colonizers. They also silenced Israeli viewpoints and made the Palestinian perspective more prominent. Al Jazeera is funded by Qatar, an Arab state, which likely explains the positive depictions of Palestinians and negative depictions of Israelis, and therefore this study again shows, how prevalent the *us vs them* set-up is in news, and not only in the western perspective.

In a more diachronic study, Sanz Sabido (2015) studied how the Israeli Palestinian crisis was reported on British newspapers. The data studied extended over several decades, and observed that the events and actors related to the Israeli Palestinian conflict were contextualized and recontextualized differently depending on the sampled period (Sanz Sabido 2015, 213): the contextualization was in line with the representation of these actors in each period, and the clearest ideological shift in the discourse was between in 1967, when events that occurred in 1948 (*al-Nakba*, explained in the following section) were recontextualized in a way that was in sharp contrast with the original narrative of 1948. This proves that ideologies are not fixed, and representations can shape perceptions. Similarly to Ahmed, Abed and Hussein (2022), Sanz Sabido applies *orientalism* to the Israeli Palestinian conflict, in the way that British news media considers the Israeli perspective as *us*, while Palestinians as *them*, i.e. the *other*, which is evident in the over-simplification of the history of the conflict and the rewriting of it (ibid.).

As for news on the ongoing conflict, Azim and ur Rehman (2024) studied the reporting by The New York Post and The Guardian on the topic using Dijk van Dijk's *us vs them* -model. Similarly to Amaireh (2023), they found that Palestinians were represented by The Guardian as the oppressed, whereas Israelis were represented as the oppressors, therefore reinforcing *us vs them* narratives (Azim and ur Rehman 2024, 29). The New York Post on the other hand was found to represent Israelis as the victims and Palestinians as the aggressors (Azim and ur Rehman 2024, 31). These differences could be explained by the political leanings of each newspaper, The Guardian being liberal and centre left while The New York Post is usually more conservative. Matrood (2025) also studied the newspaper reporting on the current conflict by using Wodak's historical discourse-historical approach and van Leeuwen's sociological representation of social actors to see if the discourse surrounding the ongoing struggle in Gaza affects the lives of innocent people. Matrood states in the results that the macro-topics were shown to be represented most often in topoi of help, topoi of war and death, and topoi of struggle (2025, 927). Micro-strategies and categories affiliated with how the conflict was represented were "genericization, Assimilation via using massive nouns, Individuality and Nomination with formal and semi-formal nomination only, and [...] aggregation via both numerical aggregation, statistical aggregation, and aggregation by using different quantifiers" (ibid.). In other words, the results indicate that discourse following current conflict and negative depictions of Palestine affects the lives of innocent people in Gaza, as discourse is not born in a vacuum.

Yu and Zheng (2022) studied how the Hong Kong protests were reported on China Daily and The Guardian using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model, which will be introduced later in this thesis. Their categorization of discourse elements was as follows: *description*, *interpretation* and *explanation*. They further categorized description into wording and modality, similar to Fairclough's categorizations of vocabulary and grammar. Yu and Zheng found that China Daily represented Hong Kong protesters negatively, whereas The Guardian represented them positively. For example, like the Bloor's example of the words 'terrorist' and 'freedom fighter', the two newspapers were inclined to using very different terminology on the protesters: China Daily would refer to them as 'rioters' and 'radicals', whereas The Guardian would refer to them as 'activists' and 'pro-democrats' (2022, 353). Rubing and Sandaran (2023) also used the 3D model to study discourse around Brexit on The Times, a British newspaper. In short, they argue, that when it comes to news reporting, language use is not random, and that different images of the EU and the UK government were portrayed differently depending on whether the writer was for or against Brexit (Rubing and Sandaran 2023, 969). A similar research method to that of Yu and Zheng (2022) and Rubing and Sandaran (2023) is used in this thesis.

The results of the studies mentioned in this section show a common theme: the newspapers exhibit ideologies that are arguably somewhat 'expected' of them; China Daily, owned by the Chinese Communist party, depicts Hong Kong protester negatively, and a Qatar-funded newspaper depicts Israelis negatively while western newspapers depict Palestinians and other people of colour negatively. Additionally, as Azim and ur Rehman (2024) showed, The New York Post is inclined to show Israel in a more favourable light than Palestine. Based on this, it can be expected that pro-Israel attitudes are present in the newspapers included in this thesis, at least in The New York Post. Furthermore, as Palestinians are racialized as non-white and as numerous Palestinians are now refugees, the findings by van Dijk (2000) and KhosraviNik (2010) for example support the hypothesis of this thesis, that conservative American newspapers are more likely to report on Palestinians in a negative light and, similarly to for example Teo (2000), Ahmed, Abed and Hussein (2022) and Sanz Sabido (2015), *othering* is also deployed by western newspapers against Palestinians.

2.2 Israeli Palestinian Background

As was explained in the previous section, it is important to know the context of the analysed discourse. Therefore, to analyse the current situation in Palestine and Israel, the history

between the two needs to be addressed. It would be a misconception to state that the conflict started on October 7th with the attack on Israel by Hamas, and therefore in this section I shall briefly explain the recent history of the situation in the area to give a better understanding of what has led to the hostilities between the two nations and how it affects the point of view through which the discourse surrounding the current conflict is analysed in this thesis.

2.2.1 History

The state of Israel was founded on land that historically belongs to the Palestinian people in 1948 (Pearlman 2011, 56–57). Britain had mandate for Palestine from 1920 until it was given up in 1947 (Pearlman 2011, 56), and the creation of Israel essentially ended the British rule over Palestine (Sanz Sabido 2015, 200). Along with the creation of the state of Israel, in 1948 Israel's military, the Israel Defense Forces (hereafter IDF), was formed. Palestinian lands were dispossessed in 1948 and occupied by Israel in 1967 (Bose 2007, 214). *Al-Nakba* ('the catastrophe') refers to the events of 1948, when Palestinian villages were destroyed and homes and fields were dispossessed, which resulted in approximately 600 000–760 000 Palestinians becoming refugees. This resulted in a fragmented, Palestinian nation driven by the desire to return to their homeland (Pearlman 2011, 58–64).

The Gaza strip is an area of 363 square kilometres by the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and along with West Bank it makes up the current Palestine. The Gaza strip, along with the West Bank, was occupied by Israel for decades. However, in 2005, the IDF withdrew from Gaza, all Israeli citizens were evacuated, and Israel announced the end of its military government on the strip of land (Bose 2007, 204). The West Bank is still occupied by Israel to this day. According to international law, Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands is illegal (OHCHR 2022).

In 2007, Islamic Resistance Movement (*Harakat al-muqāwamat al-islāmiyya*, hereafter Hamas), won the parliamentary elections (Awawda 2018, 285) and has ruled over the area of the Gaza strip ever since. Before Hamas, however, there were several other institutions, organizations and grassroots movements striving for the liberation of the Palestinian people. In the 1950s, the Muslim Brotherhood was gaining popularity in Gaza among young refugees (Pearlman 2011, 64). However, many were frustrated due to the Brotherhood's reluctance to armed resistance and believed that Palestinians should rely on themselves instead of other Arab countries to liberate their nation. Out of this idea, the Palestinian National Liberation, Fatah (in Pearlman 2011 'Fateh', acronym from the Palestinian name *Harakat al-Taḥrīr al-*

Waṭanī l-Filasṭīnī), was born (ibid.). PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) was born in the years after the Nakba when Palestinians were dispersed across the Arabic diaspora with a desire to return to Palestine (Pearlman 2011, 62). Its formation was announced by the Palestinian National Council (PNC) (Pearlman 2011, 65). The PLO was essentially a proto-state institution, where PNC was the parliament and the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) its military branch (ibid.). PLO and guerrilla groups such as Fatah were in essence the two sides of a very divided Palestinian struggle.

Several Arab countries, such as Syria, Jordan and Egypt have been largely involved in the Palestinian struggle against the occupation. Division between Palestinian factions were deepened by divisions between Arab countries, all of which accelerated armed protests against Israel. An armed conflict of six days between Israel and allied Arab states that wanted power in the Palestinian territories (Pearlman 2011, 66) is referred to as the 1967 war. As a result, Israel defeated the Arab armies and occupied Gaza and West Bank (ibid.). This strengthened the belief that Palestinians could not rely on other Arab nations, while the ideological differences fragmented the unity between and within Palestinian fedayeen groups (Pearlman 2011, 69). In 1987, Hamas was born from the Muslim Brotherhood. First, Islamists broke away from the brotherhood because they wanted to emphasize armed resistance, and the Islamic Jihad was born (Pearlman 2011, 100). Then, Ahmad Yasin and his colleagues announced the formation of Hamas, which soon absorbed the Brotherhood. Israel encouraged the development of Islamic movements to defeat the PLO (Pearlman 2011, 100).

A Palestinian uprising known as the First Intifada started in 1987 when an Israeli truck hit Palestinian workers in Gaza, killing four and injuring seven. This caused boycotts and protests, to which Israel responded to with gunfire, leaving 26 people dead within a month (Pearlman 2011, 102). DFLP (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine), PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), the Communist Party and Fatah were important in determining the Intifada's goals by coming together to form UNLU (United National Leadership of the Uprising (Pearlman 2011, 103). Despite the bulk of society taking part, the First Intifada heightened nonviolent protests, which was made possible by leadership and grassroots organizations (Pearlman 2011, 122–123).

The Oslo Accords were an attempt at a peace process between the PLO and Israel between 1993 and 2000, that was meant to give more authority to Palestinians via the PA (Palestinian Authority). However, as the PLO recognized Israel and Israel recognized PLO, during the

process, Israel confiscated even more land and imposed restrictions. Palestinians killed many Israelis and Israel killed even more Palestinians (Pearlman 2011, 124). The Second Intifada started in 2000 as thousands of people protested against lethal brutality by Israeli police following Palestinians throwing stones at them in protest of the Israeli right-wing prime minister. After days of demonstrations and massive Palestinian casualties, Palestinians responded to the gunfire. The conflict lasted for five years and claimed many more lives compared to the First Intifada (Pearlman 2011, 151). Fatah and Hamas competed for power in Gaza until Hamas' parliamentary win in 2007.

Zionism is the idea, according to which Jewish people should have the right to their own state in Palestine, essentially as a way to protect themselves from antisemitism in the rest of the world (Sumantra 2007, 212). However, other motivations for its creation can be argued, since the presence of a “western” state in the Middle East should serve the interests of the rest of the western world. In fact, the US has always been an avid supporter of the Jewish nation state and is the most powerful country involved in the situation in the international field (Sanz Sabido 2015, 201). Whereas there have been Jewish people living in Palestine before the state of Israel existed, they historically owned only less than 10% of land and constituted a third of the population before 1948 yet were given 56% of Palestine with the creation of Israel (Pearlman 2011, 56). Despite being obviously linked, Zionism and Judaism are however not interchangeable, and anti-Zionism is not to be confused with antisemitism, as many Jewish people oppose the state of Israel for a plethora of reasons. Jewish Voices for Peace (JVFP) explains Jewish anti-Zionism as follows:

Jewish anti-Zionists span a political and religious spectrum, from religious and secular progressives who view opposition to Zionism as an anti-racist praxis, to ultra-Orthodox Jews who oppose Jewish dominion until the time of the Messiah, to anarchist Jews who oppose the very concept of nation-states, Jewish or otherwise. (Jewish Voices for Peace, n.d.)

They define non-Jewish anti-Zionism as motivated by “moral criticism of the policies of the Israeli government, problems with the impact of Zionist thinking in Israel on non-Jewish residents, and/or a criticism of ethno-nationalism more broadly” (ibid.). Furthermore, as JVFP explains, Palestinian people often identify as anti-Zionist due to the current and historical actions of Israel.

2.2.2 Current Situation

In Israel, there are two types of citizenships: the Jewish citizen and the Arab citizen. Jewish citizens enjoy privileges over Arab citizens, whereas Arab non-citizens have essentially no rights (Sanz Sabido 2015, 204). This has been the case in Israel long before the current conflict. In fact, according to Amnesty International (2022), Israel is an apartheid state, where Jewish Israelis are first class citizens and Palestinians are second class citizens. The ceremonial head of state in Israel is the president (Isaac Herzog, as of April 2025), although real executive power is exercised by the prime minister and their cabinet. At the time of writing this thesis, the prime minister of Israel is Benjamin Netanyahu. Another important figure in the conflict on Israel's side is the defense minister, who oversees the IDF. Yoav Gallant held this position until Netanyahu fired him in 2024, and since then, Israel Katz has served in the role. Hamas, which has ruled the Gaza strip ever since its victory over Fatah in the parliamentary elections in 2007, is a Palestinian nationalist and Sunni Islamist political organization, which has been classified a terrorist organization by the United States and many other western countries. Since the start of the current conflict, two important Hamas leaders have been assassinated by Israel: Ismail Haniyeh and his successor, Yahya Sinwar, who is often seen as the one behind the October 7th attacks.

What is referred to as the October 7th attacks began, when the Qassam Brigades, Hamas' military wing, with some other Palestinian armed groups, started their attack on southern Israel by firing rockets and breaching the border by land (Amnesty International 2024b, 13), consequently killing about 1200 people and capturing 251, both soldiers and civilians, including children. On the grounds of killing civilians and taking hostages, the Palestinian armed groups have been accused of committing war crimes during their October 7th attacks, according to for example the Human Rights Watch (2024b). As reported by Amnesty International (2024b, 13), 800 of those killed in Israel on October 7th were civilians and 36 were children. According to some sources, about 1600–1700 Israelis are said to have been killed in the conflict. However, this number has been difficult to confirm due to lack of reliable sources and changing numbers. OCHA (2025) reported in March 2025 the Israeli death toll to be 1607. On December 4th, Israel estimated that about 100 hostages remained in Gaza (Abuaisha 2024), after some were freed in a hostage exchange deal or unilaterally by Hamas (Spiro 2023) and several were killed either by Hamas or in Israel's strikes and its friendly fire (Abuaisha 2024; Aderet 2023; NBC News 2023). According to OHCHR (2024,

20–21) released Israeli hostages have reported either witnessing or experiencing poor living conditions in underground tunnels, and violence, including sexual abuse, while in captivity.

Soon after the October 7th attacks started, Israel declared war against Hamas and has since destroyed nearly the entire Gazan infrastructure, driven almost the entire population of 1.1 million people (90%) from their homes, and killed tens of thousands of people in its quest to destroy Hamas (Amnesty International 2024b, 12). In a letter from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, it states that within 24 hours of starting the attack on Gaza after October 7th, 2023, Israel had killed 313 Palestinians, injured over 2000 and displaced 20 000 (United Nations 2024b). About one year later, on October 9th, 2024, the Gaza death toll had surpassed 42 000 people (ibid.), not including the roughly ten thousand people buried under the rubble, according to an Israeli human rights organization Gisha (2024). By then, the number of injured Palestinians was 97 590, as reported by Amnesty International (2024b, 16). According to a press release by OHCHR, most (70%) of those killed in Gaza between October 7th, 2023, and April 30th, 2024, were women and children (2024, 6). In fact, Amnesty International (2024b, 16) reports that the conflict has been one of the deadliest for children in history with 13 319 Palestinian children dead by October 7th, 2024.

A year into the conflict, in October 2024, the Gaza borders were almost completely closed, having allowed only some staff for international organizations and a small number patients, some 200, to go through (ibid.). Furthermore, as reported by Gisha (2024), several international organizations such as UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), the UN (United Nations), the WFP (World Food Programme) and ANERA (American Near East Refugee Aid) also reported, that the provision of humanitarian aid in Gaza has become difficult due to Israel preventing it from entering the area, which was also reported by Amnesty (2024b, 12). Moreover, the systematic destruction of homes, hospitals, roads, energy infrastructure as well as water, hygiene and sanitation infrastructure combined with the majority of Gaza's displaced population being forced into ever-shrinking areas with sub-human conditions has indirectly caused starvation, diseases and death as people are unable to access food, clean water and shelter, seek healthcare or earn livelihood (Amnesty International 2024b, 12; 23; 132). In addition, Israel has struck the areas it has told Palestinians to evacuate to which has resulted in deaths of refugees, for example in the Rafah offensive (Amnesty International 2024b, 15), and also deaths of medical personnel, which has prevented the injured from receiving medical help (OHCHR 2024, 19).

