



STATSVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN

Portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Regional Media

Analysis of the use of framing in media coverage in Al Jazeera and Times of Israel of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from 2019-2024

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Examensarbete: 15hp

Programme and course: Statsvetarprogrammet, SK1523

Level: Undergraduate

Term and year: HT 2024

Supervisor: Sindre Gade Vikstrand

Word Count: 10569

Abstract

This paper studies and analyzes how casualties of war/killing are framed in regional media outlets in regards to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from 2019-2024. With this study I will use a catalog of 10 articles from *Al Jazeera* and 10 from *Times of Israel* to analyze which framing methods are more prominent in the media outlets, and the different ways these framing devices are used. This analysis is conducted by using a qualitative analysis method, and using a coding frame inspired by the operationalization method of Mohammed ElMasry (2009). The framing analysis of the sample articles found that both news outlets primarily condemned the other. On the one hand, Times of Israel primarily framed the Gazan factions as criminals. On the other hand, Al Jazeera primarily focused on humanizing the victims of the Israeli attacks. There is also an analysis of how these framing devices are used. During my analysis I also explored that Times of Israel primarily uses the framing of *criminality* to justify the actions against the Gazan factions, and to justify the actions of the military. Moreover, Al Jazeera uses humanizing framing to counter the Israeli narratives.

Keywords: Framing, Israeli, Palestinian, Media, Al Jazeera, Times of Israel, Prominence

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1. Introduction

Media coverage has been a key factor within the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The conflict is undoubtedly one of the most complex in modern times, and many articles have been written about it over the years in countless media sources. However, media outlets are often criticized for a lack of critical and objective perspective, or favoring one side over the other. Not only regional media outlets are accused of being biased and unobjective, but also western media outlets are accused of the same thing. Needless to say, western media outlets has been heavily criticized for being biased and impartial, and there are several empirical studies conducted on this topic to support this narrative. However, as of the time of writing, there seems to be a lack of studies conducted about news sources from Israel and the rest of the Middle East about their portrayal of the conflict. With this in mind, I decided to pursue the study of articles from this region, with the intent of filling this research gap, which is the study of media framing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In my study, I will use a catalog of articles from *Al Jazeera* and *Times of Israel*, which are two international regional sources.

Furthermore, this study will focus on the articles framing on the use of deadly violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, from both sides. Death is a recurring theme, and topic of discussion in the majority of the articles I have read prior to my research from both sides. In addition, one of my primary sources is a research paper of media framing of killing by ElMasry (2009), which provides an insight into how this topic can be analysed. With this in mind, I decided to focus on the portrayal of the killing and deadly violence specifically within the regional news sources such as Al Jazeera and Times of Israel.

Additionally, this study will use a catalog of 10 articles from Al Jazeera and Times of Israel, and analyse how they frame the killing. Moreover, these articles will be used in my study as a snapshot of the portrayal of killing in this conflict. My study focuses on articles made in the past five years. This is in order to analyse a wider range of different subject matters related to the conflict from both sides, and how killing on different occasions is portrayed by the regional news outlets. I will be conducting my analysis using a qualitative method analysis of the

articles, where I will be using a *coding frame* that is intended to analyse forms of framing related to killing within armed conflicts.

To conclude, the aim of my study is to explore and analyse how the regional media sources have portrayed killing and deadly violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from 2019 to 2024. Additionally, to gain an understanding of how these sources, that are more regional to the conflict, portray deadly violence of both sides. Moreover, this study will analyse the framing devices that are more prominent in the articles in regards to killing. This is in order to have a clearer understanding of how killing is predominantly portrayed through framing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from regional news outlets in the last five years.

2. Literature Review

Many different studies have been conducted about the media framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These studies cover a range of different news outlets from several regions in the world, and those different studies and research have also covered many different time periods. After all, this is a very popular topic of research, as a simple Google search would find hundreds of scholarly articles analysing media framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Additionally, I will explore the literature surrounding this topic, and what previous studies have focused on, and then discuss what I will be contributing with my study to the research field.

2.1. Literature Regarding Media Framing in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Within my research into the topic, I found out that several research papers were published in the last year, as of the time of writing in November 2024. In other words, it seems that analysing media framing has become more common in relation to the onset of the ongoing 2023 Gaza War, and how the conflict has become a focal point of media discourse. Many articles regarding this topic have focused on different western media's framing of the conflict (Nystedt, 2024). Moreover, how media outlets from countries such as Sweden and Germany have framed the conflict (Hoare and Ziegler, 2024; Asmus, 2024), and some have focused on media framing from social media (Taylor, 2024). They all contribute in different ways to the furthering of this academic field, which this study aims to further improve.

An inspirational article in regards to how I should approach my research was e.g Asmus (2024), who analysed the German articles while presenting them in a table format and grouping the categories she used for her content analysis, which I found would fit for summarizing my coding frame for my own analysis. Many of the other articles helped with specific structural choices of how a study such as this should be laid out. Warshagha et al. (2024) does a comparative analysis between the *Washington Post* and *Al Jazeera*, and analyses how they frame the conflict in order to stir public sentiment, which was similar enough to my study where I decided to source some structural elements from it (Warshagha et al, 2024). The articles mentioned above also helped identify the research gap that my analysis would contribute to the wider field of research into the topic of analysis of media framing in this specific context. However, as will be evident in later chapters, another article I found

informational and inspirational when conducting this study, which I wish to further elaborate on.

2.2. Framing of Killing in Media

The scholarly article that helped inspire my article the most is ElMasry's (2009) article named *Death in the Middle East: An Analysis of How the New York Times and Chicago Tribune Framed Killings in the Second Palestinian Intifada*. It played a significant role in narrowing my research scope from a more general analysis of the portrayal/framing of war in the media, to focusing on how killing is framed by the media. It also strongly influenced the analytical direction of my study, as the framing devices and theoretical framework used is the same as the one of ElMasry, in order to adapt his operationalization method. However, many adjustments were made from his work to mine, as there are specific design choices in his articles that I was unable to adapt, or that I did not feel was suitable for my study to adapt.

Firstly, my analytical method is a qualitative content analysis, which is already different from ElMasry's more data driven quantitative content analysis. This made more specialized analytical components he used for his analysis redundant in mine, such as the statistical analysis. Moreover, his coding sheet for analysing indicators was specialised for his analysis of articles from the time period of 2000-2002, which are unusable for my analysis. I also decided that it was not beneficial to use a coding sheet, due to easier and just as effective analytical focuses being available.

Secondly, his articles are sampled by 'death days', where the three categories for the 2 year period were 'Palestinian only' death days, 'Israeli only' death days, and 'both' death days (ElMasry, 2009: 19). This did not make much sense to use for my research, as this sample method required a larger sample of articles. Moreover, this also served ElMasry's specific analytical direction, which is different from mine.

Additionally, the final key change was the omission of the third analytical component for legitimization/de-legitimation; prominence. While justification and condemnation remain highly relevant analytical components to my research direction, prominence as a framing indicator is

not as relevant to my research as it was to ElMasry. Prominence was used by ElMasry to analyse what point of view is expressed more clearly in the news coverage. This made sense for his article of analysing American news outlets, where the focus was “to find out what framing devices the papers used to express pro-Israeli bias” (ElMasry, 2009: 32). However, this is not what I am analysing, or intend to discuss in any substantial depth as my research is intended to be descriptive, and focusing on two regional news outlets, an Israeli one and a pro-Palestinian’s Middle Eastern one. Therefore, this analytical unit was omitted.