At the time of writing this thesis, the most recent estimate of the death toll between October 7th, 2023, and March 4th, 2025, is 48 405 Palestinians reported dead and 111 835 injured. The death count in Gaza has been questioned, as the Gaza Health Ministry (GHM) is said to be controlled by Hamas. However, it is estimated that the number of people killed by Israel is fairly accurate, as stated by several organizations such as the UN, WHO and HRW; in fact, the death toll in Gaza may be even higher than estimated (Maad 2023). For example, Amnesty International's report (2024b, 16) states that the actual death toll of the conflict is likely much higher than thought and will become clearer once the conflict ends and missing bodies buried under rubble can be recovered. For these reasons, this thesis shall refer to the numbers reported by GHM as factual and the most accurate available estimation.

Even before October 7th, 2023, there have been thousands of Palestinians kept as prisoners in Israel, and the laws regarding them are different from laws regarding Israeli prisoners, as reported by the HRW (Shakir 2023). In fact, Israel holds more Palestinian de facto hostages than Hamas is holding Israeli hostages in Gaza (Semler 2024). Moreover, some of the Palestinians being held captive in Israel are children (Amnesty International 2024b, 234) and many have not been charged with or convicted of anything (Reuters 2025). Confirmed reports have described poor living conditions, violence, sexual abuse, torture and death of Palestinian captives in Israeli detention centers (Amnesty International 2024b, 234). In 2025, there are about 9500 Palestinians held prisoner in Israel (Nabolsi and Shamala 2025).

In 2024, a UN human rights expert and the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, stated in a report that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Israel is committing a genocide in Gaza (United Nations 2024a). On December 29th, 2023, South Africa brought a case before the International Court of Justice accusing Israel of committing a genocide in the Gaza strip. As a result, in January 2024, the court ruled that Israel's operations in Gaza could be classified as a genocide and ordered Israel to take measures to stop this. HRW and Amnesty have accused Israel of not obliging the court's orders (Human Rights Watch 2024a; Amnesty International 2024a). As of April 2025, the case is ongoing, and no conviction has been made, but in December of 2024, Amnesty concluded in their research that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza on the grounds of "killing and causing serious harm" (Amnesty International 2024b, 106) and "inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about destruction" (Amnesty International 2024b, 123).

Israel and Hamas agreed on a three-stage ceasefire deal on January 15th, 2025. A similar deal had earlier been approved by Hamas, but Israel would not accept a deal that included ending the fighting in Gaza completely (Goldenberg and Magdy 2024). The stages of the ceasefire deal signed on January 17th 2025 were meant to be as follows (according to for example Magdy and Callister 2024): the first stage included the release of 33 captives (women, children, elders, the sick) held by Hamas for some 1900 Palestinian captives held by Israel, allowing humanitarian aid to Gaza, Israel partially withdrawing from Gaza and displaced Palestinians being allowed to return to their homes. The second stage would have been Hamas returning alive male hostages for a number of Palestinian captives and a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. The final stage would have been each side returning deceased hostages, as well as the end of the blockade of Gaza in exchange of Hamas not rebuilding its military. However, only the first phase was ever completed. The 2025 ceasefire deal, a slight variation of the original, came effective as of January 19th, but since Hamas failed to provide the names of some to-be-freed hostages by the first deadline, Israel also violated the ceasefire agreement and killed over a dozen people in Gaza and injured many more (Socolovsky and Lonsdorf 2025). After this, Hamas provided the required list of names and freed the three female hostages in exchange for Israel releasing 90 women and children they had labeled as terrorists (Da Silva and Hamamdjian 2025), but who had no convictions (Reuters 2025). In total of eight rounds of hostage exchanges were made, the final being in late February 2025. However, the second stage was never implemented as Israel proposed delaying it against Hamas' wishes, and ended up breaking the ceasefire before stage two could begin (Al Jazeera 2025).

In addition to failing to provide Israel with the names of to-be-released Hostages, Hamas has been accused of violating the ceasefire deal due to the organization releasing female soldiers before all female civilians were released (Al-Mugharabi and Mackenzie 2025), for holding demeaning ceremonies for the hostage releases (Al Shemary 2025) and for initially returning wrong remains in the place of those of a deceased Israeli hostage (Berman 2025). Israel also repeatedly violated the ceasefire by, for example, purposefully delaying the return of Palestinian prisoners (Al Shemary 2025); preventing aid from entering Gaza (Rowlands et al. 2025); killing Palestinians during the truce (Haboush and Abushamala 2025); halting electricity to Gaza (Lidman and Magdy 2025); refusing to withdraw (El-Bawab and Miller 2025); wanting to renegotiate the terms after the 1st stage of the ceasefire when Hamas maintained moving to stage two as planned (Al Jazeera 2025). On March 18th, Israel bombed

Gaza in one of the deadliest attacks to the area, killing hundreds of people including women, children and elders, ending the ceasefire (Shurafa and Mednick 2025).

2.3 U.S Newspapers

It is typical to American news media to cater to either liberal or conservative audiences, and although according to Groseclose and Milyo (2005, 1193) the majority of American journalists are liberal, there are a number of newspapers published in the US that report from a conservative perspective, as can be seen for example in the list compiled by Altschiller (2024). It should be noted that newspapers not being impartial is not a new phenomenon, as this has been the case since the early American newspapers were printed in the 19th century, when each newspaper was explicitly affiliated with a political party (Bulla, n.d.). Moreover, news is business, and therefore completely objective reporting is difficult to achieve. In the following sub-sections, the two newspapers used to search for articles for the analysis are to be introduced. More on the process of choosing these two newspapers will be discussed in section 3.1 Materials. When referring to the newspapers as either conservative or liberal, I refer to how the idea of conservatism and liberalism is understood in the context of US politics: Republicans most often lean more conservative and far right, whereas Democrats tend to lean a bit closer to the liberal left, while still on the center-right of the political compass. Conservative values often include ideas of strict foreign policy, individualism over collectivism, Christians over non-Christians, and even white supremacy, while liberalism, in short, represents the opposite: being more favorable of foreigners, more collectivist and more accepting of other religions (Lakoff 2016, n.p.).

2.3.1 The New York Times

The New York Times, founded in 1851, is the American newspaper with the second largest print circulation of 267.7k in the span of six months in 2023, second only to the Wall Street Journal (Majid 2024). It is typically understood, that in the liberal-conservative scale, The New York Times leans more liberal than conservative (Altschiller 2024). Moreover, The New York Times is a newspaper, that requires a subscription to read online, which may affect the way which the headlines, for example, are constructed. According to The New York Times Company website, “The New York Times is dedicated to helping people understand the world through on-the-ground, expert and deeply reported independent journalism” (The New York Times n.d.). Unlike the Wall Street Journal, which is more focused on business-related news,

the New York Times covers news on a broader field and has reported on the situation in Gaza extensively.

2.3.2 The New York Post

After The New York Times, the American newspaper with the third largest average print circulation per six months with a number of 131.2k (Majid 2024), is The New York Post, which was founded in 1801. Unlike the aforementioned New York Times, The New York Post does not require a subscription to read online. The New York Post traditionally leans more conservative than liberal (Altschiller 2024). The New York Post also has reported on the Gaza situation extensively. The New York Post is a tabloid, a type of newspaper that is characterized as more sensational and less formal than traditional broadsheet newspapers. The 'About New York Post' -page describes an agenda that is very different than that of NYT; it makes no big promises of independent and objective reporting. Instead, the page states: "We shine a bright light on the people and institutions that shape our readers' lives; we break big stories and set the news agenda; and we offer engaging, fun and addictive content to the country and the world" (New York Post n.d.). This quotation gives the idea of news stories that are not only informative, but also entertaining for the reader.

3 Materials and Methods

In this section I introduce the materials and research method used for the analysis. The research was conducted by closely reading a set of news articles from two American newspapers, chosen beforehand by following certain criteria to avoid biased results. For the research method, Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model was chosen. As for research ethics, all the materials are published newspaper articles readily available for almost anyone, aside from the ones behind a paywall, and therefore there should be no issues regarding copyrights or the privacy and dignity of authors.

3.1 Materials

The newspapers for the study were chosen in accordance with the list of the largest US-based newspapers by Press Gazette (Majid 2024), so that the dataset includes material from one of the largest liberal and one of the largest conservative sources. Whether a newspaper leans conservative or traditional was determined by a research guide on the BU Libraries website (Altschiller 2024). As a result, the sites that ended up as sources for the data were New York Times to represent the more liberal newspaper, and The New York Post as a more conservative-leaning newspaper. The Wallstreet Journal, despite having the largest readership, was left out since its main focus is on business-related news.

To get a comprehensive look at the reporting and how it may have changed over the year, articles from throughout the ongoing conflict were chosen for analysis from each newspaper using either the newspaper's own advanced search function (The New York Times) or the Google search function, if the newspaper website itself did not have an advanced search function (The New York Post) with the name of the newspaper and the following keywords: *Israel* and *Palestine*. For the purposes of this thesis, pieces of news regarding topics not directly related to the ongoing Israeli Palestinian crisis were left out of the dataset, even if the articles contained a given key word. To achieve an impartial method of data collection, the articles were picked in the following way: first, a keyword together with the name of the newspaper was entered into the search bar on the newspaper website or Google; then, the timeframe was manually set to get articles from the immediate aftermath of the October 7th attack, a few months after it, after the conflict was starting to get classified as a genocide, after the Tel al-Sultan massacre, and from more recent turns of events. The timeframes were, respectively, October 7th–8th 2023; December 7th–10th 2023; February 26th–27th; May 26th–

28th and September 19th–22nd. This was done to ensure that the search engines would show results for each timeframe on each online newspaper, in case some of them did not report on the crisis every single day. After conducting the search, the first relevant articles were chosen. This produced twenty articles, ten for each newspaper. However, since the NYT articles were significantly shorter, two more articles were acquired for the NYT data by using the aforementioned keywords and setting the date range to July 26th–30th (a timeframe that is roughly in the middle of the October data and May data). This was done to ensure that both datasets would be about equal in size, to avoid skewing the quantitative results. As a result, the NYT data was 9574 words in size, whereas the NYP data was 9235 words, with 12 New York Times articles and 10 New York Post articles. For the purposes of this thesis, only the text in the articles was analyzed and any visual and audiovisual material was left out due to limitations of scope. To be clear, the analyzed text includes the titles of the articles and the captions of any images.

3.2 Methods

The data for this thesis was collected by copying and pasting the articles, including the article text as well as headings and image captions, onto separate Word documents to make storing the data as well as making notes and mark-ups more convenient for analysis. Norman Fairclough's (1989) Three-Dimensional Framework was chosen as the research method. This method has three stages: *description*, *interpretation* and *explanation*, reflecting the three elements of discourse: *text*, *discourse practice* and *social practice*, which will be explained in more detail in the next paragraphs. The research method is both qualitative and quantitative, as it involves analyzing the language used in a qualitative manner, but also counting of different word tokens that occurred often in the dataset.

In *Language and Power* (1989), Fairclough introduces an approach to CDA called the Three-Dimensional Framework. The three dimensions of discourse in this model are *text*, *interaction* and *social context* (Fairclough 1989, 109), or, in other words, *text*, *discourse practice* and *social practice* (Yu and Zheng 2022, 350). Respectively, the three stages of CDA in this model therefore are “*description* of text, *interpretation* of the relationship between text and interaction, and *explanation* of the relationship between interaction and social context” (Fairclough 1989, 109).

Fairclough (1989) introduces two categories of description: *vocabulary* and *grammar*, which roughly correspond to the categorizations of *wording* and *modality* by Yu and Zheng (2022).

Description refers to the study of the textual elements, such as vocabulary and grammar, or wording and modality, as done by Yu and Zheng (2022). *Wording* means simply the words used in the text, whereas *modality*, a grammatical feature, means “the area of meaning that lies between yes and no” (Yu and Zheng 2022, 356). *Modality* allows for “partial perspectives to be universalized” (ibid.) and therefore can shift the writer’s personal opinion onto someone else or present it as an objective fact. The description part of the analysis in this thesis was conducted by highlighting textual elements that showed some sort of bias or attitude towards either side of the Israeli Palestinian conflict and then counting and comparing them between sources.

The second stage, *interpretation*, refers to “the force, the coherence, and the intertextuality of texts” (Yu and Zheng 2022, 357). It examines discourse practice, so the representations of discourse as social interaction. According to Fairclough, discourse practice “involves processes of text production, distribution, and consumption, and the nature of these processes varies between different types of discourse according to social factors” (2002, 78). In other words, it accounts for the ways texts are produced, distributed and consumed depends on the social context. For example, newspaper articles are produced collectively through various stages of production, with access to different sources and transforming them into reports (ibid.). As news media is full of samples from other texts, *intertextuality* is the most relevant dimension of the interpretation aspect in the context of this thesis, when looking at how the news articles are produced. Fairclough explains that the *text producer* can be deconstructed into different positions, which then may be held by one person, or several different people. These positions are *animator*, who “makes the sounds, or the marks on the paper” (ibid.); *author*, who is responsible for putting the words together; and *principal*, “whose position is represented by the words” (ibid.). Moreover, Fairclough states that an ambiguous relationship between these positions is common in newspapers: the principal is usually an outside source, yet news articles give the impression, that the newspaper itself is the principal, and collectively authored reports are presented as authored by a single journalist, who in fact acts more as the animator (ibid.).

Intertextuality, the most salient aspect of the interpretation stage, has several dimensions. Manifest intertextuality refers to what texts drawn upon, and to how they are drawn upon, which Fairclough discusses as related to discourse representation (2002, 118). Yu and Zheng studied this aspect as news report’s speech reporting, and the ways when, how and why something or someone is quoted differ between sources on the same event (2022, 358). They

looked for news sources explicitly marked with quotation marks and reporting clauses in the data to study the production, and classified them into specific, semi-specific and unidentified sources. The same method for the study of the production was incorporated in this thesis, so the interpretation stage of the analysis was conducted by focusing on the intertextuality of the articles and looking for sources explicitly marked with reporting clauses such as ‘she said’, to see if the news sources would reveal bias or attitude.

Finally, at the last stage, *explanation* analyses the social practice and focuses on explaining the description and interpretation of the text in the social context of things in regard to explicit and implicit ideologies. The results of the description and interpretation stages were analyzed in relation to larger intertextual and social context, in accordance with the 3D model’s explanation stage. In the context of this thesis, this means that the findings of the research are therefore discussed in the social and historical context of the Israeli Palestinian crisis and the previous discourses surrounding it. In this stage, what events the newspapers chose to report on was also paid attention to, as it reveals what the journalists and newspapers wish to bring to the foreground, and therefore further affects the way the events are understood by the readership. This is representation and it is closely to discourse and power structures.

The 3D model was created for the purpose of understanding the power relations and ideological processes related to discourse that were discussed earlier. In fact, The Three-Dimensional Framework by Fairclough has been widely recognized as the most practical and complete method for CDA, as it combines linguistics with theories of sociology and ideology, therefore advocating for an interdisciplinary approach in CDA (Yu and Zheng 2022, 350).

4 Description

In the following two sections, the results of the quantitative study will be presented and analyzed, and then further discussed qualitatively in the subsequent section. This is done in accordance with Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model that accounts for texts, discourse practice and social practice, i.e., description, interpretation and explanation of the texts. Section 4 focuses on the description, as in the textual features of the analysis, while interpretation and explanation are the focus of the subsequent section 5, Discussion.

As explained before, the main focus of this section, description, refers to the analysis of the formal features, so textual elements, of the articles (Yu and Cheng 2022, 351). Wording, or vocabulary, refers simply to the words in a piece of text, "especially when these are chosen to generate a particular effect" (Yu and Zheng 2022, 352). The first sub-section examines the word choices made in the news articles and attempt to unveil possible bias in them. The second sub-section focuses on the grammatical features of the texts, more specifically on modality, which refers to the grammatical features that convey certainness or uncertainty, and represent the grey area between yes and no.

All in all, as expected, it seems like The New York Post used more Israel-positive wordings in their reporting, creating a more pro-Israel perspective than The New York Times, which seems more neutral, but there was some variation depending on the journalists. The analysis of grammar, mostly modality, did not reveal as notable differences between the two datasets. It is worth noting that the articles published on New York Post that seemed to be more neutral in their wording than usual were originally by Associated Press (AP) and therefore not written by New York Post journalists themselves, although they did pass any possible criteria the newspaper has for its publications.

For the sake of clarity and word count, and to avoid mix-ups, The New York Post and The New York Times will be referred to as the NYP and the NYT, respectively. Neither newspaper showed little change in the wording throughout the year, so presenting the results chronologically is not relevant.

4.1 Wording

This part of the analysis was done by looking at what kind of vocabulary is used when referring to the Palestinian side and the Israeli side, as well as how the conflict is discussed

and what words are used to refer to it. Looking at how different sides of the conflict are referred to can reveal something about the way they are represented in the news media discourse, which in turn affects how they are represented and viewed in society, since discourse and society are closely linked together. Therefore, negative vocabulary is linked to negative representation. The NYP articles produced slightly more tokens for words that carry biased connotations than the NYT articles did, which can be seen in the following tables. The findings shall be discussed more in depth in the Explanation stage of the analysis. Table 1 shows what terms were used to refer to Palestinian people and organizations by the NYT:

Table 1 Terms Used for Palestinians by the NYT

Term	n
armed wing/group/operative	7
civilian	25
fighter	6
forces	2
group	10
Hamas	93
men/man	2
militant	10
militant group	5
military	9
operative	7
Palestinian	73
refugee	2
terrorist	3
victim	2
woman/women	1

As can be seen in Table 1, most of the words used by the NYT to refer to Palestinians were related to military activities, but they were not outright negative in attitude. Military-related vocabulary is of course not particularly surprising given that the topics of the news are all war-related. ‘Terrorist’ is the only word on the list that has an explicitly negative connotation, but together with fighter and militant they represent 7.4% of all 257 word tokens in the table. The rest are either somewhat neutral or even sympathetic (such as ‘victim’). Similarly, Table 2 shows what terms the NYP used for Palestinians and Palestinians organizations alike.

Table 2 Terms Used for Palestinians by the NYP

Term	n
boy	1
civilian	18
combatant	1
detainee	2
fighter	10
group	24
gunmen	6
Hamas	106
man/men	14
militant	18
Palestinian	62
prisoner	7
protester	1
refugee	4
terror group/organization	6
terrorist	25
troops	1
woman/women	2

Table 2 also consists of terms mostly related to military activities, but also words with more negative connotations. Words related to terrorism and violent actions in general were used much more abundantly than in the NYT data. Where the NYT used words like ‘armed group’, ‘military’ and ‘fighter’, the NYP used ‘terrorist’, but also ‘militant’ and ‘civilian’ were used quite frequently. The word ‘terrorist’ appeared in the NYP data, when referring to Palestinians, 25 times, and in addition, ‘terror group’ or ‘terror organization’ were used six times. This is in stark contrast to the NYT, where the word ‘terrorist’ appeared three times. Further, the only times the NYT used words like ‘terrorist’ were either in the context of quoting a third party, such as an Israeli government or military official, when reporting on IDF holding Palestinians captive for alleged terror charges, or when referring to specific events classified as a terrorist attacks. ‘Hamas’ was mentioned in the NYP data 106 times, whereas in the NYT data it appeared 93 times, despite the NYT data being slightly larger in terms of word count. The difference is not remarkably different, but it does show, that the NYP is slightly more likely to mention Hamas activity than the NYT is. These seem to be the largest differences between the two datasets in terms of the vocabulary, as otherwise there was similar vocabulary used in both datasets. The word ‘refugee’, for example, only appeared

in both newspapers a few times (three times in the NYT; four times in the NYP). ‘ Hamas ’ was the most used word in this context for both newspapers. Negative words (like ‘terror group’, ‘terrorist’, ‘combatant’, ‘fighter’, ‘gunmen’, ‘militant’) take up 21.4% of the 308 words with 66 tokens. This is approximately three times more than in the NYT.

Table 3 and Table 4 present terms used by the NYT and the NYP, respectively, for Israeli people and organizations. As can be seen, there was slightly less variation in the vocabulary used for Israelis than Palestinians, but the difference was again not remarkable:

Table 3 Terms Used for Israelis by the NYT

Terms	n
army	3
civilian	4
forces	10
hostage	18
IDF	4
Israeli	149
military	61
soldier	22
troops	6
woman/women	3

Table 4 Terms Used for Israelis by the NYP

Terms	n
army	14
captive	6
civilian	14
forces	8
hostage	28
IDF	35
Israeli	124
man/men	3
military	37
prisoner	1
protester	1
soldier	35
troops	15
woman/women	9

Moreover, military related vocabulary, such as ‘army’, ‘forces’, ‘IDF’, ‘military’, ‘soldier’, ‘troops’, seem to dominate too, and they were the same in both datasets. ‘Civilian’ was mentioned frequently, mostly due to situations involving Israeli hostages held by Hamas. Interestingly, Palestinian civilians were mentioned more than Israeli civilians by each newspaper. In the NYP the difference is small (18 for Palestinians, 14 for Israelis), but in the NYT it is large (25 for Palestinians, 4 for Israelis). However, the word ‘hostage’ was not used once for Palestinians held captive by Israel, despite many of them being held without charges. Furthermore, the NYT did not discuss Palestinian captives held by Israel, whereas the NYP did, but referred to them with words such as ‘detainee’ and ‘prisoner’, which have very different connotations than ‘hostage’. No negative words were used by either source.

It should be noted that the words ‘Israeli’ and ‘Palestinian’ were also mentioned as parts of organization names, such as Israeli Defense Forces or Palestinian Health Ministry. Therefore, the number of mentions of each does not directly indicate a blatant bias in one direction or the other, despite ‘Israeli’ having over twice as many mentions.

Based on the findings presented in table 1 to 4, it appears that the NYP divides the sides of the conflict quite easily into terrorists and soldiers. It refers to Hamas members more often as terrorists, rather than with words with more neutral connotations, for example as soldiers, troops or fighters, which it tends to call IDF members. IDF members were not called terrorists even in cases of their violent actions towards Palestinian civilians. In the following quotation, a very blatant example of the aforementioned divide into Palestinian terrorists and Israeli soldiers is presented in the headline for one of NYP articles by Ronny Reyes in December:

(1) Dozens of Hamas terrorists surrender to Israeli soldiers, report says (Reyes 2023)

As can be seen, in the same sentence, Reyes refers to Hamas fighters as terrorists and Israeli fighters as soldiers, which have very different connotations and therefore show obvious bias. In the same article, Reyes later admits that it has not been confirmed whether the men in question were in fact members of Hamas or other such organizations, and at the end even mentions a Hamas leader saying the men are not their fighters, yet still calls them terrorist repeatedly in the article, which demonstrates one of many cases of pro-Israel bias in the language used by the NYP. More examples of the wordings in use shall be given for deeper analysis in the discussion section later.

Next, the words used for the actions of each side were analyzed. Tables 5 and 6 show, what terms were used for Israeli military activity by the NYT and the NYP, respectively:

Table 5 Israeli military activity in the NYT

Term	n
airstrike	10
arrest	6
attack	2
counterterrorism	1
detention	1
genocide	4
incursion	1
invasion/invade	6
kill	39
massacre	2
occupation	8
offensive	11
operation	10
retaliation	9
strike	26

Table 6 Israeli military activity in the NYP

Term	n
arrest	7
assault	4
attack	3
blockade	5
campaign	3
counter attack	2
counter strike	3
genocide	3
jail/ed	10
kill	15
occupation/occupied	3
offensive	7
operation	5
raid	15

retaliation	3
strike	14
take into custody	1
violence	3

Most of the words in Table 5 refer to Israel's attacks on the Gaza strip. The word 'kill' appeared frequently in the NYT data when discussing Israeli military activity. In this context, it refers to when someone was killed as a result of Israel's actions, so, in most cases, when an IDF soldier killed a Palestinian person or people. Another frequent word was 'strike'. Some of the words are as neutral as the topic allows, and can be described as more lenient, such as 'counterterrorism', 'incursion' and 'operation'. Aside from the word 'operation', though, they did not appear often, aside from a very few examples. Nevertheless, they can be classified as neutral, since they do not imply explicit violence or harm. Some words, on the other hand, were clearly negatively connotated, as they implied violent or at least directly harmful consequences. Out of these words, 'airstrike', 'attack', 'genocide', 'invasion', 'kill', 'massacre', 'occupation' and 'offensive' were classified as negative. These make up 98 of the total 136 word tokens listed in the table, representing 72% of them. The word 'arrest' was used in the context of Israel taking Palestinians as captive.

As demonstrated in Table 6, the NYP data showed more diversity in the terminology than the NYT. The most frequent words were 'raid' and 'kill' appearing 15 times each, with 'strike' coming close with 14 hits. However, while both 'strike' and 'kill' appeared the most in the NYT data too, the NYT used them about twice as much. Terms with neutral and negative connotations appeared as well. These include, for example, 'campaign', 'counter attack', 'counter strike', 'operation', 'retaliation' and 'take into custody'. These are classified as neutral, because they either carry no explicitly violent connotations, or imply that the attack was done out of self-defense. While no negatively charged terms appeared particularly often, aside from the word 'kill', negative word tokens, including 'assault'; 'attack'; 'genocide'; 'kill'; 'occupation/occupied'; 'offensive'; 'strike' and 'violence', account for a total of 52 tokens. This represents 49% of all the 106 words in table 6. Therefore, there were only about half as many negatively charged words for Israel activity used by the NYP than the NYT.

Table 7 shows what terms were used for activity from the Palestinian side by the NYT. As can be seen, fewer words appeared compared to Israeli activity.

Table 7 Palestinian military activity in the NYT

Term	n
armed resistance	1
assault	4
attack	23
kill	7
operation	2
raid	1
strike	1
terrorism	9
terrorist attack	1

The overwhelmingly most common word was ‘attack’ with 23 appearances. In total 45 appearances (92% of total 49) of negatively loaded words used for Palestinian activity were counted in the NYT data, including ‘assault’, ‘attack’, ‘kill’, ‘strike’, ‘terrorism’ and ‘terrorist attack’. This is more, than the NYT used for Israeli activity (72%).

Table 8 presents the terms that the NYP used for Palestinian military activity. Again, while these terms are more frequent than in the NYT data, they are still less frequent than what was used to refer to Israeli activity.

Table 8 Palestinian military activity in the NYP

Term	n
assault	5
attack	34
capture	12
kill	11
operation	2
raid	1
revolution	1
rocket attack/barrage/strike	10
strike	4
terror(ist) attack	4
violence	1

Counting the negative word tokens comes up to 81 (95% of the total 85 words), so significantly more than the NYT used for Palestinians. However, percentagewise the difference was not as significant. Nonetheless, the NYP used significantly more negative

words for Palestinian activity than Israeli activity (95% vs 49%). Here, too, ‘attack’ was the most common word, as was in the NYT.

Looking at the results for the activity vocabulary all together, when it comes to words used for certain events and attacks done by either side, the NYP writers tended to prefer to use the word ‘attack’ (in some cases, even terror(ist) attack), when discussing Hamas’ actions against Israel, whereas a plethora of different words to describe IDF’s actions were used. These included words like ‘operation’ ‘offensive’, ‘incursion’, ‘retaliation’, ‘assault’ and ‘(counter) attack’. The first three carry a purely militaristic connotation with less violence involved than in ‘attack’ and ‘assault’, for example. The word ‘attack’ was used in the NYP data 34 times when referring to the actions of Palestinian fighters, whereas in the context of Israel’s actions it only appeared three times. A similar trend was repeated in the NYT data, where the word appeared in each dataset in the context of Palestinian and Israeli activity, respectively, 23 times and two times. Interestingly, though, the NYP used the word ‘retaliation’ for Israel’s attacks three times, whereas the NYT used it nine times. However, considering the word counts, this is not a very definitive finding, only unexpected. The NYP was more inclined to refer to the ongoing situation as a war rather than, for example, a conflict or genocide, unless a third party was being quoted. For example by Morphet, Tillet and Sheehy (2024) mention the word ‘genocide’ was three times, but only when quoting either Aaron Bushnell, a deceased pro-Palestine protester, or his friend, the interviewee. The use of the word ‘war’ gives the impression of two somewhat equal opposing states are fighting on a battlefield, which is not the case, as indicated in the following example:

(2) One of the things he told me is that coming across his desk ... was the US military was involved in the genocides going on in Palestine,” the friend said, referring to Israel’s war against the Palestinian terror group Hamas in Gaza (Morphet, Tillet and Sheehy 2024)

The example above shows the interviewee refer to the ongoing conflict as ‘genocides’, which the journalist then comments on by referring to the conflict rather as war, thereby disagreeing with the interviewee, and then proceeds to call Hamas a terror group. However, the difference to the NYT was not drastic here, considering that the word ‘genocide’ only appeared four times in the NYT data. Nonetheless, the NYT reported directly on the case against Israel accusing the country of genocide against Palestinians. In stark contrast, none of the NYP discussed the international court case by South Africa against Israel.

In some of the articles published by the NYP, Associated Press (2023b) expresses some distain for Israel’s attack on Gaza, as can be seen in the following examples:

(3) Desperate Palestinians fleeing Israel’s expanding ground offensive

(4) Israel’s ferocious military assault on Gaza

In these examples, the use of the adjective ‘desperate’ to describe fleeing Palestinian refugees shows sympathy for them, whereas the use of the adjective ‘ferocious’ to describe Israel’s actions shows clear disagreement with said actions. Another negative adjective in the article used to describe Israel’s attack is the word ‘devastating’. Noteworthy is also, that the entire article does not contain the words ‘terror’ (as in ‘terror attack’ or ‘terror group’ etc), ‘terrorism’ or ‘terrorist’ at all, unlike most of the other NYP articles.

In the NYP articles, Israeli soldier and civilians alike were held as ‘hostage’ in Gaza, whereas Palestinians ‘arrested’ or ‘imprisoned’ for ‘terror charges’ were mentioned, with little to no attention drawn to the Palestinian civilians, even children, being held captive in Israel. The word ‘hostage’, when referring to people held captive by Hamas, appeared in the NYP data 28 times. Other words for these people used by NYP were ‘captive’ (six appearances) and prisoner (one appearance). In contrast, the NYT mentioned the word ‘hostage’, as in Israeli hostages, 18 times. No other noteworthy terms for the hostages were used.

4.2 Grammar

This section presents findings related to grammar. An aspect of grammar that was particularly important was modality, which refers to the “uncertainty of sentences”, i.e. the use of modal verbs, adverbs and adjectives, as well as tenses, tag questions and hedges (Yu and Zheng 2022, 352). Out of all modal devices, mostly modal verbs were present in the dataset, similarly to Yu and Zheng (2022). They divided the modal verbs into Low, Median and High value categories, which was also done in this study.

Table 9 illustrates the use of modal verbs used in the NYP articles and their distribution. In total, 78 modal verbs were found in the NYP data, as can be seen in the table.

Table 9 Modal Verbs in the NYP

Value	Modal verb	n	% of total
Low	may not	1	
	can	4	

	cannot	1	
	could not	2	
	could	7	
		15	19%
Median	will not	1	
	will	18	
	would	36	
	should not	1	
		56	72%
High	must	6	
	have to	1	
		7	9%
	total	78	100 %

In summary, fifteen were of Low value; fifty-six were of Median value; seven were of High value. Therefore, Median value modal verbs were the most common, and High value modal verbs the least common.

Table 10 shows the number and distribution of modal verbs in the NYT articles. Overall, the use of modal verbs in similar in both newspapers.

Table 10 Modal Verbs in the NYT

Value	Modal verb	n	% of total
Low	might	3	
	can	1	
	could	11	
	could not	1	
		16	31%
Median	will	8	
	would	16	
	would not	3	
	should	1	
	shall	1	
		29	57 %
High	must	2	
	have to	4	
		6	12%
	Total	51	100 %

Like the NYP, Median value modal verbs were the most common with twenty-nine verbs, whereas High value modal verbs were the least common with only six verbs. Low value modal verbs fell in between with sixteen verbs. Median value modal verbs being the most frequent is in line with Yu and Zheng (2022) findings.