Finally, the difference in analytical direction, as well as the analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in mine and El-Masry’s article will naturally provide different insights. ElMasry’s article was published in 2009, with his text samples being from the time period of 2000-2002. This means that his body of work is approximately 20 years old. Since then, there has been significant development. In 2002, the dynamics of the conflict were very different. For example, the key player of modern Palestinian politics, especially in Gaza, Hamas, had not yet been elected to power in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, a reexamining of the media portrayal of killing is important in order to update the research into this field. Furthermore, a key focus of ElMasry’s research was to analyse how the American news outlets *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* framed the killing in the conflict before and after September 11 2001. As far as my analysis is concerned, analysing tendencies of news reporting during or after a certain period is not a primary concern. Additionally, my analysis deals with articles more regional to the conflict; *Al Jazeera* and *Times of Israel*, with a different analytical angle.

3. Theoretical Approach

In this section I will be going over the main theoretical framework that will work in the background of the research and analysis. When considering theories for explaining media portrayal of conflicts, the most relevant theory to use would be the *framing theory*. As well as that, I will also be discussing the concept of legitimation, as the coding frame and the analysis of framing will include mentions of legitimation and de-legitimation, as well as their counterparts of justification and condemnation. Therefore, providing a conceptual understanding of this would be beneficial. These theoretical components will later be applied to analyse the use of framing in the articles written by Al Jazeera and Times of Israel regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

3.1. Framing Theory

When framing is brought up, it can refer to either the media frame or the individual frame (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). For the purposes of this study, when mentioning framing, it is exclusively in reference to media framing. A media frame refers to the “words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker (e.g. a media outlet) uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987). Scheufele (1999) expands on media framing by highlighting the concept of *frame building*. Frame building refers to the dynamics of how speakers such as media outlets choose specific frames. These frames can be affected by a variety of internal factors such as journalistic norms, organizational policies, and routines within media organizations. Moreover, external factors can also affect the frame building, such as social movements, political actors, public relations campaigns, and economic pressures (Scheufele, 1999).

The chosen frame reveals what the speaker sees as relevant to the topic at hand (Chong and Druckman, 2007: 100). This indicates that analysing what the ‘speaker’ is emphasizing in the writing, reveals how they wish to frame the events. In the context of the portrayal of killing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by my chosen news outlets, the choice of how the speaker frames the event reveals what aspects of the deaths should be focused on. Relevant examples of what the speaker might focus on would include questions like: Were the deadly actions proportional? Who were the people who committed the killing?

In ElMasry (2009), it is further elaborated on that media framing suggests that the way information is packaged and presented can define problems and issues and provide coherence and meaning for communication receivers, manifest content is given meaning and coherence through framing. Framing is described as a process that plays itself out through the use of various textual devices such as metaphors, catchphrases, associations, depictions, placement and repetition (Entman, 1993 in ElMasry, 2009: 9). It is also suggested that frames have at least four locations in the communication process; the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. Due to the nature of the analysis as a content analysis, the location that will be focused on is the text. Regarding text, Entman states that it “contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences” (Entman, 1993 in ElMasry, 2009: 9).

Taking into consideration that a text is considered the cornerstone of producing any media framing. In my study, I will not only explore solely the texts and use of certain keywords, but also the other framing techniques such as pictures, videos, and ambiguous language. As Entman indicates, they are part of the larger framing process (ElMasry, 2009: 9).

3.2. Legitimation

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, being legitimate refers to “accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements”, for example a legitimate government (Merriam-Webster, n.d). ElMasry refers to legitimation in similar ways, where legitimation is in reference to “the act of making something valid, justifiable, reasonable and right” (ElMasry, 2009: 10). He elaborates on what constitutes de-legitimation, which refers to as “to suggest that something is evil, criminal and unacceptable” (ElMasry, 2009: 10). Therefore, it is through legitimation and de-legitimation that different media outlets will decide the level of objectivity and biases about different conflict events.

By, for example, referring to a freedom fighter as a terrorist, or vice versa, that will function to legitimize or de-legitimize a person of the group. Thus, the language and the rhetoric is vital in framing the conflict in articles. There are instances where writing regarding people being killed

being framed as for example “genocide” and “atrocity”, where another article may frame it as “collateral damage” or as part of self-defense or defense of the homeland and its people. Therefore, the media has the power to legitimate or de-legitimate serious events in dramatic and different ways, depending on the way it frames it.

4. Specified Aim and Research Question

Prior to introducing the research design and the analysis, it is important to emphasize what specifically my thesis is attempting to accomplish. As my work is descriptive in nature, my main aim is to examine and understand how two regionally based and internationally broadcast news outlets from each conflict party, *Al Jazeera* and *Times of Israel*, most prominently frame the conflict, and how they may differ in their framing of *killing* in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, using the available evidence from my sample articles. The research questions that my thesis explores will be the following:

1. What framing methods for killings are most prominently used in the articles?
2. What are the main differences in the use of these framing devices by the two regional media outlets?

These two research questions interrelate and aim to give the reader a better insight into the concept of framing methods and devices. Due to the use of the word prominently in my research question, I find it relevant to define it for the purpose of clarity. The definition of prominence means “standing out so as to be seen easily; particularly noticeable” (Dictionary.com, n.d). To rephrase, the analysis of prominence of framing is essentially trying to figure out which form of framing stands out the most from the articles in their portrayal of the conflict.

5. Research Design and Methods

In this chapter I will be going through the research design and method I have chosen. I will be discussing in more depth the methodology used, and which analytical approach I used to conduct the analysis. I will provide an in-depth description of the coding frame, and discuss what will be measured, how it will be measured, and through what mechanisms I will be using to ensure that the analysis remains objective, and is possible to be used for future studies. I will also provide an overview and discussion of my data collection. Finally, I will detail why I chose to focus on *Al Jazeera* and *Times of Israel*, and what methods I used in order to find the articles.

5.1. Methodology

The method that I will be using for analysing the articles will be a qualitative content analysis. A qualitative content analysis is a form of content analysis which includes more complex interpretations of texts that can only be done by humans, and that can systematically describe the contents of the qualitative data by categorising parts of the material with a coding frame (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 50-51). Many different elements of the texts can be measured or counted, for example the appearance of certain words, expressions or portrayals, metaphors or certain forms of argumentation (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 51). Content analysis is useful for finding patterns in larger samples of text, and has many different purposes such as determining if news reporting is partial or impartial, or how the news reporting communicates certain events (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 51-54). As this work is aiming to analyse the portrayal of killing in media, it is a necessity that there is a human understanding of the definitions and the theory that is involved in determining and assessing how the news articles portray killing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

I will be making use of a coding frame for my research design, which is inspired by Mohammed ElMasry's (2009) operationalisation method. Coding frames conducted as a part of qualitative content analysis are typically done manually, as manual coding makes it possible to conduct more complicated assessments and interpretations of texts (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 58). In making a coding frame for a content analysis, there needs to be something that can be measured. These are called *recording units*. These can consist of anything that can be

differentiated in different forms of texts (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 59). My coding frame is looking for certain keywords and discussions in the articles that are associated with the sampling units. The *sampling units* (which in the future will be referred to as framing indicators or devices) come in the form of the framing indicators for legitimization (justification) /de-legitimation (condemnation), and these are used to determine the nature of how the news articles frame killing.