According to the data, the NYP uses slightly more modal devices than the NYT, despite the NYT data having a slightly larger word count. However, it does not seem like the modal verbs used by either party exhibited obvious bias to any direction, but some examples could still be found. They will be discussed in the next section. As mentioned, modal verbs were the most common modality device found in the data. However, modal adverbs and adjectives such as ‘likely’ and ‘apparently’, and ‘potential’ also appeared a few times.

5 Discussion

This section focuses on interpreting and explaining the results of the analysis presented in the previous section, in accordance with the 3D model. The interpretation stage addresses the intertextuality of the articles, i.e. what sources were referenced and, therefore, whose point of view and voice were manifested in them. The explanation stage explains why the discourse is the way it is, taking into account its social, cultural and historical contexts and hegemonies (Yu and Zheng 2022, 360).

5.1 Interpretation

Interpretation is the analysis of discursive practice (Fairclough 2002, 78), which, as explained before, involves the analysis of production, distribution and consumption, which all happen differently in various social contexts. As explained earlier, one dimension of discourse practice, i.e. the interpretation of texts, is intertextuality, which is also the most relevant part of interpretation in the context of news discourse. This sub-section focuses mostly on the intertextuality of the news articles, that is, what other sources were referenced in them. News sources were counted in the way that for example different UN officials or IDF officers for example were grouped together as simply UN or IDF and counted as part of those groups. Each individual source was counted only once.

The NYP articles referenced many Israeli sources. However, among the NYP articles, especially those written by AP also referenced more impartial sources, such as UN officials. All in all, while the NYP seemed to report more in favor of Israel, it still did refer to some Palestinian sources, such as the GHM, Hamas leaders and even Palestinian civilians, in some cases. These findings are summarized in table 11:

Table 11 Sources in the NYP

Source	n
Hamas	3
Other Palestinian org.	3
Palestinian civilians	3
Israel government	7
Israeli military	3
Israeli citizens	1
Other Israeli org	1
Israel news	3

American news	2
American citizens	2
US military	1
US government	7
The UN	4
Unspecified Pal. media	1
Other countries' news	2
Other countries gov	2
Other unspecified	5
Hezbollah	1
Total	51

Table 11 shows what news sources the NYP quoted in the data. *Hamas* includes the organization as a whole, specific Hamas leaders as well as the organization's armed wing, the al-Qassam Brigades, whereas *Israeli military* includes, for example, army spokespeople as well as statements made by the IDF as a whole, and *Israeli government* includes Israel in general in addition to specific ministers, such as Yoav Gallant and Benjamin Netanyahu. *Other countries' news* includes Reuters and The New Arab; *Other countries gov* on the other hand means Saudi Arabi and Qatar. *The UN* group includes both the organization as a whole and any specifically named experts and officials cited in the articles. *Other unspecified* sources refer to sources such as unspecified witnesses, reports, organizations and social media posts.

There were 15 Israeli sources and 10 Palestinian sources. While there is a clear difference, it is still proportionally small. There were 51 sources in total, out of which Israeli sources represent 29% and Palestinian sources represent 20%. Still, the difference is almost 10%, which may indicate pro-Israel bias. Another way to compare the data is to include Israel's and Palestine's allies in the numbers, so in this case, the American sources (12) and Israeli sources (15) together make up 27 (53%) sources, and Palestinian sources together with its ally Hezbollah make up only 11 (22%) sources. This way of looking at the data makes the difference, and therefore the Israeli bias, even more noticeable. Defining a neutral source is difficult, since as established, full objectivity is not entirely possible. However, for the purposes of this analysis, the neutral sources in this case are considered the human rights organizations and the *Other unspecified*, since they do not directly represent either side of the conflict. There were nine of these neutral sources (18%), which is fewer than either Palestinian or Israeli sources.

The same logic for the categories was applied for the NYT data as was for the NYP data, but some adjustments had to be made to account for the fact, that the NYT quoted sources differently, as will be discussed later. For example, the category of *Palestinian health officials* includes sources such as the GHM, a spokesman for the Al-Aqsa hospital and further unspecified health and hospital authorities and officials. *Other human rights organizations* refer to different HRW directors, Amnesty International, a nonprofit that monitors civilian deaths in conflicts, the International Federation for Human Rights and an unspecified human rights organization. The *Other countries* mentioned are Iran and Lebanon, whereas the *Other experts* at the end are the Palestinian ambassador for the United Kingdom, a British emergency specialist and a Palestine analyst at the International Crisis Group. *Other unspecified* includes otherwise completely unspecified reports, social media posts, officials and international aid groups. Table 12 list all the news sources quoted by the NYT:

Table 12 Sources in the NYT

Source	n
Hamas	4
Palestinian health officials	5
Palestinian civilians	6
Other Palestinian org	4
Other Palestinian sources	2
Israel government	8
Israeli military	6
Other Israeli sources	3
US government	3
Hezbollah	2
The UN	7
Other human rights organizations	6
International court	2
Other countries etc.	3
Other experts	3
Other unspecified	5
Total	70

The NYT included in total 21 Palestinian sources and 17 Israeli sources. The Palestinian sources represent 30% of all sources, whereas Israeli sources represent 24% respectively. There were 23 neutral sources, i.e. sources that are not Israeli, Palestinian, or governments

and organizations such as the US, Lebanon, Iran and Hezbollah. This is more than either Israeli or Palestinian sources, representing 33% of all sources.

Comparing the two newspapers, it can be seen, that the NYT (70 sources) quoted almost twenty more sources than the NYP (51), although, again, the NYT data was slightly larger in word count. The NYT used more both Israeli and Palestinian sources than the NYP, but the difference between the amount of Israeli and Palestinian sources was slightly larger than in the NYT. The NYT (23) used over twice as many ‘neutral’ sources as the NYP (9) did, representing 33% and 18% respectively.

5.2 Explanation

The findings presented in the previous sections will further be discussed and explained in this section by setting them in the larger social context, which was further elaborated on in section 2.2. In general, it appears that The New York Post tends to report from the point of view of Israel rather than Palestine. The NYP’s pro-Israel bias was especially evident in the wording, what the journalists chose to focus on in their articles and from what perspectives. This is in line with the historical context, considering that the US is a longstanding ally of Israel and therefore its media is not as likely to openly criticize it, as opposed to, for example, the media of a country that does not have diplomatic ties with Israel. Furthermore, this supports some of the earlier studies made on the topic, that suggested that western newspapers were biased in favor of Israel (Ahmed, Abed and Hussain 2022; Sanz Sabido 2015), especially conservative ones (Azim and ur Rehman (2024).

Although it also exhibited some pro-Israel bias in some instances, for example with wording, The New York Times was more Palestine-friendly than the New York Post. In these articles, its journalists use less negative vocabulary and cite more Palestinian sources, which is in line with the expectation for the liberal source, similarly to how Azim and ur Rehman (2024) found Palestine to be depicted more favourably in liberal The Guardian than in the NYP. In fact, aside from the alliance between Israel and the US, the biased ways of reporting can be attributed to the political leanings of each newspaper, since the conservative one did end up proving to be more pro-Israel. The pro-Israel bias in American news can be attributed to *orientalism*, and by extension *othering*, similarly to how Sanz Sabido (2015) applied it to the pro-Israel bias in British news. These explanations will be further explored later in this section. The importance of *making strange* and challenging internalized, racist attitudes, whether intentional or not, becomes increasingly clear when looking at how the

disadvantageous, racialized side of the conflict that deals with intertwining systems of oppression is represented in western newspapers.

As established, each newspaper could be inclined to cater to their respective audiences, that is, the NYT to liberals, and the NYP to conservatives. The NYP is a conservative newspaper that is more adverse towards Palestinians than the NYT, as Palestinians are considered non-white and non-Christian, specifically Muslim. This is despite Palestine having one of the oldest Christian communities in the world, although it has dwindled since Hamas took control of Gaza and has continued to do so as Israel has kept attacking the area (Mallinder 2023). In any case, Palestinians are largely regarded as Muslim, since Islam is the religion the majority of the population follows and Hamas endorses. Liberal values, which the NYT is usually thought to represent, on the other hand, are far more inclusive of *the other* than conservative values. Since most of the US is considered Christian and white, this would mean that the liberal newspaper would be more sympathetic towards brown people and Muslims. Also, as KhosraviNik (2010) found, conservative newspapers are often more likely to report on RASIM when they engage in negative actions. In summary, both newspapers were mostly in line with their expected values. These results demonstrate, how discourses are important components of ideologies, as was explained in the background section.

Another thing that can explain the differences is the fact, that NYP is a tabloid that does not require a subscription to read online, whereas the NYT is a broadsheet newspaper with a monthly subscription. This could for example mean that while the NYP must rely more on sensational headlines and stories to get clicks, the NYT does not need to do so to generate revenue, as it has its subscribers. Relating this to *news values*, which were discussed in section 2., the NYP could choose to foreground news values such as *Negativity* by reporting negatively about Palestinians, because it generates clicks and, therefore, revenue. In contrast, the NYP foregrounding the news value of *Proximity* would explain the more Israel-positive tone of their articles, since Israel is culturally closer to the US than Palestine. In other words, Israel is *us*, Palestine is *them*. Positioning the conflict as *the other* (Palestinians) attacking *us* (Israel and, by extension, its allies), it generates more traffic on the website.

It is worth mentioning that many of the NYP news articles were written by the same journalist, Ronny Reyes. Therefore, whether his writing reflects more of his personal attitudes and beliefs, or the stance of the newspaper he works for is unclear, but perhaps both aspects play a role. However, as was disclosed in the methods section, the relationships between

different positions in the production of texts are often ambiguous, and therefore Reyes might be solely the animator here, rather than the principal, and so the attitudes expressed in his articles possibly reflect both the stance of the newspaper he works for and his own views. On the topic of the authors of the news articles, it should be noted, that the more neutral, or at least less pro-Israel pieces of news published by the NYP were not written by NYP journalists themselves, but by the Associated Press. This could reflect the reluctance of NYP and its journalists to report in ways that shows Israel in unfavorable light and Palestinians as anything but aggressors, while also wanting to quickly publish any news on the topic to generate revenue for the NYP via clicks. In these cases, then, AP could be considered the author and principal of the text instead of the NYP. As mentioned, the roles of the principal, the author and the animator are sometimes difficult to distinguish and the roles often overlap, so assigning pro-Israel or pro-Palestine views on any specific journalists is perhaps not entirely accurate, as the newspapers could have some sort of editorial policy or political line they wish to maintain. Individual journalists should nevertheless be held responsible for the news they write, as they hold the power to present events and people in certain lights, and to therefore shape perceptions and public opinions especially on minorities already in vulnerable positions, as was proven by for example Sanz Sabido (2015). In this case, this pertains to people of colour, Muslims and specifically Palestinians in not only, but especially in the US. This reflects further back to Matrood (2025), who found, that negative depictions of Palestinians affect the lives of innocent people, and it can therefore be deducted that the representations of Palestinians in American news may well expand to affect for example Arabs living in the US.

Next, I shall discuss what the newspapers chose to focus on in general, before moving onto discussing more specific findings that were presented in the earlier section. While both post-October 7th news articles by the NYP seemed to report almost entirely from an Israeli viewpoint, the article by Associated Press (published by NYP on their website) holds space to the Palestinian viewpoint as well.

- (5) The blockade, which restricts the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza, has devastated the territory's economy. [...] The Palestinians say the closure amounts to collective punishment (Associated Press 2023a)

Example (5) draws attention to the fact that Israel has had Gaza in a blockade since 2007, and therefore does not play into the narrative that Hamas attacked peaceful Israel out of nowhere, which is a sentiment evident in commonly used phrases, such as 'Israel has the right to defend

itself', that has been used to justify Israel's actions by, for example, the White House (Associated Press 2023a). It takes into account the social and historical context that has shaped the animosity between the two nations without solely blaming Hamas. The next example is from the same news article:

- (6) Nearly 200 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli military raids in the West Bank, which has seen heavy fighting. Israel says the raids are aimed at militants, but stonethrowing protesters and people uninvolved in the violence have also been killed (Associated Press 2023a)

Example (6) also demonstrates at least some sort of criticism towards the Israeli military by pointing out its tendency to inflict violence on Palestinian bystanders and unrest among civilians despite claiming to target militants. Similarly, another article by Associated Press (2023b) focuses mostly on the casualties, injuries, displacement and imprisonment of Palestinians, relying on sources such as the UN and Palestinian Health Ministry, but also mentions Israeli casualties and hostages at the end. This brings us back to the concept of the principal of texts, that is, whose position is being represented by the article. It can be argued that in most cases, where the Israeli point of view is overrepresented in comparison the Palestinian point of view, that Israeli sources are the principal of the reports. However, in these AP articles, Palestinian sources along with neutral sources, such as UN, are the principal. However, as these articles were not originally written by NYP, it would be problematic to give much credit of this acknowledgement to it. It would also be misleading to claim that reporting objective facts, such as Palestinian casualties and Israeli violence, or not calling all Palestinians terrorists, is pro-Palestine. However, seeing as how some of NYP articles hardly mentioned IDF's crimes towards Palestinians, if at all, it is a step in a more objective direction. This could be attributed to rising awareness of the crimes committed by the IDF against Palestinians and of the history of the two nations causing a shift in attitudes. In general, the Associated Press articles take a less pro-Israel stance than NYP's own articles, and report on casualties on both sides, without obvious cherry picking.

Next, I shall discuss and further analyse the findings related to the wording of the articles. It is indicated in section 4.1 that there is some apparent bias in the vocabulary used by the newspapers, for example, the different vocabulary used to refer to Israeli and Palestinian people and (military) activity. Whereas no negative vocabulary was used for Israeli people and organizations by either newspaper, the NYP used almost three times as much negative vocabulary for Palestinians (21%) than the NYT did (7%). Unexpectedly, both sources

showed pro-Israel bias in the sense that they used more negative vocabulary for Palestinian activity than Israeli activity (92% vs 72% in the NYT; 95% vs 49% in the NYP). However, the difference between Palestinians and Israelis was two times larger in the NYP, which means that the pro-Israel stance is also much more noticeable. Moreover, more negative vocabulary is not unusual, since many military-related words directly imply violence.

Using different words for the IDF and Hamas may not always be due to an intentional pro-Israel or pro-Palestinian bias, as Hamas, a political organization rather than an army, has a military wing consisting of what could be considered guerrilla fighters, whereas the IDF is the official military of the state of Israel. Therefore, these two are admittedly not always directly comparable. However, using vocabulary with neutral or positive connotations only for one side, while calling the other side collectively as terrorists or other overly negative words is a clear sign of bias and attitude and cannot be called objective reporting, which, on the other hand, NYP does not claim to aim at. Nevertheless, as already established, news media has the power to shape perceptions and therefore this kind of bias is arguably questionable and even irresponsible. Using more neutral words, such as fighter or soldier, for both, would avoid painting all Palestinians as villains and the IDF as heroes, which the NYP arguably does with using words such as ‘terrorist’ overwhelmingly for Hamas members, or even Palestinians in general, while calling the IDF members just ‘soldiers’ and ‘troops’. This finding is similar to that of Ahmed, Abed and Hussain (2022), who found that Palestinians are represented as mostly terrorists and kidnappers in western news media.

On the other hand, interestingly, the NYT seems to go out of its way to avoid using negative terms such as terrorist, and, for example, one of its journalists, Martínez (2023), uses terms such as ‘militant attack’ and ‘militant group’, whereas a NYP article would likely, based on the data, replace ‘militant’ with ‘terror’ or ‘terrorist’. Martínez’s choice, for example, makes the article more neutral in its tone while still reporting on violent actions by Hamas. If the newspapers were to refer to Hamas soldiers as ‘freedom fighters’, for example, and called Israel’s strikes to civilian areas in Gaza terror attacks, they would paint a very different picture of the situation to their readers and have the potential to make Hamas appear as heroes instead. This is because, as explained in the background section, news media has power in discourse, since it can be used to achieve social goals, which is why it is so important to hold the outlets accountable for the word choices they make, and language in news is not random, as stated in earlier studies (Rubing and Sandaran 2023). When IDF is represented neutrally or positively, its atrocities against brown people and Muslims, even children, is normalized.

Classifying Hamas as terrorist, but not the IDF, is biased when both are committing essentially the same acts, the difference being that one is an ally to the USA, whereas the other is brown and Muslim, so *the other*, which is why their actions condemned.

Moreover, the fact that the NYP mentioned Hamas more than the NYT did shows how the NYP wants to represent Palestinians: as the aggressors. In comparison, the word ‘civilian’, when referring to Palestinians, being mentioned in the NYP 18 times compared to 22 in the NYT is not a major difference, especially if one accounts for the minor difference in word counts of each dataset. However, considering how many more times the words ‘Hamas’ and ‘terrorist’ were mentioned by the NYP, it does further confirm the impression that, to the NYP, Palestinians are far more often the aggressors than the victims of the situation. The NYP seems to subscribe to a narrative where Palestinians attack, and Israel defends itself. These findings on wording show that despite Palestinian casualties being manifold compared to Israeli casualties, and the fact that Israel has Gaza under a siege, many NYP articles ignore the suffering experienced by Palestinians, since they are *the other*, whereas Israel, to them, is *us*. The conservative source reporting negatively on Palestinians and their activity relates back to Azim and ur Rehman (2024), who also found that the NYP depicted Palestinians as solely the aggressors. It also reflects to *framing*, which was mentioned in the background, since here Palestinians are framed as the aggressors.

How the newspapers would refer to the conflict itself also tells something about how they want to present the situation to their readers. As already mentioned, the NYT used negative vocabulary for Israeli activity almost twice as many times in its articles as the NYP did (98 vs 52 times, representing 72% and 49%). This demonstrates how the liberal source is, perhaps, more willing to condemn Israel. Referring to the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict as a war has been criticized as it gives a false impression, that the situation is an armed conflict between two equal opponents, rather than a situation where a much more powerful occupying state is committing a genocide on an indigenous population that tries to resist the occupation. It could be argued that the newspapers were hesitant to use such words as ‘genocide’ when no official conviction has been made by the international court, since there would be the risk of reporting unconfirmed facts, but also to avoid being anti-Israel and therefore anti-America, resulting in losing the support of some of their readers. The imbalance in the use of the word ‘attack’ could also be explained in some sense, since Hamas’ offensive on October 7th, 2023, is commonly referred to as ‘the October 7th attacks’, which means that the word is automatically used more when referring the Hamas’ doings and naturally skews the data. However, that

does not take away the fact, that more neutral words were used to Israel's offensives. In fact, using more neutral words, such as 'operation' for IDF does show pro-Israel bias, whether intentional or not, because it polishes the violent events and diminishes the human suffering they have caused. The word choice 'retaliation' implies that Palestinians started the situation by attacking Israel for no particular reason, and Israel is merely responding in equal measures. However, as we know, Israel has inflicted injustice upon the Palestinian people for decades, yet Palestinians are not given the same grace as Israel, since the October 7th attack is not once called a 'retaliation' in the NYP or the NYT. Nonetheless, the number of times the word appeared in the data was surprisingly small, considering how often Israel's aggression is justified as self defense. It is also surprising that the NYT used it three times more than the NYP, despite the NYT being, in many other instances, more lenient towards Palestinians than the NYP. This difference, however, is not remarkable enough to draw definite conclusions on, since it did appear even in the NYT only nine times.

Some of the most blatant pro-Israel bias and justification for Israel's violence by NYP is displayed by Reyes after the IDF bombed the Tel al-Sultan refugee camp in Rafah, that had been designated as a safe zone by Israel, and where 1.4 million civilians were seeking shelter in May 2024. Reyes (2024b) refers to Hamas as terrorists and to the attack as a strike back against Hamas in the title and through the article:

(7) Israel strikes back at Hamas in Rafah after terrorists launched first major missile barrage in months

Referring to Israel's attack that killed refugees in a safe zone as a strike back against Hamas rather than as a war crime against sheltering civilians takes attention away from the horrors experienced by Palestinians and also takes away accountability from Israel, which gives the impression of taking Israel's side. Moreover, the structure and vocabulary in the example below by Reyes (2023b) also portrays vague use of language that seems to shift accountability directly away from Israel, while still admitting that its actions did cause the deaths:

(8) Israel conducted bombardments at the camp that reportedly killed dozens

In example 8, the journalist avoids making statements such as 'Israel bombed a refugee camp and killed dozens of Palestinian refugees' as it would show Israel in a worse light than the more circuitous way of putting it displayed in the example above. 'Conducted bombardments' gives much more leniency to Israel than just 'bombed'. This is in line with the common sentiment that by inflicting violence and oppression on Palestinians, Israel is merely

defending itself. This kind of language further normalizes and diminishes suffering of people not only in Palestine, but in the third world and is again linked to *othering*, which was discussed earlier. It is also in line with the long-going sentiment that ignores and even dehumanizes the Palestinian side, mentioning their suffering as an afterthought rather than as a tragedy like any other. This is related to *perspective* and *causality* that were introduced in the background section, since the journalist exercises their power by choosing which perspective they are bringing to the foreground and what the causalities of the situation are. Therefore, this example demonstrates pro-Israeli bias in its wording and grammar even though it is reporting on Israel's violence against Palestinian civilians in the way that it gives justification for the violence by framing it as a retaliation. It also glosses over the catastrophic consequences with the sentence structure. Overall, these findings on wording hint at the normalization of violence against Palestinians especially in the conservative sources and also enforce racist and Islamophobic stereotypes of Palestinians as aggressors. These negative depictions of an oppressed group of people further reproduces unequal power relations.

A few instances show NYP discrediting the data on Palestinian deaths and injuries collected by the GHM by adding that it is being controlled by Hamas, without any apparent relevance:

- (9) The Gaza Health Ministry — which is controlled by Hamas — reported at least 3,000 Palestinians have been killed and more than 12,500 injured (Vincent 2023)

Whether intentionally or not, the arguably unnecessary remark about the health ministry being 'controlled' by Hamas gives the message, that these numbers are not entirely reliable, as Hamas is called a terror group in the same article, which naturally takes away the organization's credibility and respectability in the eyes of the reader. The same kind of reporting can also be found in one of the articles by Reyes (2024b):

- (10) The death toll in Gaza has surpassed 36,000, according to the Hamas-run health ministry, which does not differentiate between civilians and terrorists

However, as mentioned earlier, the casualties reported by GHM have been deemed reliable and accurate by for example the UN, WHO and the HRW, and according to some sources the number of victims may be even higher than has been reported (Maad 2023). This kind of subtle skepticism yet again downplays the suffering of Palestinians victims and may awaken doubt towards the numbers in the article's readers, if there was none before. It is, again, in line with the dehumanization and othering of Palestinian and downplaying their death and suffering that the NYP has been exhibiting throughout the data.

In total, the occupied West Bank was discussed more in the NYT articles than by the NYP. This shows that the NYT is less hesitant to tell the Palestinian side of the story than the NYP is whereas NYT seems to be more inclined to taking the context of Israel illegally occupying Palestinian territories into account in their reporting. This demonstrates that the liberal news source is more likely to report on the long-going oppression of Palestinian people by Israel. All in all, the failure of most of the NYP articles to even mention the decades long occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel, or what originally lead to the hostilities between the two nations indicates, again, that the NYP depicts Palestinians solely as aggressors, and ignores the historical background of the situation and the long ongoing struggle of Palestinians under Israeli oppression. Ignoring the occupation of West Bank is one example of this. It is also an example of backgrounding certain historical and social contexts instead of foregrounding them in order to paint a more favorable picture of the ally.

Like vocabulary, grammar can also be used to shift accountability and soften statements to avoid painting an active participant as an aggressor, and that, for example, deaths of Palestinian refugees were caused by some passive force such as a bombing, rather than Israel's deliberate attacks, as was demonstrated earlier in example 8. The use of modality also gives more space for interpretation and allows more uncertainty, as saying something *might* have happened still leaves open the possibility that it did not, in fact, happen, and therefore gives journalists more room to report hearsay, for example. Overall, the NYT using fewer modal verbs than the NYP could indicate that the NYT is more definitive in and certain about their reporting, considering that the NYT data was a bit larger word count wise. This could be because the NYP is a tabloid, which tend to sensationalize topics, and therefore it is possible that they reported on less certain topics and events. However, the data shows that the NYT used low value modal verbs slightly more often than the NYP did: the NYT used them 16 times, while in the NYP data they appeared 15 times. The difference of one token is insignificant, but in comparison to the word counts (which was slightly larger for the NYT) and the total number of modal verbs found in the data, the difference is larger (31% of all modal verbs for the NYT and 19% for the NYP, as indicated in tables 5 and 6). Low value modal verbs are those that especially mark uncertainty (*may, might, could, can, etc.*), which then indicates, that the NYT is in fact more uncertain about their reporting than the NYP. Median value modal verbs, such as *would and should*, can also be used for this purpose. The NYP used these more. Next, the modal verbs used in the articles shall be examined in their contexts to get a better understanding of how they may be used to portray attitude.

(11) Netanyahu has repeatedly claimed that military pressure would be the best way to secure the freedom of the estimated 134 hostages being held in Gaza. (Reyes 2024a)

Example 11 illustrates the use of the modal verb *would* to indicate uncertainty. The article does not directly make the claim that military pressure indeed is the best way to free the hostages, but still holds space for the possibility. Along with the “Netanyahu [...] claimed”, it also shifts responsibility and credit for the statement from the NYP and Reyes to Netanyahu, as a way to wash their hands from the possibility that military pressure (i.e. attacking the Gaza strip) is not the best way to get Hamas to free the hostages. Therefore, this quote is an example of the NYP giving justification for Israel’s military activity in the Gaza strip while being open for the possibility of retracting this support in case the statement becomes obsolete without having to eat its own words.

Example 12 below is from the NYT. Similarly to the NYP, the NYT gives credit for the prediction to unspecified officials, and uses *would* to leave space for uncertainty.

(12) [A]ccording to one of the officials, Israeli intelligence officers believe that [...] Yahya Sinwar, has become more amenable in recent weeks to a deal that would allow for only a temporary truce. (Bergman, Kingsley and Levenson 2024)

This quotation includes the possibility of the statement made in it not holding up and Sinwar not accepting anything but a permanent truce. Nonetheless, no use of modality marked with explicit bias or attitude can be found in the article.

Examples 11 and 12 were both taken from articles that had the most appearances for the modal verb *would* in each dataset. Interestingly, both articles were also published in February 2024 and discussed the hostage negotiations going on at the time.

However, one more note about uncertainty can be made. The idea that the NYP is less certain about its reporting is enforced in some articles that went even as far as reporting unchecked facts and, in that way, representing Palestinians negatively. For example, in section 4.1. the division of Hamas and IDF into terrorists and soldiers was discussed. An example of this was an article Reyes (2023), that reported about a large group of Palestinian being imprisoned by Israel. In this article, the men are collectively referred to as terrorists, despite no proof that all of them were affiliated with Hamas or other such organizations, let alone that they had committed acts of terrorism at all. As mentioned earlier, this can also be seen as a means to dehumanize Palestinian prisoners and to give justification for Israel taking prisoners of war, or hostages, which is a war crime. Kershner (2023) from the NYT reports on the same event

and states that Israel has apprehended people *suspected* of terrorism. Putting it the way Kershner does already leaves much more space for the possibility that all of the people arrested are not guilty of terrorism and therefore is less biased in that sense. However, Reyes (2023) also cites Palestinian sources in his article, giving a voice to several Palestinians who have come forward and said that there were civilians among those arrested. Kershner (2023) only cites Israeli sources, mainly military spokespeople, therefore not giving a voice to Palestinians. However, she does also mention that the military's stories are impossible to verify for sure, therefore leaving the possibility that the Israeli sources are not accurate.

As for intertextuality, based on how many sources each newspaper quoted in their articles, it appears that the NYT is slightly more impartial, since it used overall more sources than the NYP (70 and 51, respectively). Moreover, the NYP used more Israeli sources, while the NYT used more Palestinian sources, but the difference between the two sources was larger for the NYP, which indicates rather pro-Israeli bias from the NYP than pro-Palestine bias from the NYT, as the NYT did also cite 17 Israeli sources. While the differences were not striking, they are nonetheless worth noting here, because they demonstrate whose perspective each newspaper wants to depict. The NYP favoring Israel's side of the story is further proven by the fact that the Palestinian sources quoted by the NYP were three Hamas sources, three civilians, three Palestinian organizations and one unspecified Palestinian media source. This is in contrast with the NYT that cited Palestinian health officials five times, on top of four Hamas sources, six civilians, four Palestinian organizations and two other Palestinian sources. Citing several different health officials shows that the NYT wants to perhaps give credibility to and a voice to them. The NYP cited the GHM too, but it discredited their statistics, and did not use other Palestinian health authorities as sources for their authorities, which is why the GHM was grouped under *Other Palestinian org* in the table presenting the NYP sources. Also, diversity in the sources that newspapers cite show that they have done their research on the topic and do not rely too much on the same few sources. This also indicates more objective reporting. Furthermore, the NYT used over twice as many sources deemed neutral in this study (23) than the NYP did (9), which is, considering the word count for each dataset, also nearly twice as much percentagewise (33% vs. 18% respectively). Therefore, based on these findings, the NYT was slightly more objective, leaning in favor of the Palestinian side, while the NYP again leaned more pro-Israel and was less objective. The direction the NYT has taken thus goes against the expectation, that an American newspaper favors Israeli sources based on the historical, political and economic alliance between the two, while the

NYP's direction is in line with said expectation. Then again, the NYT again represents the more liberal, or left-wing side, as Palestinians are considered *the other*, whereas the NYP stays more conservative, or right-wing, as Israelis are considered *us*, which has been a common theme in the findings.

In the Introduction section three research questions were presented, and I will repeat them here for the sake of clarity and then answer them based on the findings presented in the previous section and on the discussion in this section. The research questions this thesis aims to answer are as follows:

1. What kind of bias or attitude is explicit or implicit in the language used by American news?
2. How do these attitudes differ between conservative and liberal sources included in the dataset?
3. How have these attitudes changed in the eleven months following the initial attack?

To answer the first research question based on the findings presented and discussed, some pro-Israel, anti-Palestine bias an attitude is both explicit and implicit in American news, but also Israel-critical viewpoints were expressed. It can be argued that the language used by the NYP reveals pro-Israel bias and attitude. It has a tendency of using vocabulary and grammar structures that present Israel in a more positive light, which gives the impression that Israel is merely defending itself against Hamas in equal measures, whereas Palestinians are the aggressors and any Palestinian casualties are often even glossed over. While some of the findings indicate pro-Israeli bias in the wordings for Palestinian activity, the NYT was still much more neutral and Palestine-positive than the NYP. The language of its language conveyed sympathy for both the Israeli side and the Palestinian side. This was, however, more evident in the wording. Modality, which is the second element of description in addition to Wording analysed in this thesis, did not show as clear difference in attitude between the two newspapers, although the results between the two differed a little. However, these differences were not directly in line with attitude or bias. The NYP also cited more Israeli sources than Palestinian sources, whereas it was the opposite for the NYT. Therefore, in short, the NYP gave more space for Israeli voices, whereas the NYT gave more space for Palestinian voices.

Based on these findings then, the answer to question number two is that the conservative news source showed more positive bias towards Israel than the liberal one, as the conservative

source (the NYP) used more negative vocabulary for Palestine and cited more Israeli sources than the liberal newspaper (the NYT), which was slightly more objective, leaning more in favor of Palestine since it cited more Palestinian sources and used more negative vocabulary for Israel than for Palestine, also more so than the NYP did.

To answer research question three, no noticeable change in the bias or attitude was evident in the NYT data. It is likely that any slightly differing stances found in the dataset were due to the articles being written by different journalists. The same can be said for the NYP, where the differences in stance and attitude could be explained by the fact that not only were they written by different journalists, but also originally published on a different news website. Nonetheless, it is somewhat evident that while the first articles reported more on the negative effects of Palestinian activity, the journalists later reported more on the negative effects of the conflict on Palestinian territories and their residents by Israel. Again, this is explained by the timeframe starting from the October 7th attacks by Hamas, which means that it is only makes sense that the first articles focused more on that, whereas the later articles focused more on the attacks by Israel. Nevertheless, no major chronological changes in the attitude and bias were evident in the wording and grammar data, nor were the news sources drastically different between the older and the newer articles. Therefore, it can be concluded that no clear shift in the attitudes happened between October 2023 and September 2024 in the NYP, whereas the difference was insignificant in the articles published by the NYT. The differences had less to do with their date of publication than they did with who wrote the article and with the specific topics of each article.