The coding frame needs to be used consequently. This means that if two different samples of articles are compared, then it is important that these are assessed in the exact same way (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 61). To accomplish this I will be making use of *double coding*. Double coding means to organise the order of which the texts are analysed, to minimise systematic inadvertent sliding in the assessment of the articles. Systematic sliding entails that over time texts may be assessed differently (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 62). *Textens Mening och Makt* mentions that one should begin by working on a few texts from one of the samples, then move over to a few texts from the other sample. This way the sliding has less of an impact on the results gathered, as if there is any sliding it will affect both samples equally in theory (Boreus and Kohl, 2018: 62).

The book also makes mention of four different strategies of reading and interpreting texts; *interpreter oriented*, *sender oriented*, *receiver oriented*, and *discourse oriented*. I have chosen to work with the *interpreter oriented* strategy. This strategy focuses on the meaning of the text from the perspective of the person analysing the text. A way of using this strategy is when the analyser uses specific tools or interpretations for a certain purpose that would be unknown to the sender and recipient of the texts being analysed (Boreus and Bergström, 2018: 31-32). Based on what has previously been discussed about how I am planning to analyse the portrayal of killing in the media through a descriptive qualitative content analysis, this is deemed as the most suitable strategy for interpreting the articles.

5.2. Coding Frame and Operationalisation

The coding frame will analyse the articles based on two main forms of legitimization/de-legitimation; justification, condemnation. ElMasry labels justification as a form

of legitimation, and condemnation as a form of de-legitimation (ElMasry, 2009: 10). As previously mentioned, legitimation refers to the act of making something; in this context violent acts, valid, justifiable, reasonable and right, and to condemn is to suggest that something is evil, criminal and unacceptable (ElMasry, 2009: 9-10). In this viewpoint, it is through legitimation and de-legitimation that the media present favorable or unfavorable views about people and events. My coding frame will include a table of the 10 *Al Jazeera* articles, and one of the 10 *Times of Israel* articles. In these tables I will include the numbers of the articles, which will be used for referencing the articles in future discussion. I will also be including the name of the article, and have two columns dedicated to the justification and condemnation that the article uses. I will also have a column outlining the date of publication of each article.

I will highlight all the indicators present in the articles regarding justification and condemnation, and rank the indicators from one to four for which I perceive is the most prominent (1) to the least prominent (4) in the article. This is based on how important and emphasized this framing device is in the article, and will be further developed in section 6.2.

Some key words I will use to indicate the prominence in each framing indicator in the coding frame will be “extensive”, “frequent/detailed”, “some” or “brief”, where extensive is most prominent and brief is least prominent. A framing indicator being used “extensively”, and is heavily emphasized as a key part of the article, it will be labeled as 1. A framing indicator being used “frequently/detailed”, in that it is often mentioned, emphasized and repeated, it will be given a 2. If a framing is “sometimes” used, and is not deemed to be an important part to the overall framing of the article, it will be given a 3. If a framing device is being used “briefly” and is not important to the articles framing of the killing, it will be labeled a 4. A framing indicator will be not be mentioned in regards to the article in the coding frame if at least one of the three criteria are met:

1. It does not feature at all in the article.
2. Any statements relevant to a framing indicator are directly contradicted or explicitly dismissed in the article.

3. If an article uses a framing device equally for both sides' without any further elaboration. An article is deemed to treat both sides equally if, for example, both sides have one citation from a spokesperson each with similar length with no added commentary by the journalist.

If I discover any ambiguity in choosing the indicators, or which indicator that may have been left out for whatever reason, it will be given as an asterisk* and I will be discussing the ambiguity in the appendices.

Below is an example of how the coding frame would look for a hypothetical article, where I include some abridged notes about the use of each framing device and their prominence ranked. *Italics* indicate how much I deem that they have featured, and the underline indicates the basis of how I determined that the article used this framing device. How these framing devices are understood is developed in the following subchapter.

#	Article Name	Justification	Condemnation	Date
1	<i>Example: Israel bombing kills 50 people in Gaza</i>	<p>2. Self-Defense: <i>Frequent</i> mention of <u>preemptive defensive actions</u> undertaken to prevent harm.</p> <p>3. Explicit Rationale: <i>Some</i> mention of <u>neutralising Hamas' fighting capability</u>.</p> <p>4. War/Battle: <i>Brief</i> mentions of <u>operations</u> and <u>military</u> targets.</p>	<p>2. Humanization: <i>Frequent</i> mention of <u>death tolls</u> and <u>people affected</u> by the attacks</p> <p>2. Aggression: <i>Frequent</i> mention of Israel "<u>attacking</u>" Gaza.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: <i>Some</i> mentions of "complete and <u>violent repression</u>", "<u>discriminatory practices</u>"</p> <p>3. Criminality: <i>Some</i> use of terms such as "<u>genocide</u>", "<u>massacre</u>" to describe Israeli attacks.</p>	1 Jan 2019

5.2.1. Definitions of the Coding Expressions

Justification is a form of framing which is used to legitimize the actions of the party in discussion. This framing includes four key indicators that are used to analyse legitimation of the article: Self-Defense, War/Battle, Explicit Rationale, and Accident. Firstly, self-defense is a form of framing where an article would portray that someone needed to kill in order to prevent harm from being inflicted upon him/herself or others (ElMasry, 2009: 11). This is typically seen in writing that references one party attacking first, and that the other party is “responding” or “defending” themselves against the violence. Secondly, mention of War/Battle is an implicit way of legitimizing the actions, as killings are mostly considered as an inevitable consequence of an engagement between two equal parties (ElMasry, 2009: 11-12). The mention of wars, operations, military targets or mention of engagements in the context of killing is a strong indication of using this framing method. Thirdly, explicit rationale refers to highlighting a specific reasoning behind why an operation leading to death was carried out. Providing the explicit rationale for the killing frames it as something conducted through a planned operation, and in many cases serves to justify the actions (ElMasry, 2009: 13). Finally, accident is a form of framing where killings are justified under the notion that these consequences were unintentional, or that innocents were killed as a consequence of killing, trying to kill, or striking a key target (ElMasry, 2009: 13).

In addition, condemnation refers to the explicit or implicit declaration that something is wrong and unacceptable (ElMasry, 2009: 14). Similarly to justification, it also has 4 main indicators. These include: Aggression, Criminality, Cruelty and Humanization.

To start with, aggression is a form of condemnation where killing is framed and characterised as being committed with unnecessary initiation of hostilities for no stated reason (ElMasry, 2009: 14). Key words such as stating that one party began the “attack”, “bombing” or other hostile actions indicates the use of aggression. Moreover, framing killing as an act of criminality represents a powerful form of de-legitimation as criminal actions are denounced heavily. ElMasry believes that the framing of criminality can be seen in terms of word selection, such as when articles refer to certain actors as “terrorists”, “extremists” or “fundamentalists” (ElMasry, 2009: 14). Moreover, descriptions such as for example

“occupation” or “illegal settlements” and references to other inherent acts of criminality can frame a party or actions as criminal. Furthermore, the media can also condemn killings and killers by attributing it as an act of cruelty. This is often seen through key use of terminology with connotations to cruel and excessive violence and killing, such as “savage”, “barbaric”, and “massacre” (ElMasry, 2009: 14). Moreover, in more recent times, terms with historical connotations have been more frequently used in reference to the conflict such as “genocide”, “apartheid” or “coloniser”, that invoke the same form of framing. Finally, the articles may also de-legitimise and condemn killing by humanizing the people killed by one of the parties in the conflict. Providing more details about the data regarding people killed, including the name, age, family, or even more in-depth such as hobbies or occupation can implicitly condemn the killers as it highlights the humanity in the deceased people and generates sympathy for the ones affected by the killers.

5.2.2. Validity

As previously covered in chapter 2.2, there are aspects from ElMasry’s coding, focus, and analysis that are removed or adjusted from my work to his. With that being said, there is not a fundamental difference in my work and the work of ElMasry. The key components of the coding frame remain the same, and the definitions of the indicators were not changed outside of adding a few more keywords, and I am making use of the same theoretical framework that ElMasry was. Therefore, the analytical component that I am using remains a tried and tested method which yielded results in previous work, and is also grounded on methodological frameworks which are mentioned in academic books, as covered in section 5.1.

5.3. Data Collection Method

The data used for this research are the following. The primary source is the 20 articles from Al Jazeera and Times of Israel, which I found by using the Google search engine, using a simple random sampling method. A simple random sampling method is in this case choosing a sample of texts in a random way where each article has an equal chance of being chosen as the other (Vitter, 1985: 37). As I have no way of knowing what the Google algorithm is going to give me for articles, the random sampling of articles by Google’s algorithm with my method would reflect what the average person searching for the conflict for the first time would encounter. Of

course, there is no way to ensure perfectly random selection using this method, but I believe it gets close to reflecting what sorts of articles a human would encounter in their reading, which are the sorts of articles that I am interested in analysing.

Within these 10 Google searches for each news outlet, 4 of these searched for Gaza, 3 for the West Bank and 3 for Israel. There are two other set criterias for the articles that I will choose. Firstly, they have to involve mention of death, or deadly actions in the article so that the operationalisation method can be used as intended. This is also to align it with the scope of my work, which is to examine the portrayal of killing in media. Secondly, I will not be using any articles labeled as 'live update'. This is purely to make the analysis more consistent and to make data collection less confusing for myself, as the 'live update' format of articles are different from normal articles. They are mostly a collection of headlines and do not provide much substance that can be broken down using my analytical framework.

5.3.1. Choice of Sources

The key components of my study is to understand how regional news outlets frame killing in the conflict. Both news outlets were selected on the basis that they were mainstream, meaning that they are prominent news sources in their region that have a regular and large audience, and that they also have an English-speaking journalist team. Al Jazeera is a Qatari-based news outlet, and is also among the most prominent news sources originating from the Middle East that covers international news, but also focuses on the regional news relating to the Middle East such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Although it is not located in Palestine, the Qatari government has close ties to Palestinian authorities, and Al Jazeera is a voice for the Palestinians vicariously. Times of Israel is an Israeli-based news outlet that is among the largest and most reputable in Israel, and also has an English-speaking journalist-team covering international news, while also focusing on regional news relating to Israel. As both news outlets are mainstream, regional, and sympathize to either conflict party, and contain a major English-speaking journalist-team. Therefore, they were deemed to be appropriate news outlets to sample the articles from, and to analyse them for my study.

6. Data Collection and Results

In this chapter of the study I will be summarising the results gathered from the articles and discussing them in relation to my research question. I will be describing which of the framing indicators most prominently used by Al Jazeera and Times of Israel in the sample of articles I have chosen. This paper will also discuss the characteristics that regional news sources showcase in regard to framing events of the conflict, and how they may differ. During this discussion I will be highlighting key parts of the articles, which will help explore the research questions in a profound manner.

6.1. Summary of Data Collection of Chosen Articles

In this segment I summarise my general findings using my data collection method from the 10 *Al Jazeera* and 10 *Times of Israel* article. The first table consists of the 10 *Al Jazeera* articles, and the other 10 consists of the *Times of Israel* articles. The table includes my observations about the framing indicators for justification and condemnation present in each of the articles, and an abridged passage providing insight into how I believe the framing device was used.

Al Jazeera Articles:

#	Article Name	Justification	Condemnation	Date
1	<i>Israeli settlers refuse to vacate illegal West Bank settlement</i>	3: Explicit Rationale: Some religious claims and historical arguments from settlers to justify their actions.	<p>2. Criminality: Frequent use of terms such as “illegal settlements”, “apartheid” “crimes against humanity”.</p> <p>2. Humanization: A personal story of Khabeisa, and emphasis on the importance of olive orchards to Palestinian livelihoods.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: Some mention of disproportionate violence and killing by Israeli forces, and destruction of olive trees and homes.</p> <p>4. Aggression: Brief mention of Israel as</p>	25 June 2021

			the aggressor.	
2	<i>More than 40 Palestinians hurt in occupied West Bank as tensions rise</i>	4. Explicit Rationale: Short mention of Hamas firing rockets at Israel, with no direct reference to self-defense framing.	<p>1. Humanization: Extensive descriptions of the people fatally shot. Also frequent mention of people wounded in protests.</p> <p>2. Cruelty: Frequent mentions of “complete and violent repression”, “Israel’s discriminatory practices” and burning of religious sites.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Some mention of “Israeli bombardment of ... Gaza”, and Palestinians wounded or killed by settler groups.</p> <p>3. Criminality: Some mention of “illegal settlement” and “coloniser”.</p>	13 May 2021
3	<i>‘My son was killed on October 6. There was no Hamas’</i>	There is no attempt at justifying any of the actions in this article using any of the aforementioned framing indicators.	<p>1. Humanization: The article extensively details the death of the Dmaid family’s eldest son, and its aftermath.</p> <p>2. Aggression: Frequent mention of recent “attacks” orchestrated by the IDF and settlers.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: Some description of “rampaging” attacks, attack by settlers as a “Pogrom”; an organised massacre.</p> <p>3. Criminality: Some mentions of the illegality of the settlements, the occupation and land theft.</p>	1 Dec 2023
4	<i>Israel bombs residential</i>	3. War/Battle: Some mentions of military operations and campaigns conducted by Israel.	1. Humanization: Extensive mention of death tolls, and the issues facing the people of Gaza.	17 Nov 2024

	<i>building in north Gaza's Beit Lahiya, killing 50</i>	4. Explicit Rationale: Brief mention of Israeli military targeting Hamas.	2. Aggression: Frequent mention of Israeli bombings across Gaza. 3. Cruelty: Some mention of Israel "leaving tens of thousands to starve", and emergency workers unable to reach the "siege" to provide aid. 3. Criminality: Use of terms such as "genocide", "massacre".	
5	<i>A year on from war, Gaza frustrated at slow reconstruction</i>	4. Self-Defense/Explicit Rationale*: Brief description of Israel responding to rocket fire, and the Israeli casualties. 4. War/Battle: Brief description of the attack of the Israeli military offensive.	1. Humanization: Extensive accounts of people such as Abed losing their home and belongings in May 2021. 2. Cruelty: Frequent mention of displacement of people and worsened living conditions after "devastating" Israeli attacks. 3. Aggression: Mention of the 2021 War as Israeli "offensive" attack on Gaza, labeling them as the aggressor. 3. Criminality: Some mention of Israel allegedly restricting vital resources from entering Gaza.	10 May 2022
6	<i>Israeli forces kill Palestinian man in raid on occupied West Bank town</i>	3. War/Battle: Some mention of an "armed confrontation", and "ongoing military operation"	2. Humanization: Detailed description of the person killed in the raid, and mentions of others injured or killed since October 7. 2. Aggression: Frequent mentions of "assaults", "offensives" and "daily arrests" conducted by the IDF. 3. Criminality: Some mention of "occupation", and "arrests"	9 Nov 2024