6 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this thesis, it appears that the NYT is more critical of Israel, whereas the NYP is more favorable of Israel, as hypothesized. This was evident in the word choices made by the journalists, but the analysis of intertextuality also revealed some further pro-Israel bias in the NYP. In description analysis, wording seems to have revealed the largest differences between the two newspapers, whereas modality alone did not reveal notable differences between the newspapers, nor indicate any obvious bias. The wording part of the analysis revealed, for example, that the NYP used more negative vocabulary when it discussed Palestinian people and activity. In contrast, the NYT was not as hostile towards Palestinians and was slightly more lenient towards Palestinian resistance. However, it did not display overwhelming pro-Palestine bias per se. Nonetheless, the kind of blatant pro-Israel bias and even dehumanization of Palestinians that was present in the NYP data was not found to be as explicit in the NYT data. For example, it was found that the NYT used more neutral vocabulary. In fact, while nothing can be entirely objective, not that many instances of obvious bias could be detected in the NYT data, and so the Discussion part of this thesis therefore shifted the focus more on critiquing the NYP reporting, since it had more problematic material to discuss. While the NYT data did include some articles that swayed in the favor of either Israel or Palestine, the NYP, being a tabloid, seems to have an overall more dramatic way of reporting, which leads to more biased language and explicit attitude. Some variation was present in the data samples, and while the NYT does seem to be more neutral or Palestine-friendly in general, it is still not entirely free of western bias either as complete objectivity or impartiality is difficult to achieve due to inherent power structures imbedded in discourse and society as well as internalized attitudes that are to be actively challenged, as was initially discussed in background section. Overall, the findings seemed to be mostly in line with how Palestinians have been found to be represented in news in some earlier research.

From a chronological perspective, while the NYT has since the start of the current conflict swayed to a more Israel-critical direction, the analysis of neither the formal elements of the next, nor the intertextuality alone, did not reveal any obvious shift to one direction or the other. They did publish articles directly reporting on the catastrophic consequences of Israel's attacks instead of trying to give the impression that Israel only ever retaliates, but this did not have major impact on the findings. In contrast, the NYP's tendency to show any Palestinian

resistance in a negative light did not change. The findings did not indicate any significant differences between the earliest and latest articles in neither the description, nor the interpretation parts of the analysis. Therefore, while there was clear pro-Israel bias in the data in different articles, unexpectedly there were no significant chronological differences in the shifting attitudes. In fact, any minor changes that were present between the NYP articles can be attributed to the individual journalists rather than a shifting, common consensus.

As for future research, a broader look into the reporting of the conflict would be in order. This could include simply more news articles or newspapers, but also other forms of news media, such as data from television and social media news sites. Furthermore, a multimodal approach, which the scope of this thesis did not permit, would help get a more comprehensive look at how different sides of the conflict are represented in news reporting through different modes, such as images and videos. A broader perspective would allow for more definitive generalizations to be made.

In conclusion, the way the Israeli Palestinian crisis is often handled in these newspapers, especially in the NYP, portrays blatant double standards and ties into the historical downplaying and even erasure of brown people's suffering, and ignores the effects of decades of settler colonialism which has brought the situation to a boiling point. The idea that one essentially western nation, the state of Israel, has the right to defend itself against Palestinian armed resistance by systematically murdering tens of thousands of women, children, elders and civilians while the rest of the world either watches, or actively supports it in the case of the US, is undeniably dehumanizing, racist, colonialist and Islamophobic, since it does not view Palestinian lives as equally worthy as any other. Newspapers carry a massive responsibility when telling news stories, because they have every opportunity, and also the responsibility to research their topics and to draw attention to marginalized and oppressed people, yet, as illustrated in this thesis, especially the conservative sources barely scratched the surface of the context. Whether the newspaper articles analyzed here were limited in their word counts or not is not entirely clear, but it should not stop them from fair reporting and at least not demonizing the largely disadvantageous side of the conflict. To be more objective and in order not to play into existing hegemonies that withhold racist power structures, the journalists and news outlets should challenge their internalized attitudes and bias, according to which Palestinians are inherently the aggressors and their right to live their lives in peace comes second to the right of Israel to exist as an apartheid state which is built on oppression and theft.

References

Primary Sources

Abdulrahim, Raja and Aric Toler. 2024. "Israeli Soldiers Throw Three Seemingly Lifeless Palestinians Off a Roof." *The New York Times*. Accessed 16.10.2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/20/world/middleeast/israel-soldiers-palestinian-bodies-roof.html?searchResultPosition>

Abdulrahim, Raja and Ephrat Livni. 2024. "Ismail Haniyeh, a Top Hamas Leader, Is Dead at 62". *The New York Times*. Accessed 18.12.2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/31/world/middleeast/ismail-haniyeh-dead.html?searchResultPosition=11>

Associated Press. 2023a. "Netanyahu tells Israel 'We are at war' after Hamas launches an unprecedented attack, killing at least 300 people." *The New York Post*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://nypost.com/2023/10/07/israel-says-palestinian-militants-are-infiltrating-from-gaza-residents-told-to-remain-indoors/>

———. 2023b. "Palestinians crowd into ever-shrinking areas in Gaza as Israel's war against Hamas enters 3rd month." *The New York Post*. Accessed 23.10.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2023/12/08/news/palestinians-crowd-into-ever-shrinking-areas-in-gaza-as-israels-war-against-hamas-enters-3rd-month/>

———. 2024. "Israeli soldiers pushed 4 apparently lifeless bodies from roofs during a West Bank raid." *The New York Post*. Accessed 26.9.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2024/09/20/world-news/israeli-soldiers-pushed-4-apparently-lifeless-bodies-from-roofs-during-a-west-bank-raid/>

Bergman, Ronen, Patrick Kingsley and Michael Levenson. 2024. "Israelis Broach a Concession in Hostage Talk With Hamas." *The New York Times*. Accessed 16.10.2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/26/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-gaza-cease-fire-talks.html?searchResultPosition=2>

Boxerman, Aaron. 2024. "Hamas fires rockets at central Israel for the first time in months." *The New York Times*. Accessed 16.10.2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/05/26/world/israel-gaza-war-hamas-rafah?searchResultPosition=4#israels-military-says-the-rockets-came-from-rafah-where-its-troops-have-been-advancing>

- Cumming-Bruce, Nick. 2024. "U.N. Says Israeli War in Gaza Has 'Catastrophic Consequences' for Children." *The New York Times*. Accessed 23.9.2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/19/world/middleeast/un-israel-gaza-war-children.html?searchResultPosition=20>
- Kershner, Isabel. 2023a. "Militants stage a large-scale infiltration into Israel." *The New York Times*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2023/10/07/world/israel-gaza-attack?searchResultPosition=1#israel-gaza-militants-infiltrate>
- . 2023b. "Israel Says It Detained Hundreds of Terrorism Suspects in Gaza." *The New York Times*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/08/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-surrender-gaza.html?searchResultPosition=2>
- Kingsley, Patrick and Aaron Boxerman. 2023. "A prominent Gazan professor has been killed in a strike." *The New York Times*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2023/12/08/world/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news/refaat-alareer-gaza-poet?ogrp=ctr&smid=url-share>
- Land, Olivia. 2024. "Israeli tanks enter Rafah for first time in Gaza war." *The New York Post*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://nypost.com/2024/05/28/world-news/israeli-tanks-enter-rafah-for-first-time-in-gaza-war/>
- Martínez, Andrés R. 2023. "Here's a timeline of Saturday's attacks and Israel's retaliation." *The New York Times*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/08/world/middleeast/timeline-gaza-israel-attacks-hamas.html?searchResultPosition=1>
- Morphet, Jack, Andy Tillett and Kate Sheehy. 2024. "US airman Aaron Bushnell claimed to have classified knowledge of US forces fighting in Gaza tunnels on night before setting himself on fire: pal." *The New York Post*. Accessed 22.10.2024. <https://nypost.com/2024/02/27/us-news/aaron-bushnell-claimed-secret-knowledge-of-us-forces-in-gaza/>
- Patil, Anushka. 2024a. "Israel submits a report on measures to prevent genocide in Gaza, as ordered by the U.N.'s top court." *The New York Times*. Accessed 16.10.2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/02/27/world/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news?searchResultPosition=1#israel-submits-a-report-on-measures-to-prevent-genocide-in-gaza-as-ordered-by-the-uns-top-court>
- . 2024b. "Israeli Airstrike in Rafah Kills Dozens in Tent Camp, Gazan Officials Say." *The New York Times*. Accessed 16.10.2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/05/26/world/israel-gaza-war-amas-rafah?searchResultPosition=1#israeli-airstrike-kills-dozens-in-a-rafah-tent-camp-gazan-authorities-say-israel-says-it-targeted-a-amas-compound>

Rasgon, Adam and Aaron Boxerman. 2024. "New Israeli Evacuation Order in Gaza Displaces Palestinians Again." *The New York Times*. Accessed 18.12.2024.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/27/world/middleeast/israel-evacuation-order-gaza.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Reyes, Ronny. 2023. "Dozens of Hamas terrorists surrender to Israeli soldiers, report says." *The New York Post*. Accessed 23.10.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2023/12/07/news/dozens-of-hamas-terrorists-surrender-to-israeli-soldiers/>

———. 2024a. "Israel considers release of 15 terrorists for 5 female soldiers, as Biden hopes for cease-fire next week." *The New York Post*. Accessed 22.10.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2024/02/27/world-news/israel-considers-release-of-15-terrorists-for-5-female-soldiers/>

———. 2024b. "Israel strikes back at Hamas in Rafah after terrorists launched first major missile barrage in months." *The New York Post*. Accessed 22.10.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2024/05/26/world-news/amas-fires-hundreds-of-rockets-from-gaza-prompting-sirens-in-tel-aviv-for-first-time-in-months/>

———. 2024c. "Netanyahu weighs plan to evacuate all of northern Gaza, lay complete siege: report." *The New York Post*. Accessed 26.9.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2024/09/22/world-news/netanyahu-weighs-plan-to-evacuate-all-of-northern-gaza-lay-complete-siege-report/>

Vincent, Isabel. 2023. "Hamas captured enough Israelis during shock attack to swap for all jailed Palestinians: leader." *The New York Post*. Accessed 23.10.2024.

<https://nypost.com/2023/10/07/amas-captured-enough-israelis-during-shock-attack-to-swap-for-all-jailed-palestinians-leader/>

Secondary Sources

Abuaisha, Nour. 2024. "Hamas says 33 Israeli hostages killed in ongoing Israeli strikes on Gaza since October 2023." *Anadolu Ajansı*. Accessed 12.12.2024.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/amas-says-33-israeli-hostages-killed-in-ongoing-israeli-strikes-on-gaza-since-october-2023/3411379>

- Aderet, Ofer. 2023. "Six Israeli Hostages Held by Hamas Confirmed Killed in Captivity." *Haaretz*. Accessed 12.12.2024. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-01/ty-article/six-israeli-hostages-held-by-hamas-confirmed-killed-in-captivity/0000018c-251a-dc03-a9ec-3d7baab00000>
- Ahmed, Mudbir Shihab, Teiseer Mohammed Abed and Karama Hassan Hussain. 2022. "Israeli-Palestinian struggle: A critical discourse analysis." *International Journal of Health Sciences* 6, no 8: 3676–3688.
- Al Jazeera. 2025. "Hamas rejects Israel's 'formulation' to extend phase one of Gaza ceasefire." *Al Jazeera*. Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/1/hamas-rejects-israels-formulation-to-extend-phase-one-of-gaza-ceasefire>
- Al-Mugharabi, Nidal and James Mackenzie. 2025. "Hamas names four Israel female soldier hostages to be freed in second swap." *Reuters*. Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/hamas-gives-names-four-israeli-hostages-be-released-saturday-2025-01-24/>
- Al Shemary, Joseph. 2025. "Netanyahu said Israel will delay the release of 602 Palestinian prisoners that was supposed to happen on Saturday 'until the release of the next hostages is guaranteed'". Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/world-news/netanyahu-delay-release-palestinian-prisoners-hamas/>
- Altschiller, Donald. 2024. "Newspapers – which way do they lean?" *BU Libraries*. Accessed 23.9.2024. <https://library.bu.edu/blumenthal/bias>
- Amaireh, Hanan Ali. 2023. "A Critical Discourse Analysis of Al Jazeera's Reporting of the 2021 Israel-Palestine Crisis." *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* 24, no 1: 21–40.
- Amnesty International. 2022. "Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians". *Amnesty International*. Accessed 11.9.2024. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid/>
- . 2024a. "Israel defying ICJ ruling to prevent genocide by failing to allow adequate humanitarian aid to reach Gaza." *Human Amnesty International*. Accessed 13.12.2024. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/israel-defying-icj-ruling-to-prevent-genocide-by-failing-to-allow-adequate-humanitarian-aid-to-reach-gaza/>
- . 2024b. "'You Feel Like You Are Subhuman': Israel's Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza." *Amnesty International*. Accessed 12.12.2024. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/8668/2024/en/>

- Awawda, Osayd. 2018. "Palestine." *Yearbook of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law* 20, no 1: 285–90.
- Azim, Sumaira and Hafiz Javed ur Rehman. 2024. "A Discourse Analysis of Palestine Issue as Portrayed in the Selected Renowned International English Newspapers." *Research Journal of Religious Thoughts* 2, no 2: 24–33.
- Bednarek, Monika, and Helen Caple. 2014. "Why Do News Values Matter? Towards a New Methodological Framework for Analysing News Discourse in Critical Discourse Analysis and Beyond." *Discourse & society* 25, no 2: 135–158.
- Berman, Lazar. 2025. "IDF: Remains of Kfir and Ariel Bibas identified, but 3rd body sent by Hamas is not their mother Shiri." *The Times of Israel*. Accessed 28.3.2025.
https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-remains-of-kfir-and-ariel-bibas-idd-3rd-body-sent-by-hamas-isnt-their-mom-shiri/
- Bloor, Meriel and Thomas Bloor. 2007. *The Practice of Critical Discourse Analysis: an Introduction*. London: Hodder Education.
- Bose, Sumantra. 2007. *Contested Lands Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Cyprus, and Sri Lanka*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Brennan, David. 2023. "How Does Israel's Military Compare to Hamas Forces?" *Newsweek*. Accessed 20.9.2024. <https://www.newsweek.com/how-israel-military-idf-compare-hamas-forces-gaza-strip-palestinians-offensive-1834142>
- Bulla, David W. n.d. "Party press era | US Politics & Media in the 1800s." *Britannica*. Accessed 28.4.2025. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/party-press-era>
- Da Silva, Chantal and Daniele Hamamdjian. 2025. "Palestinians celebrate release of 90 prisoners and detainees held by Israel in first phase of ceasefire deal." *NBC News*. Accessed 5.2.2025. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/israel-hamas-war-ceasefire-deal-palestinian-prisoners-freed-west-bank-rcna188359>
- El-Bawab, Nadine and Jordana Miller. 2025. "Israel will not withdraw from Philadelphia corridor as stipulated in ceasefire." *ABC News*. Accessed 28.3.2025.
<https://abcnews.go.com/International/israel-withdraw-philadelphia-corridor-stipulated-ceasefire/story?id=119249232>
- Fairclough, Norman. 1989. *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
- . [1992] 2002. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity.
- . [1995] 2003. *Media Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fiske, John. 1994. *Media matters: Race and Gender in U.S. politics*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