7	<i>Israeli soldier killed during raid in occupied West Bank</i>	<p>2. Explicit Rationale: Much care is given to detail the reasons for the actions of the IDF.</p> <p>3. War/Battle: Some mention of key terminology such as “clashes” and “raids” present in the article.</p> <p>4. Self Defense: Brief mention of response to the rock thrower, and protective measures.</p>	<p>2. Criminality: Frequent mention of “occupation”, “violation of international law” and “illegal settlements”.</p> <p>3. Humanization: Some attention given to the death of an Israeli soldier from the rock throw.</p>	12 May 2020
8	<i>Israeli forces kill Palestinian in West Bank: Ministry</i>	<p>3. Explicit Rationale: Some mention of the IDF responding to violence and protecting civilians.</p> <p>3. Self-Defense: Palestinians are mentioned as the initiators and that Israeli forces responded to attacks.</p> <p>3. War/Battle: Some mentions of “military raids” and “operations”.</p>	<p>2. Criminality: Frequent mention of “occupation”.</p> <p>2. Cruelty: Emphasis on the restrictions for Palestinians and heavy police presence, framed as worsening living conditions.</p> <p>3. Humanization: The killing of Usama Adawi is explained in some detail.</p> <p>4. Aggression: Brief mentions of past aggressions by Israeli forces during 2022.</p>	12 Oct 2022
9	<i>Israel kills three Palestinians in besieged Gaza Strip</i>	<p>3. Explicit Rationale: Some statements from the IDF and Hamas of the killing of suspects and bombing of Gaza.</p> <p>4. Self-Defense: Brief mention of Israel responding to aggression from the victims, as well as Hamas.</p> <p>4. War/Battle: Brief contextualization of the Gaza “war”</p>	<p>1. Aggression: Much of the article is spent detailing the Israeli attacks, with brief mention of the attack of the Palestinians.</p> <p>2. Humanization: Frequent emphasis on why the victims and other Palestinians would want to attack Israel.</p> <p>2. Criminality: The article mentions Israel's crimes; siege of Gaza, unlawful imprisonment, and frequently refers to “siege” and “blockade” of Gaza.</p>	18 Aug 2019

			<p>3. Cruelty: Some mention of “crippling” blockades and economic conditions on Gaza caused by Israel, delay in allowing ambulances to reach the area of conflict.</p>	
10	<p><i>Today in Gaza, I no longer believe we’ll get out of Israel’s assault alive</i></p>	<p>There is no attempt at justifying any of the actions in this article using any of the aforementioned framing devices.</p>	<p>1. Humanization: The narrative is focused on the writer and the civilians of Gaza living through the chaos after October 7.</p> <p>2. Cruelty: Detailed descriptions of the human toll of the bombings, and Israel’s indiscriminate attacks.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Some descriptions of the Israeli bombings of the area, which implicitly places them as the aggressor.</p>	<p>Oct 11 2023</p>

Times of Israel Articles:

#	Article Name	Justification	Condemnation	Date
1	<i>Israel said worried Hamas could kill hostages to avenge slain leader Sinwar</i>	<p>2. Explicit Rationale: Outlines the intentions of using Sinwar’s body as a ‘bargaining chip’.</p> <p>2. Accident: The death of Sinwar is framed as a part of a “random clash” and “chance encounter”.</p> <p>3. Self-Defense: Some mentions of pre-emptive measures to minimise risks of harming hostages.</p> <p>4. War/Battle: Brief mentions of military operations in the context of the killing of Sinwar.</p>	<p>2. Criminality: The article labels Sinwar as a “terror chief” and frames the attacks by Hamas and Hezbollah as “barbaric”.</p>	19 Oct 2024
2	<i>As Islamic Jihad sparks Gaza-Israel conflict, all eyes are on Hamas</i>	<p>2. Self-Defense: Frequent mention of responding preemptively to threats from the PIJ and defensive actions to prevent harm to civilians.</p> <p>3. War/Battle: Some mention of striking military targets.</p> <p>3. Explicit Rationale: Some IDF rationale provided about the need to neutralize the PIJ threat.</p>	<p>2. Criminality: Frequent mention of PIJ and Hamas as “terrorists”.</p> <p>3. Humanization: Brief mention of lack of essential needs for Gazans due to conflict. Humanizes Israeli civilians threatened by the conflict.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: Some mention of PIJ intending to “mow down” Israelis and “targeting civilians”, portraying a grim picture of excessive violence.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Some framing of “PIJ-prompted surge of violence”, and mentions of “attacks”.</p>	6 Aug 2022
3	<i>Sgt. Ido</i>	<p>1. Self-Defense: Heavy emphasis on</p>	<p>1. Humanization: Extensive account of</p>	27 Dec

	<i>Binenstock, 19: Died on battlefield trying to save friends</i>	<p>Binenstock dying in defense of himself, his comrades, and his country from the terrorists.</p> <p>2. War/Battle: Actively describing the battle that killed Binenstock.</p>	<p>the death of Binenstock on October 7 by Hamas.</p> <p>2. Criminality: Frequent mentions of Hamas as “terrorists”.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: Description of the “brutal” attack, and detailing the cruelty of battle from Binenstocks story.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Some mentions of Hamas as instigating the attack on October 7.</p>	2023
4	<i>Hamas and Islamic Jihad praise deadly West Bank terror shootings</i>	<p>3. Explicit Rationale: Statements from Hamas and PIJ, labeling the attack a resistance against occupation.</p> <p>3. War/Battle: Framing of the attack as an “operation” by Hamas and PIJ.</p>	<p>2. Criminality: Frequent mention of “terrorist”, “terror group” in reference to the attacker, and Hamas and the PIJ.</p> <p>2. Humanization: Descriptions of the people wounded or killed by the violence, and detailing a father of 12.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Describing the event as “assault”, and the terrorist shooting at soldiers and civilians.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: Some mention of “stabbing” and civilian casualties.</p>	17 Mar 2019
5	<i>2020 sees fewest soldiers, civilians killed in war or terror in Israel’s history</i>	<p>1. War/Battle: Extensive discussion of the “fighting”, “operations”, “war” and “battles” taken place during 2020.</p> <p>2. Self-Defense: Detailing of the preventative and protective measures in the West Bank and Gaza.</p>	<p>2. Criminality: Frequent description of the opposition groups as “terror groups” and the attacks as “terror attacks”.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Mention of “assaults”, “attacks” and “projectiles fired” at Israel by opposing groups the past year.</p> <p>4. Cruelty: Brief mention of a “brutal assault” in the West Bank</p>	31 Dec 2020

		<p>2. Explicit Rationale: Frequent mentions of the reasons for undertaking these defensive and protective measures.</p>		
6	<p><i>At least nine Palestinians reported killed as violence spreads to West Bank</i></p>	<p>3. Self-Defense: Some description that the IDF “responded” to the rocks and Molotov’s thrown.</p> <p>3. Explicit Rationale: The IDF claims that they targeted the “main rioters” in the exchange.</p>	<p>2. Cruelty: Abbas detailing the event as a “bloody day” and “brutal and programmed killing” by the IDF, and torching of police stations.</p> <p>2. Humanization: Detailing the dead in the attack and previous attacks, and mentioning two by name.</p> <p>3. Criminality: Some descriptions of Israel as “occupiers” by Abbas and Hamas, framing it as illegal.</p> <p>4. Aggression: Brief mention of Israeli “aggression”.</p>	14 May 2021
7	<p><i>2 Jewish Israelis sentenced over brutal assault of Palestinian during May 2021 riots</i></p>	<p>3. Explicit Rationale: Mention that the assault was done due to nationalistic hatred and desire to terrorize.</p>	<p>1. Cruelty: Extensive description of the protest and killing, including “brutal” “maiming” “stoning” “looting” “barrage of firebombs, shootings and brawls.”</p> <p>2. Aggression: Frequent mention of “assault”, “assailants”, and framing of the killers and Israeli protesters as the aggressors.</p> <p>3. Criminality: Mention of “violation of basic human values”, and conviction of Israeli criminals after May 2021 attacks</p> <p>3. Humanization: Some description of the person killed, and the human toll of the</p>	14 Sep 2023

			demonstrations.	
8	<i>Yahya Sinwar: Radical Islamist ideologue utterly committed to Israel's destruction</i>	<p>1. Explicit Rationale: Extensive description of Sinwar's motives for "liberating Palestine", "armed struggle" and "to destroy [Israel]"</p> <p>3. War/Battle: Contextualizing Sinwar's story before, after and during "war(s)" and his role in them.</p>	<p>1. Cruelty: Extensive mention of Sinwar's ideology, and dubbing him a "butcher", "the face of evil", and responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Palestinians.</p> <p>2. Criminality: Dubbing Sinwar a "murderer", mention of his time in prison and frequent mention of him and Hamas as "terrorists", "terror group".</p> <p>3. Aggression: Framing of Sinwar as orchestrator of October 7 attacks, mention of "assault" and "attacks".</p> <p>4. Humanization: Limited detail about Sinwar's struggles growing up in Khan Younis in Gaza.</p>	17 Oct 2024
9	<i>Man shot dead in Tuba-Zangariyye, taking Arab community toll to 176 this year</i>	<p>2. Explicit Rationale: The deaths are framed as part of an ongoing crime wave with gang feuds and institutional neglect.</p>	<p>1. Humanization: The article extensively describes recent victims of the crime wave, their families unable to attend funerals, and the wider human toll of the crime wave.</p> <p>2. Criminality: Frequent mention of crime and gang-related activities, threats and killings.</p> <p>3. Aggression: Mentions of several "attacks" conducted, and premeditated targeted killings of gang members.</p> <p>3. Cruelty: Description of murder of family members, and families unable to attend funerals in fear of attacks.</p>	19 Sep 2023
10	<i>Shin Bet says it</i>	<p>1. Explicit Rationale: Extensive</p>	<p>1. Criminality: Extensive mention of</p>	Dec 31

<p><i>foiled 1,040 major terror attacks in West Bank, Jerusalem in 2024</i></p>	<p>explanation behind the killings, most were perceived as threats.</p> <p>1. Self-Defense: Extensive framing of actions as “thwarting”, “eliminating”, and “responding” to threats.</p> <p>3. War/Battle: Some mention of the “war” following October 7 as context behind the actions.</p> <p>4. Accident: Brief mention of “mistakenly” killing three hostages in Gaza, and the “chance encounter” killing Sinwar.</p>	<p>arresting Palestinians and stopping “terrorists” “kidnappings” “stabbings” etc.</p> <p>2. Cruelty: Framing of October 7 as “devastating”, an “onslaught”, “atrocious”</p> <p>3. Humanization: Description of the hostages, and a video displaying the rescue of a named hostage.</p> <p>4. Aggression: Brief framing of October 7 as a Hamas “attack”.</p>	<p>2024</p>
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6.2. Analysis of Prominence in News Framing

As can be seen in the table, the most *frequent* indicator used for justification is *explicit rationale*, which is used 16 times in the sample, and the most frequently used indicator for condemnation in the sample is *criminality*, used 19 times. However, the question of what is the most *prominent* framing indicator is another one entirely, and requires a more detailed analysis. I will be in part using a mathematical method to narrow down the prominent indicators, in order to make a content analysis of the more prominent indicators.

As prominence is defined as “standing out so as to be seen easily; particularly noticeable” (Dictionary.com, n.d), it needs to be a key part of the framing of a majority of the articles. Before proceeding, I think I should provide clarity as to how I ranked the prominence of the framing indicators, in order to understand in more depth what lies behind the number. As an example, in Al Jazeera #9 (Aljazeera, 2019), I labeled, 1- aggression, 2- humanization, 3- explicit rationale, 4- war/battle. In regards to why aggression was labeled as the most prominent, it was based on the extensive detail, focus and importance in the article regarding the framing of Israel as the aggressor in this killing. In most of the 20 small paragraphs,

including the headline and accompanying video, there is mention of Israeli forces attacking or killing Palestinians in Gaza, such as:

- “Israel kills three Palestinians in besieged Gaza Strip” (headline)
- “... funeral for 3 Palestinians in their early 20s... targeted by the Israeli army” (video)
- “At least three Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces” (1/20)
- “one other Palestinian suffered “critical” injuries following the overnight attack” (2/20)
- “medics said that Israeli forces... hours after the attack” (5/20)
- “the Israeli army said an attack helicopter and tank had fired...” (6/20)
- “Israeli air raids hit parts of... Gaza” (7/20)
- “four armed men who were killed ... by Israeli fire” (11/20)
- “spokesman for Islamic Jihad, blamed continuous Israeli aggression” (13/20)
- “... Israeli aggression...” (14/20)
- “Israel has waged three wars on Gaza since 2008” (15/20)
- “... the Israeli army has killed more than...” (16/20)

The underlined words are what I used to determine the framing of aggression in the article. Even this segment about framing of aggression in this article had to be abbreviated slightly due to just how extensive the framing of aggression was in the article, and this was the standard I set for labeling a framing device as the highest amount of prominence.

Humanization was a framing indicator I labeled as a two in the article, due to its frequent use of humanizing the victims of the conflict. However, this way of framing was not the primary focus of this article. This content analysis has to be done slightly differently, due to the less explicit descriptions that humanizing framing typically involves.

There is mention of the three people who were killed, with one in critical condition, with the names of the dead explicitly named with their (young) ages. A video included a funeral of the three Palestinians, which showcases the human toll of the war on the people of Gaza. The article also provides quotes and sourcing from Hamas and PIJ, where they highlight that these men did not act irrationally and that they were acting

out of “anger and frustration with the current situation inside the Gaza Strip”, the ‘current situation’ is later framed as a “crippling blockade”. Moreover, the anger is framed as being caused by Israel with the statement “There is anger among the Palestinian youth over Israeli aggression and crimes ...”. This provides a very human explanation for why the Palestinians are arming themselves against Israel, and humanises their actions. There is also some mention of the wider picture of the human toll by stating Palestinian deaths and injuries from protests the past year.

I interpreted the following framing of humanisation as a big part of the article's storytelling, but I felt it was not present enough to warrant labeling it a one. At the start of the article we get told of the three people killed by Israel, and after some further contextualizing of the event, and previous events, we get told why the victims did what they did. The humanizing framing is prominent in the writing, but not as extensive as the framing of aggression, or other framings of humanization present in other articles.