- Fuchs, Amir and Suzie Navot. 2023. "Nation-State Law Explainer". *The Israel Democracy Institute*. Accessed 24.9.2024. <https://en.idi.org.il/articles/24241>
- Gisha. 2024. "Gaza Now: Current facts and figures." *Gisha*. Accessed 24.10.2024. <https://gisha.org/en/the-humanitarian-catastrophe-in-gaza-facts-and-figures/>
- Goldenberg, Tia and Samy Magdy. 2024. "Netanyahu Rejects Permanent Gaza Ceasefire, in Blow to U.S Backed Proposal." *Time Magazine*. Accessed 5.2.2025. <https://web.archive.org/web/20240626023013/https://time.com/6991146/netanyahu-rejects-permanent-ceasefire-israel-gaza/>
- Groseclose, Tim and Jeffrey Milyo. 2005. "A Measure of Media Bias." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 120, no. 4: 1191-1237.
- Haboush, Mustafa M.M. and Rania R.a Abushamala. 2025. "At least 118 killed by Israel in Gaza since ceasefire: Official." *Anadolu Ajansı*. Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/at-least-118-palestinians-killed-by-israel-in-gaza-since-ceasefire-official/3478860>
- Human Rights Watch. 2024a. "Israel Not Complying with World Court Order in Genocide Case." *Human Rights Watch*. Accessed 13.12.2024. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/26/israel-not-complying-world-court-order-genocide-case>
- . 2024b. "October 7 Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes by Hamas-led Groups". *Human Rights Watch*. Accessed 24.9.2024. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/17/october-7-crimes-against-humanity-war-crimes-hamas-led-groups>
- Jewish Voices for Peace. n.d. "Our Approach to Zionism." *Jewish Voices for Peace*. Accessed 7.4.2025. <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/resource/zionism/>
- KhosraviNik, Majid. 2010. "The representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in British newspapers: A critical discourse analysis." *Journal of Language and Politics* 9, no 1: 1–28.
- Lakoff, George. [1996] 2016. *Moral Politics: how liberals and conservatives think*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lidman, Melanie and Samy Magdy. 2025. "Israel cuts off electricity supply to Gaza, affecting a desalination plant producing drinking water." *Associated Press*. Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://apnews.com/article/gaza-israel-palestinians-war-news-ba90f0de3d4f64a1762d1a39f787817f>

- Maad, Assma. 2023. "Why the Gaza Health Ministry's death count is considered reliable." *Le Monde*. Accessed 11.11.2024. https://www.lemonde.fr/en/les-decodeurs/article/2024/10/13/why-the-gaza-health-ministry-s-death-count-is-considered-reliable_6729264_8.html
- Magdy, Samy and Drew Callister. 2024 "Here's what's on the table for Israel and Hamas in the latest cease-fire plan." *Associated Press*. Accessed 27.3. <https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-war-gaza-ceasefire-negotiations-7cec005ccd59dbd817ef9614a8611ca4>
- Majid, Aisha. 2024. "Top 25 US newspaper circulations: Print circulations of largest titles fall 14% in year to September 2023". *Press Gazette*. Accessed 23.9.2024. https://pressgazette.co.uk/media-audience-and-business-data/media_metrics/us-newspaper-circulation-2023/
- Mallinder, Lorraine. 2023. "Under Israeli attack: Who are the Christians of Gaza?" *Al Jazeera*. Accessed 13.2.2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/1/under-israeli-attack-who-are-the-christians-of-gaza>
- Matrood, Doaa Taher. 2025. "The representation of Gaza's humanitarian crisis in the BBC news report: A critical discourse analysis." *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation* 6, no 1: 924–928.
- Nabolsi, Iyad and Rania Abu Shamala. 2025. "Gaza hospital director subjected to torture, brutal abuse in Israel's notorious Sde Teiman prison: Palestinian lawyer." *Anadolu Ajansi*. Accessed 27.3.2025. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/gaza-hospital-director-subjected-to-torture-brutal-abuse-in-israel-s-notorious-sde-teiman-prison-palestinian-lawyer/3505358>
- NBC News. 2023. "IDF says it mistakenly killed 3 Israeli hostages during fighting." *NBC News*. Accessed 12.12.2024. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/live-blog/israel-amas-war-live-updates-rcna129901>
- New York Post. n.d. "About New York Post." *New York Post*. Accessed 20.11.2024. <https://nypost.com/about-new-york-post/>
- New York Times. n.d. "Company." *NYT CO*. Accessed. 20.11.2024. <https://www.nytc.com/company/>
- OCHA. 2025. "Reported impact snapshot | Gaza Strip." *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*. Accessed 27.3.2025. <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-4-march-2025>

- OHCHR. 2022. “Dismantling Israel’s illegal occupation is a sine qua non for Palestinian right to self-determination: UN expert”. *OHCHR*. Accessed 24.9.2024.
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/10/dismantling-israels-illegal-occupation-sine-qua-non-palestinian-right-self>
- . 2024. “Six-month update report on the human rights situation in Gaza: 1 November 2023 to 30 April 2024.” *OHCHR*. Accessed 13.12.2024.
<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/opt/20241106-Gaza-Update-Report-OPT.pdf>
- Paniagua, José Bernardo, Guillermo López García, Pelegrí Sancho Cremades and Eric Serra Alegre (eds.). 2007. *Critical Discourse Analysis of Media Texts*. Spain: Universitat de València.
- Pearlman, Wendy. 2011. *Violence, Nonviolence, and the Palestinian National Movement*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pennycook, Alastair. 1994. “Incommensurable Discourses?” *Applied Linguistics* 15, no 2: 115–138.
- . 2021. *Critical Applied Linguistics: A Critical Re-introduction*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Reuters. 2024. “UN agency says Israel still preventing aid from reaching northern Gaza.” *Reuters*. Accessed 23.10.2024. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-agency-says-israel-still-preventing-aid-reaching-northern-gaza-2024-10-21/>
- Reuters. 2025. “What we know about the Gaza hostage and prisoner exchange.” *Reuters*. Accessed 5.2.2025. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/what-we-know-about-gaza-hostage-prisoner-exchange-2025-01-18/>
- Rowlands, Lyndal, Nils Adler, Stephen Quillen and Maziar Motamedi. 2025. “Update: Israel block all aid into Gaza after first phase of truce ends.” *Al Jazeera*. Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2025/3/2/live-israel-us-propose-terms-to-extend-gaza-ceasefire-hamas-yet-to-reply?update=3547305>
- Rubing, Guo and Shanti. C Sandaran. 2023. “A critical discourse analysis of news discourse on in the times.” *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 13, no 1: 968–984.
- Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Sanz Sabido, Ruth. 2015. “Palestine in the British Press: A Postcolonial Critical Discourse Analysis.” *Journal of Arab & Muslim media research* 8, no 3: 199–216.

- Semler, Stephen. 2024. "Israel is holding more hostages than Hamas." *China Daily Hong Kong*. Accessed 24.10.2024. <https://www.chinadailyhk.com/hk/article/581982>
- Shakir, Omar. 2023. "Why Does Israel Have So Many Palestinians in Detention and Available to Swap?" *Human Rights Watch*. Accessed 24.20.2024. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/29/why-does-israel-have-so-many-palestinians-detention-and-available-swap>
- Shurafa, Wafaa and Sam Mednick. 2025. "Israel launches deadly wave of airstrikes across Gaza after ceasefire talks stall." *Associated Press*. Accessed 28.3.2025. <https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-hamas-war-news-ceasefire-hostages-03-17-2025-b8753b9458a44f10ab08aa9b12582780>
- Socolovsky, Jerome and Kat Lonsdorf. 2025. "First Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners freed in ceasefire deal with Hamas." *National Public Radio*. Accessed 27.3.2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/19/g-s1-43571/ceasefire-goes-into-effect-in-gaza>
- Spiro, Amy. 2023. "8 Israeli hostages freed from Gaza at end of seventh day of truce." *Times of Israel*. Accessed 12.12.2024. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hamas-frees-2-israeli-women-with-6-8-more-set-for-return-thursday-alongside-3-bodies/>
- Teo, Peter. 2000. "Racism in the News: A Critical Discourse Analysis of News Reporting in Two Australian Newspapers." *Discourse & Society* 11, no 1: 7–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926500011001002> (Original work published 2000)
- Thompson, John B. 1990. *Ideology and Modern Culture: critical social theory in the era of mass communication*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Timke, Edward. 2023. "The Advertising Industry's Advice on Accessibility and Disability Representation: A Critical Discourse Analysis." *Journal of Advertising* 52, no 5: 706–720.
- United Nations. 2024a. "Rights expert finds 'reasonable grounds' genocide is being committed in Gaza." *UN News*. Accessed 12.9.2024. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147976>
- . 2024b. "One-year of Israel's genocide against the Palestinians – Letter from the State of Palestine." *United Nations*. Accessed 24.10.2024. <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/palestine-letter-08oct24/>
- van Dijk, Teun A. 2000. "New(s) Racism: a Discourse Analytical Approach." In *Ethnic Minorities and the Media: Changing Cultural Boundaries*, edited by Simon Cottle, 33–49. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- . 2009. *Society and Discourse: How Social Contexts Influence Text and Talk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weiss, Gilbert and Ruth Wodak. 2003. "Introduction: Theory, Interdisciplinarity and Critical Discourse Analysis." In *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*, edited by Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak, 1–32. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wodak, Ruth. 2001a. "What CDA is about – a summary of its history, important concepts and its developments." In *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, 1–13. London: SAGE.
- . 2001b. "The discourse-historical approach." In *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, edited by Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer, 63–94. London: SAGE.
- Yu, Xiaofan, & Haicui Zheng. 2022. "A Critical Discourse Analysis of Different News Reports on the Same Event: Illustrated with Examples from China Daily and The Guardian." *Open Journal of Social Sciences* 10: 348–363.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Abbreviations and Tables

List of Abbreviations

3D	Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model
ANERA	American Near East Refugee Aid
ANM	Arab Nationalist Movement
AP	Associated Press
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDS	Critical Discourse Studies
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
Fatah, Fateh	Palestinian Liberation Movement (<i>Ḥarakat al-Tahrīr al-Waṭanī l-Filasṭīnī</i>)
GHM	Gaza Health Ministry
Hamas	Islamic Resistance Movement (<i>Ḥarakat al-muqāwamat al-islāmiyya</i>)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
JVFP	Jewish Voices for Peace
NGC	The National Guidance Committee
NYP	New York Post
NYT	New York Times
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PA	Palestinian Authority
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PNC	Palestinian National Charter
PNF	Palestinian National Front
PLA	Palestine Liberation Army
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNLU	United National Leadership for the Uprising
UNRWA	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

US	United States
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

List of Tables

Table 1: Terms Used for Palestinians by the NYT

Table 2: Terms Used for Palestinians by the NYP

Table 3: Terms Used for Israelis by the NYT

Table 4: Terms Used for Israelis by the NYP

Table 5: Israeli Military Activity in the NYT

Table 6: Israeli Military Activity in the NYP

Table 7: Palestinian Military Activity in the NYT

Table 8: Palestinian Military Activity in the NYP

Table 9: Modal Verbs in the NYP

Table 10: Modal Verbs in the NYT

Table 11: Sources in the NYP

Table 12: Sources in the NYT

Appendix 2. Finnish Summary

Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma tutkii kahden yhdysvaltalaisen valtavirta sanomalehden uutisointia Gazan konfliktista aikavälillä lokakuu 2023 ja syyskuu 2024. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää, minkälaisia ennakkoasenteita yhdysvaltalaismedia tuo esille uutisoinnissaan. Koska tutkimuksessa käsitellään yhteiskunnalliseen sortoon liittyviä aiheita, on kriittinen diskurssianalyysi eli CDA (*Critical Discourse Analysis*) sen viitekehys. Tarkemmin, tutkimusmetodina käytetään Faircloughin (1989) kolmiulotteista diskurssianalyysimallia (*Three-Dimensional Model*). Sen avulla tämä tutkimus pyrkii vastaamaan kolmeen tutkimuskysymykseen:

1. Minkälaiset poliittiset kannat ja asenteet ovat eksplisiittisiä tai implisiittisiä yhdysvaltalaisten sanomalehtien käyttämässä kielessä?
2. Kuinka nämä poliittiset kannat ja asenteet eroavat konservatiivisten ja vapaamielisten uutislähteiden välillä?
3. Kuinka nämä kannat ja asenteet ovat muuttuneet vuoden aikana 2023 lokakuun iskujen jälkeen?

Tässä kontekstissa 'kanta' (*stance*) viittaa ideologiseen asenteeseen, jonka kirjoittaja ottaa suhteessa esittämiinsä väitteisiin. Se voi olla kirjoittajan oma tai esimerkiksi hänen edustamansa instituution. Tämä tutkimus havainnoi yhdysvaltalaisten sanomalehtien esittämiä kantoja ja asenteita tutkimalla sen käyttämää kieltä. Faircloughin kolmiulotteisen mallin mukaisesti tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan sanomalehtijuttujen kirjallisia ominaisuuksia, eli sanamuotoa ja kielioppia, sekä intertekstuaalisuutta. Analyysin viimeisessä vaiheessa nämä tehdyt havainnot asetetaan suurempaan sosiaaliseen kontekstiin ja siten niille pyritään löytämään syitä. Israelin ja Yhdysvaltojen läheinen suhde motivoi pitkälti tätä tutkimusta, ja tutkimuksessa todetaankin, että on odotettavissa, että Yhdysvaltojen valtavirtamedia uutisoisi Israelille suotuisasti, mutta on myös yhtä lailla odotettavissa, että analysoiduista sanomalehdistä vapaamielisempi ottaa toisinaan myös Israel-kriittisemmän kannan.

Tutkielman pohjustuksena kerrotaan taustatietoa Gazan tilanteesta. Hamasin tekemässä lokakuun 2023 iskussa kuoli noin 1200 israelilaista ja 251 otettiin panttivangiksi. Israelin liittolaisena Yhdysvallat on tukenut Israelin sittemmin käynnistämää vastaiskua Gazan kaistaleella, jossa on kuollut maaliskuuhun 2025 mennessä noin 48 tuhatta Palestiinalaista. Tämä tutkielma huomioi Israelin ja Palestiinan väliseen suhteeseen liittyvät risteävät sarron

muodot. Lisäksi pohjustuksena kerrotaan, että Israelin valtio perustettiin historiallisesti palestiinalaisille kuuluneelle maalle vuonna 1948 (Pearlman 2011, 56–57) ja satoja tuhansia alueen alkuperäisasukkaita ajettiin kodeistaan uudisasukkaiden tieltä (Pearlman 2011, 58–64). Nykypäivänäkin Israel miehittää laittomasti palestiinalaisalueita (OHCHR 2022) ja sitä vastaan on nostettu syytä palestiinalaisten kansanmurhan suorittamisesta kansainvälisessä rikostuomioistuimessa.

Tutkimuksen viitekehyksenä käytetään kriittistä diskurssi analyysiä eli CDA:ta. Diskurssilla tässä kontekstissa viitataan lähtökohtaisesti kaikkeen ihmisten väliseen vuorovaikutukseen (Bloor ja Bloor 2007, 1–2). Diskurssilla ajatellaan usein olevan läheinen, ellei jopa fundamentaalinen suhde valtaan ja ideologiaan (Pennycook 1994, 127). CDA:lla ei ole yhtä universaalisti hyväksyttyä teoriaa, mutta yleisesti se tutkii kielen ja sosiaalisten ongelmien välistä suhdetta. Tarkemmin, CDA tutkii niitä keinoja, joilla kieltä käytetään saavuttamaan yhteiskunnallisia tavoitteita (Bloor ja Bloor 2007, 2). Faircloughin (2002, 3) mukaan diskurssi ei ainoastaan reflektoi tai kuvaa sosiaalisia kokonaisuuksia ja suhteita, vaan myös rakentaa ja on itse osa niitä. CDA on erityisesti kiinnostunut diskursseista, jotka liittyvät esimerkiksi politiikkaan, sukupuoleen, mediaan ja instituutioihin, ja jotka todentavat jollain tavalla yhteiskunnallisia kamppailuita ja konflikteja (Wodak 2001a, 2–3).

CDA:lla ei pyritä täydelliseen puolueettomuuteen, sillä se ei usein ole mahdollista, mutta analyysiä tehdessä tulee tiedostaa oma asemansa ja ennakkoluulonsa suhteessa diskurssiin (Bloor ja Bloor 2007, 4). Lisäksi on CDA:ssa oleellista huomioida rakenteet, asenteet ja ideologiat, jotka ovat normalisoituja, eli joihin olemme yhteiskuntana niin tottuneet, ettemme kyseenalaista niitä (Bloor ja Bloor 2007, 14). Kirjassaan *Orientalism* Said (1978) esittelee toiseuttamisen (*othering*). Toiseuttaminen luo välin 'meidän' ja 'toisen' välille esimerkiksi etnisen taustan tai ihonvärin perusteella. Tätä 'me vs. he' ajatusta käytetään 'toisen' ryhmän vieraannuttamiseen ja jopa sortamiseen.