Explicit rationale is present in some form in the article with the Israeli army's statements and accompanying tweets about the separate incidents they responded to, which is why it was given a three.

“We just identified a number of armed suspects from Gaza approaching the security fence with Israel. We fired towards them.” - IDF

“The Israeli military said three rockets were fired from Gaza towards Israel, two of which had been intercepted by its Iron Dome aerial defence system. No Israelis were hurt.” “(in response) Israeli air raids hit parts of the northern Gaza Strip” - IDF

“The narrative from Hamas has been that this is a case of angry armed men who are acting by themselves out of a sense of anger and frustration with the current situation inside the Gaza Strip.” - Hamas

Three explicit rationales were provided toward the main points of discussion in the articles, which provided some insight into Israel’s and Hamas’ viewpoints about the violence. As it is somewhat more attention given to the explicit rationales from Israel, this serves as justification

framing. This is not an effective frame though, as much of the article discusses Israel's historical aggression and humanizes the victims of the attack, somewhat undermining the IDF statements. As it is not a frequent or consequential framing device used in the article, but still has some appearance, it was given a score of three.

War/Battle was given a score of four in the prominence scale, as there was little mention of it throughout the article and served little purpose. There are two short mentions of Israel having waged three "wars" on Gaza since 2008, and mention of the 2014 war. As the key words for the framing device does appear it has to be mentioned, but it does not provide much significance to the framing of the article.

In order to narrow down which indicators are used most prominently, firstly I measured the frequency of the appearance of certain framing indicators in the sample size. In descending order, criminality is used 19 times, humanization and aggression is used 18 times, cruelty is used 17 times, explicit rationale is used 16 times, war/battle is used 12 times, self-defense is used nine times, and accident is used two times. It is safe to say that war/battle, self-defense and accident are not the most prominent framing devices, as they do not make a frequent enough appearance in the framing of the articles.

The second method I will utilize to explore which of the five remaining indicators are most prominent is to aggregate how they were ranked from the 1-4 score in prominence, rounded to two decimal figures. In regards to the aggregated framing of the different indicators, criminality had an average of 2.37 in prominence when it appeared in the articles, humanization had on average 2.06, aggression averaged 2.88, cruelty averaged 2.53, and explicit averaged 2.63. These results indicate that explicit rationale and aggression are less prominent when they do feature in the articles.

Humanization, cruelty and criminality seem to be the most prominent indicators that can be observed from both articles. Based on observations of the table, and my analysis of the articles, criminality is most prominently used in *Times of Israel*, and humanization is the outstanding framing method in *Al Jazeera* articles. Cruelty is used to similar levels in both *Times of Israel*

and *Al Jazeera*, but is not the most prominent in either news outlet. The analysis will therefore focus on how humanization and criminality are used in the articles to frame the conflict.

6.3. Analysis of the Different Uses of Prominent Framing Indicators

As can be observed from the table, there are quite a few differences in the ways Times of Israel and Al Jazeera frame the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There are two differences that I wish to highlight that were especially relevant within my chosen sample. Firstly, there are the different points of emphasis of both articles. While Al Jazeera focuses on the human toll of the conflict in order to frame and challenge different aspects of the conflict framing used by other parties, Times of Israel focuses primarily on delegitimizing their opposition as criminals in order to legitimize the actions of the Israeli military.

6.3.1. Times of Israel Framing of Gazan Factions

In regards to *Times of Israel*, criminality is used most prominently, but is also seemingly framed quite consistently. In seven out of 10 articles the framing of criminality for Hamas, PIJ or those affiliated with them, was mainly done through framing them as “terrorists” or other terror-related terms, either directly stating that the groups and their leaders are “terrorists”, or by connecting their actions as acts of terrorism, or both. This is in order to condemn them, their actions, and to delegitimize the Palestinian factions as a governing body. This also functions to justify the actions of Israel to combat these factions in Gaza. This is seen in many examples throughout the articles, where I outlined the key ones.

In Times of Israel #3 (TOI Staff, 2023c), Hamas is almost exclusively framed as terrorists when mentioned, or simply just as the “terrorists”. This is seen with citations such as “Sgt. Ido Binenstock, 19, was killed by Hamas terrorists on the battlefield on October 7”, and “In the middle of a war and facing so many terrorist forces”.

In Times of Israel #4 (Rasgon, 2019), the headline introduces Hamas and PIJ as praising acts of terrorism, then the author goes on to label them as terrorists directly and that they frequently support terrorism, which condemns their actions as criminal. This is seen by quotes such as

“‘ Hamas and Islamic Jihad praise deadly West Bank terror shootings ’”, “‘ Hamas calls spree ‘heroic’ and ‘courageous’ ’”, “‘ The terror group frequently praises shooting, ramming and stabbing attacks against Israelis ’”

Times of Israel #8 (Times of Israel, 2024b) frames a leader of Hamas, and the actions of Hamas as terrorism and uses it to denounce the idea of a negotiated peace with Hamas and justifying the continuation of the escalated conflict started on October 7. This is seen with quotes such as “Michael Koubi ... who interrogated Sinwar for 180 hours in prison ... once asked the terrorist ...”,

“Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has categorically rejected a post-war plan for Gaza... saying any such talk now would be a reward for terror.”

Within the three outliers where there was little or no mention of terror-related terms, one was discussing inter-communal crime inside Israel, and one was discussing the sentencing of an Israeli assault. In other words, Hamas and PIJ were not mentioned in the articles. Therefore, it seems as if a primary method of framing for criminality in *Times of Israel* is to frame the Palestinian factions inside Gaza as terrorists, when they are mentioned. Placing emphasis on framing the opposing party, and the people affiliated, as “terrorists” acting against Israel delegitimize their actions as made with criminal and evil intentions. This consequently also attempts to justify and legitimize the actions and policy taken by Israel to oppose and undermine Hamas, as Israel is the nation defending itself against the “terrorists”, as can be seen with the following quote from Times of Israel #10

“Hamas’s October 7, 2023, devastating attack on southern Israel, when thousands of terrorists stormed the border to kill some 1,200 people and abduct 251, sparking the war in Gaza.”. It frames Hamas as criminals, and the aggressors, in order to later legitimize the undertaking of killing high ranking Hamas members, interrogating, arresting and “handling” thousands of Palestinians across the West Bank and Gaza by associating them with the illegitimate “terrorists” of Hamas (Fabian, 2024). For example, 2350 of the 6000 “wanted” Palestinians arrested were framed as being “affiliated with Hamas”, where the arrests were also framed as a “large-scale counterterrorism operations” in the West Bank (Fabian, 2024).

6.3.2. Al Jazeera Framing of Israeli Actions

Humanization is seen as the most frequent framing device in *Al Jazeera*. It is given a score of one point in prominence in four articles, and given a score of two in another four articles. Most of the articles mention, to various extents, the human toll and personal stories relevant to developments, attacks and death in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Humanizing framing in this context functions as a way to condemn Israel's actions. However, these human stories also serve a secondary function for many of the articles, that is of addressing certain contested narratives in the media. These include the viewpoint of Hamas being the aggressors on October 7th, and disproportionate use of violence by Israel.

In Al Jazeera #3 (Al Tahhan, 2023), the article tells the story of a family who lost their eldest child in an attack on their village in the West Bank on October 6th 2023. The personal story captures in detail about one individual case of how death affects those close to them, which serves its own function in condemning the actions. However, these stories also serve a secondary function of undermining the framing that Hamas were the aggressors on October 7th, and that Israel is acting in self-defense against “terrorism”.