Faircloughin mukaan joukkotiedotusvälineillä on merkittävä rooli tiedon, arvojen ja yhteiskunnallisten järjestelmien muovaamisessa (2003, 2). Uutismedioiden tuottajat käyttävät valtaa median kuluttajiin, koska heillä on valta päättää mistä keskustellaan ja miten, eli medialla on valta muovata käsityksiä esimerkiksi erilaisista ihmisryhmistä (Fairclough 2003, 12). Koska diskurssi ei synny tyhjiössä, vaikuttavat ne tavat, joilla sosiaalisia ryhmiä uutismediassa kuvataan myös siihen, miten kyseiset ihmisryhmät kohdataan yhteiskunnassa. Uutisarvot (*News values*) viittaavat niihin arvoihin, joilla mitataan sitä, mikä on uutisoinnin

arvoista (Bednarek ja Caple 2014, 136). Näitä ovat läheisyys (*Proximity*); negatiivisuus (*Negativity*); eliittisyys (*Eliteness*); superlatiivisuus (*Superlativeness*).

Sanomalehdet *The New York Times* (NYT) ja *The New York Post* (NYP) olivat tutkimuksen primaarilähteet. NYT ja NYP ovat Yhdysvaltojen luetuimmat sanomalehdet *Wall Street Journal* lehden jälkeen, joka jätettiin aineistosta pois, koska se keskittyy lähennä talousuutisiin. NYT on tyypillisesti vapaamielisempi sanomalehti kuin konservatiivisempi NYP. Konservatiivisilla arvoilla erityisesti amerikkalaisessa kontekstissa tarkoitetaan yleisesti ankaraa ulkopoliittikkaa, individualismia, perinteisyyttä ja kristinuskon suosimista. Vapaamielisyys edustaa kollektivismia ja suopeampaa suhtautumista ns. 'ulkopuolisiin', kuten maahanmuuttajiin ja muihin vähemmistöihin (Lakoff 2016, n.p.). NYT ja NYP valittiin primaarilähteiksi suurten lukijakuntien vuoksi, ja koska ne tyypillisesti edustavat kahta vastakkaista arvomaailmaa.

Analyysiä varten valittiin sanomalehtien nettiversioista 22 uutisartikkelia. Jotta aineistot olisivat sanamäärältään suurin piirtein samankokoiset, NYT:sta valittiin 12 uutista ja NYP:sta 10 uutista. Ne valittiin kirjoittamalla joko lehden omaan hakukenttään (NYT) tai Googlen (NYP) tarkennettuun hakuun hakusanat *Israel* ja *Palestine* ja asettamalla tarkennetun haun aikaikkunoiksi 10 (NYP) tai 12 (NYT) eri ajankohtaa aikaväliltä 7. lokakuuta 2023 ja 22. syyskuuta 2024. Kunkin haun jälkeen ensimmäinen relevantti uutisartikkeli valittiin aineistoon. Tutkimuksessa analysoitiin ainoastaan tekstiä, eli kuvat ja videot jätettiin analyysin ulkopuolelle.

Faircloughin mukaan diskurssissa on kolme ulottuvuutta: teksti (*text*), vuorovaikutus (*interaction*) ja sosiaalinen konteksti (*social context*) (1989, 109). Kukin artikkeli analysoitiin käyttämällä Faircloughin menetelmää, jossa on kolmen diskurssin ulottuvuuden mukaisesti kolme vaihetta: *description* ('kuvaus'), *interpretation* ('tulkinta') ja *explanation* ('selitys'). Lyhyesti, ensimmäisessä vaiheessa analysoidaan tekstiä, eli sanoja ja kielioppia; toisessa vaiheessa analysoidaan tekstien välistä vuorovaikutusta, eli intertekstuaalisuutta; viimeisessä vaiheessa analysoidaan näiden suhdetta sosiaaliseen kontekstiin.

Ensin analysoitiin uutisissa käytettyjä sanavalintoja israelilaisista ja palestiinalaisista ihmisistä ja järjestöistä sekä kummankin puolen toiminnasta. Eri ilmaisut koottiin yhteen, laskettiin ja luokiteltiin joko negatiiviseksi, positiiviseksi tai neutraaliksi. Analyysi osoitti, että NYP käytti noin kolme kertaa enemmän negatiivisia sanoja kuvaamaan palestiinalaisia kuin NYT (21 % vs. 7 %). Israelilaisista kumpikaan lähde ei käyttänyt avoimesti negatiivisia ilmaisuja. Kun

analysoitiin kunkin sanomalehden käyttämää sanastoa sotilaallisesta toiminnasta, saatiin selville, että NYT käytti israelilaistoiminnasta enemmän negatiivista sanastoa (72 %) kuin NYP (49 %). NYP taas käytti palestiinalaistoiminnasta hieman enemmän negatiivista sanastoa (95 %) kuin NYT (92 %). Tutkimuksessa todettiin kuitenkin, että vaikka ero prosentuaalisesti ei ole suuri, on se merkittävä määrällisesti (81 kpl vs. 45 kpl). Tämän perusteella tutkimuksessa todettiin, että NYP näyttää palestiinalaiset negatiivisemmassa ja israelilaiset positiivisemmassa valossa kuin NYT, joka oli neutraalimpi, mutta ei silti täysin välttänyt palestiinalaisten negatiivista representaatiota. NYP-aineistossa oli selkeä jako palestiinalaisiin terroristeihin ja israelilaisiin sotilaisiin, mikä osoittaa selkeää vihamielisyyttä palestiinalaisia kohtaan.

Kieliopin analyysissä keskityttiin modaalisuuteen, jolla voidaan ilmaista mahdollisuutta tai epävarmuutta. Tässä vaiheessa kaikki uutisartikkeleiden sisältämät modaaliverbit laskettiin ja luokiteltiin seuraaviin kategorioihin: *low value* ('matala arvo'), *median value* ('keskitason arvo') ja *high value* ('korkea arvo'). *High value* modaaliverbit ilmaisevat epäkohteliaampaa puhetapaa kuin *median value* ja *low value* modaaliverbit.

NYP aineistosta löytyi yhteensä 78 ja NYT aineistosta 51 modaaliverbiä. NYP aineiston modaaliverbeistä matalan arvon verbejä oli 15 kpl (19 %), keskitason verbejä 56 kpl (72 %) ja korkean arvon verbejä 7 kpl (9 %). NYT aineiston modaaliverbeistä taas matalan arvon verbejä löydettiin 16 kpl (31 %), keskitason verbejä 29 kpl (57 %) ja korkean arvon verbejä 6 kpl (12 %). Molemmissa aineistoissa keskitason modaaliverbit olivat yleisimpiä ja korkean arvon modaaliverbit harvinaisimpia. Aineistojen perusteella tutkimuksessa todetaan, että NYP käyttää ylipäätään modaaliverbejä hieman enemmän kuin NYT, vaikka jälkimmäinen aineisto oli sanamäärällisesti hieman suurempi. Tutkimuksessa todettiin, että tästä voitaisiin päätellä NYT:in olevan varmempi uutisissaan. Toisaalta tutkimus huomioi myös sen, että NYT käytti NYP:ia enemmän matalan arvon modaaliverbejä voisi indikoida, että NYT oli itseasiassa NYP:ia epävarmempi uutisissaan.

Intertekstuaalisuuden analyysi suoritettiin tutkimalla, minkälaisiin lähteisiin uutisissa viitattiin, jotta saataisiin selville, kenen näkökulmaa niissä tuotiin esille. Lähteet kategorisoitiin hieman eri tavoin riippuen lehdestä, koska ne viittasivat jokseenkin erityyppisiin lähteisiin. Kuitenkin kummankin aineiston käyttämistä lähteistä voitiin löytää seuraavat kategoriat: Hamas, muut palestiinalaiset organisaatiot, palestiinalaiset siviilit, Israelin hallitus, Israelin armeija, Yhdysvaltain hallitus, Yhdistyneet kansakunnat (YK), muut

maat, muut määrittelemättömät. Yksittäisiä lähteitä oli esimerkiksi Israelin pääministeri Benjamin Netanjahu ja Gazan terveysministeriö. Kukin yksittäinen lähde laskettiin vain kerran.

Analyysi paljasti, että NYT viittasi 70 erilaiseen lähteeseen, kun taas NYP käytti vain 51 eri lähettä. NYP viittasi enemmän israeliläislähteisiin (15 kpl, 29 %) kuin palestiinalähteisiin (10 kpl, 20 %). Tutkimuksessa todetaan, että vaikka yhdeksän prosentin ero ei ole erityisen suuri, on se silti huomionarvoinen. Kun verrataan Israelin ja sen liittolaisten Yhdysvaltojen edustamia lähteitä (27 kpl, 53 %) Palestiinan ja sen liittolaisten edustamiin lähteisiin (11 kpl, 22 %), on ero jo 31 %, eli varsin huomattava. Neutraaleja lähteitä oli NYP aineistossa vain yhdeksän (18 %).

NYT viittasi 21 palestiinalähteeseen (30 %) ja 17 israeliläislähteeseen (24 %). Kuitenkin kumpaakin enemmän se käytti neutraaleja lähteitä (23 kpl, 33 %). Tutkimuksessa todetaan siis, että NYT viittasi enemmän sekä palestiinalais- että israeliläislähteisiin kuin NYP.

Lisäksi, vaikka NYT viittasi enemmän palestiinalähteisiin kuin israeliläislähteisiin, on ero niiden välillä pienempi kuin NYP:ssä. Näiden huomioiden perusteella tutkimuksessa voidaan todeta, että NYT on neutraalimpi kuin NYP, jossa israeliläisnäkökulma on yliedustettuna palestiinaläisnäkökulmaan

Analyysin viimeisessä vaiheessa edellisten vaiheiden tulokset asetettiin sosiaaliseen ja historialliseen kontekstiinsa. Tulosten perusteella voidaan todeta, että NYP on Israel-myönteisempi kuin NYT, joka on neutraalimpi ja paikoin Palestiina-myönteisempi.

Hypoteesi, jonka mukaan konservatiivinen sanomalehti olisi Israel-myönteinen ja liberaali sanomalehti Palestiina-myönteinen todetaan yleisesti ottaen paikkansapitäväksi.

NYP:in paikoittaiselle Israel-myönteisyydelle annettiin tutkimuksessa useita selityksiä, jotka kaikki voivat osaltaan olla päteviä. Ensimmäisessä tutkimuksessa mainitaan se, että Yhdysvallat on yksinkertaisesti Israelin liittolainen, minkä vuoksi yhdysvaltalaismedia ei ole halukas kritisoimaan sen toimintaa. Tätä ajatusta tukee se, että aiemmat tutkimukset ovat todenneet muidenkin Israelin liittolaisten länsimaisten sanomalehtien olevan Israel-myönteisiä. Toisena syynä voidaan tutkimuksen mukaan pitää sitä, että konservatiivisena sanomalehtenä NYP todennäköisesti suhtautuu 'toiseen', eli tässä tapauksessa Gazan enemmistön ei-valkoiisiin muslimeihin, vähemmän suotuisasti kuin vapaamielinen NYT. Tutkimuksessa todetaan, että tämä nivoutuu aiemmin mainittuun toiseuttamiseen ja korostaa sitä, kuinka tärkeää on haastaa sisäistettyjä ennakkoluuloja rodullistetuista ihmisryhmistä, jotta voidaan välttää jo valmiiksi

heikossa asemassa olevien negatiivista representaatiota. NYT taas vapaamielisenä sanomalehtenä todennäköisemmin kritisoi Israelia, koska liberaaliin ajatusmaailmaan kuuluu usein suopeampi suhtautuminen 'ulkopuolisiin', eli tässä kontekstissa palestiinalaisiin.

Lisäksi tutkimuksessa NYT:in ja NYP:in eroja selitettiin sillä, että NYT on kuukausitilauslehti, kun taas NYP on tabloidi, joka tekee tuottoa mainostuloilla ja klikkauksilla. Koska NYT:lla on tilaajansa, sen ei tarvitse uutisoida yhtä skandalisoivasti kuin NYP:in, jonka lukeminen ei vaadi maksua. Tämän selityksen mukaan NYP siis valitsee uutisoida palestiinalaisista negatiiviseen sävyyn, koska se tuottaa enemmän klikkauksia ja tuo sivulle enemmän liikennettä, kuin neutraalinsävyinen uutisointi. Tutkimus liittyy selitykseen uutisarvot: uutisoimalla palestiinalaisista negatiivisesti NYP asettaa negatiivisuuden etualalle. Lisäksi uutisoimalla israelilaisista positiivisemmin tai neutraalimmin, NYP asettaa läheisyyden uutisarvon etualalle, koska Israel on kulttuurisesti lähempänä Yhdysvaltoja kuin Palestiina, eli se hyödyntää jo aiemmin mainittua me vs. he -ajattelua.

Tutkimuksessa huomioitiin myös uutisissa ilmi tulevien ennakkokäsitysten ja asenteiden haltijoiden epäselvyys. Monet NYP:in artikkeleista ovat saman journalistin, Ronny Reyesin kirjoittamia. Kyseiset artikkelit olivat usein selkeästi Israel-myönteisiä. Päinvastaisesti, alun perin AP:n (*Associated Press*) ja uudelleen NYP:n julkaisemat artikkelit olivat NYP-aineiston Israel-kriittisimpiä. Tutkimuksessa siis todettiin, että on vaikeaa todeta varmasti, ovatko jotkut uutisissa ilmaistut kannat journalistien omia vai sanomalehtien edustamia, mutta kumpikin voi vaikuttaa niiden yleiseen sävyyn. Tutkimus kuitenkin toteaa, että sekä journalistit että sanomalehdet ovat vastuussa siitä, miten ne edustavat tiettyjä ihmisryhmiä.

Tutkimuksen perusteella voidaan aiemmin esitettyihin tutkimuskysymyksiin vastata. Israel-positiivinen, Palestiina-kriittinen kanta oli esillä yhdysvaltalaisissa sanomalehdissä, erityisesti NYP:ssa, mutta myös Israel-kriittisiä, Palestiina-myönteisiä näkökulmia tuotiin esiin. Nämä näkökulmat erosivat liberaalien ja konservatiivisten lähteiden välillä siten, että konservatiivinen lähde oli Israel-positiivisempi. Tutkimuksessa ei kuitenkaan käynyt, että nämä mielipiteet olisivat muuttuneet vuoden aikana lokakuun 2023 jälkeen.

Tutkimuksessa tuotiin esille, kuinka sanavalinnat ja se, kenen tarina tuodaan mediassa, voivat vaikuttaa ihmisten käsityksiin ja mielikuviin. Kun NYP:in uutisissa palestiinalaisia toiseutetaan, heidän tarinansa jätetään kertomatta ja heitä toistuvasti kutsutaan terroristeiksi, voivat NYP:in lukijat nopeasti tietämättään unohtaa palestiinalaisten ihmisyyden, joka ruokkii kolmannen maailman ihmisten kärsimyksen normalisointia. Kun IDF (*Israel Defence Forces*,

'Israelin puolustusvoimat') esitetään uutisissa neutraalisti tai positiivisesti jopa silloin, kun se murhaa lapsia, normalisoi se väkivaltaa palestiinalaisia kohtaan ja vähättelee Israelin armeijan sotarikoksia. Palestiinalaisten mieltäminen terroristeina myös antaa selityksen kokonaiseen ihmisryhmään kohdistetulle joukkotuholle. Lisäksi tutkimus toteaa, että Israelin jatkuva palestiinalaisalueiden miehityksen ja jo lokakuuta 2023 edeltäneen palestiinalaisiin kohdistuneen sarron mainitsematta jättäminen on valinta, joka myös osaltaan vaikuttaa siihen, että Israel mielletään usein tilanteen uhrina, joka vain puolustaa itseään. Myös Israelin iskujen toistuva asettelu vastahyökkäyksenä NYP:ssa ruokkii tätä ajatusta. Tutkimuksessa mainitaankin, että tällaisissa tilanteissa on oleellista huomioida historiallinen konteksti ja kyseenalaistaa sisäistetyt rasistiset ja Islamofobiset ennakkoluulot eikä vahvistaa niitä.