The framing that Hamas was not the initiators is captured in the article quite clearly. The article however, mentions past engagements in the village, before later adding a quote from Labib’s father. He repeats that the attacks in the West Bank village, before or after October 7th, had nothing to do with Hamas: “my son was killed on October 6, there was no Hamas ... When they burned down Huwara in February, there was no Hamas. When they attacked our house yet again two weeks after they killed my son, there was no Hamas” (Al Tahhan, 2023). This directly opposes the Israeli rationale that Hamas instigated the war. This rationale is mentioned in Times of Israel #3, #8 and #10 in the coding frame (Times of Israel, 2023c; (Times of Israel, 2024b; Fabian, 2024).

Al Jazeera #5 (Humaid, 2022) focuses on the implications of the 2021 war in Gaza through the lens of Imadeldin Abed and Mohammed el-Sayed. It highlights through Abed that people were left “without furniture, clothes or money” as a result of their home getting bombed, and the

article highlights through el-Sayed that they or their loved ones suffer life-changing or life-ending consequences from the war. In addition, through these stories the article also portrays a broader picture of disproportionate use of violence from Israel.

There is emphasis placed on highlighting the wider scale of the destruction of the May 2021 war. This is done through providing the data of Palestinian casualties and internally displaced, where over 2200 were injured including 261 dead, with over 113 000 people displaced from their homes (Humaid, 2022). After providing the Israeli rationale for the justification for the offensive of responding to rocket fire from Gaza and blaming Hamas, the article highlights the 13 dead in Israel (Humaid, 2022). This framing of cruelty by using the juxtaposition of the Israeli casualties versus casualties in Gaza being so strikingly different also has the effect of highlighting the disproportionality of the violence, challenging the framing that this violence was a justified response. The humanizing framing serves as the backbone of which this narrative is elaborated upon in the article.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to analyse and explore the use of different framing devices related to the portrayal of killing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This research is based on the two research questions that were mentioned earlier. The first one is concerning the prominent framing indicators in the articles, and the second interrelated question is what differentiated these uses of framing in Al Jazeera and Times of Israel. In order to answer the question I used a qualitative content analysis of 20 articles from the regional news outlets from 2019-2024, where I analysed what framing indicators were present in each one of the articles.

After obtaining the data from the selected articles, I compiled them into a coding frame in order to conduct my analysis. I used the summarized articles in order to aid in my analysis of the prominent framing devices in the articles, as well as providing a qualitative analysis of what constitutes prominence. After exploring which indicators were more prominent in the articles that I analyzed, I found out that criminality was more prominently used in Times of Israel, and humanization was more prominently used in Al Jazeera. Additionally, I used a qualitative content analysis to understand how these frames were used in both news outlets, and how they were used by both of them. I found out that the use of criminality in Times of Israel was primarily used to delegitimize Hamas as a governing body by frequently referring to them as terrorists. Moreover, the framing of Hamas as illegitimate in turn justifies the actions of Israel. By contrast, Al Jazeera used the humanizing framing in order to condemn Israeli actions but also to highlight, and contest narratives of for example questioning if Hamas were the aggressors on October 7th, and disproportionality of the conflict.

This study has explored a lesser discussed topic in relation to the media framing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It undertook an analysis of two sources from regional media that are connected to each one of the conflict parties, and analysed how they portray killing in the conflict. The study also expands on existing research into portrayal of killing in the conflict more specifically from the previous research mentioned in chapter two.

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9: Appendix:

* The sole statement of self-defense is also the only explicit rationale provided from the Israeli side. As it makes little sense to use the same statement for two separate indicators, it is therefore labeled as both Self-Defense and Explicit Rationale.

General observations of the results of the analysis for future research

The first major observation that can be made in regards to the use of framing in the chosen sample of articles from *Al Jazeera* and *Times of Israel* is that condemnation is more often than not the preferred method of which to frame an event. The only cases where justification is most prominently used in *Al Jazeera* article #7 and *Times of Israel* article #1, #5, and #10.

In regards to *Times of Israel* #5 and #10, they provide general overviews of the IDF reports from that year about the operations conducted to protect the citizens of Israel, and the key events taken place during that year. These reports focus heavily on explaining in great detail about the defensive measures undergone by the IDF, which leads to self-defense and explicit rationale being used frequently and extensively in these articles and is highly likely the cause of justification being used as the primary form of framing in these articles.

In the cases of *Al Jazeera* #7 and *Times of Israel* #1, both articles are exclusively discussing the killing of an Israeli soldier and Hamas leader respectively. However, this is not anything that can be taken as hard proof that the *Al Jazeera* coverage of Israeli death or *Times of Israel* coverage of Palestinian deaths are typically framed as more justified. *Times of Israel* #6, #7 and #9 also covers deaths of Palestinians exclusively, in most cases without any mention of Israeli casualties or deaths, and the articles frame these deaths much more in forms of condemnation. This is difficult to assess in regards to *Al Jazeera*, due to the lack of articles mentioning Israeli deaths exclusively in my sample of articles. However, the present evidence does provide a strong indication that the deaths mentioned are not tied to the use of framing indicators.

In the case of *Al Jazeera* #7 and *Times of Israel* #10 the use of condemnation and justification is admittedly used very similarly, therefore it is also not impossible that the fact that there is

more justification than condemnation is merely a consequence of my personal observations, and that other analysis of these articles may find different outcomes that would not label justification as the primary form of framing used in these articles. With this in mind, it seems evident that the analysis of whether or not articles are making more use of framing of justification is not important to the overall discussion of the article's portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Another observation is that the articles referencing the larger-scale intensive conflicts of May 2021 and the ongoing war started on October 7 2023, seem to have more abundance of framing of condemnation from both sides. Out of the chosen articles, *Times of Israel* articles #1, #3, #6, #7, #8 and #10 and *Al Jazeera* articles #2 #3, #4, #5, #6 and #10 directly reference these conflicts in the reporting. With the exception of *Times of Israel* #1 and #10, all of the articles contain significant use of condemnation. Significant use of condemnation framing is interpreted as the article containing 2 or more frames frequently or extensively used, at least three condemnation frames used in total and limited or no justification framing for the other party. As previously mentioned, *Times of Israel* #10 is a bit of an outlier in the sample size, due to it being a yearly report discussing IDF operations. *Times of Israel* #1 is the only article from this time frame which actively focuses on justifying the actions of Israel as opposed to condemning Hamas, PIJ or others.

Out of the other 8 articles in the sample not discussing May 2021 or October 2023-present, *Times of Israel* #2 and #4, and *Al Jazeera* #7 and #8 raised some eyebrows for different reasons. *Times of Israel* #4 and *Al Jazeera* #8 made noteworthy remarks for justifying the actions of Hamas and Israel respectively, something barely seen in the 2021 and 2023-present articles. The article still frames Hamas or Israel's actions more significantly in forms of condemnation, but there is more noticeable use of justification framing indicators for the party being condemned in these articles as opposed to the more intensive conflict periods. *Times of Israel* #2 and *Al Jazeera* #7 do make more use of justification for framing, but more importantly do not use a significant amount of condemnation framing either. There is not enough evidence to make a claim whether the time period the article discusses affects the use

of framing, and is not entirely relevant to this study, but it is something that can be analysed in future research.