



Framing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Comparative Analysis of Al-Jazeera Arabic and CNN International

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Abstract. This study examines the framing of the Israel-Palestine conflict by Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International through corpus analysis using AntConc. The research aims to identify differences in word choices, themes, and perspectives between the two media outlets. Articles reporting on the conflict were collected from both news sources, converted into TXT format, and given different names based on the media's name and the report's date. The data was analyzed using Antconc corpus for word frequency by using several keywords related to conflict and potentially showing partiality. For example, the frequency feature on AntConc shows that Al Jazeera Arabic uses the word القصف (al-qasfu) or Bombing which appears 2.2%, being the word with the most occurrences after the words Israel and Palestine. This word shows that Al Jazeera is trying to frame Palestine as a victim of the ongoing conflict. Key findings reveal distinct framing differences: Al Jazeera Arabic frequently uses words related to occupation, resistance, and civilian suffering, framing Israel as the occupier and Palestinians as heroic resisters. Conversely, CNN International focuses on the conflict and key actors, using terms such as "conflict," "Hamas," and "Israel," with a balanced depiction of actions from both sides. This research underscores how geopolitical context and editorial policies shape media framing, influencing public perception of conflict. These insights are crucial for media consumers and researchers in understanding and critically assessing international news coverage.

Keywords: Comparative Media, Entman's Framing, Israeli-Palestine Conflict.

1 Introduction

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is the longest ongoing conflict in the 20th century. This conflict has become the most complex and sensitive issue in global politics. This conflict began in 1967 when Israel attacked Egypt, Jordan and Syria and has not been resolved (Purnama, 2016). The existence of conflicting desires to claim one territory is the cause of a conflict between Israel and Palestine who are fighting over ownership of one area (Violita, 2010). Centuries of conflict have sacrificed a lot of blood and clashed religious, cultural, and humanitarian values. The UN made countless efforts to reconcile the two nations but it still ended in an unresolved battle.

Periods of conflict occur at various times. Most recently, on October 7, 2023, the conflict has heated up again to this day. Based on *kompas.com* news, the conflict was

caused by a massive counterattack by Hamas against Israel by firing more than 2,000 rockets. This incident resulted in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stating that Israel was currently at war (Indrawati, 2023). Subsequently, the war was dominated by Israeli attacks on Palestine. From 7 October 2023 to 5 August 2024, 1,143 Israeli attacks on the Palestinian people have been recorded (Khadder et al., 2024).

The war that has occurred to date has had an impact not only on the two countries but also affects international diplomacy, regional security, and global stability. So that it attracts the attention of the mass media to broadcast news related to the conflict consistently. Every information is important to broadcast as this case is an international conflict (Sulaeman & Islami, 2022). As an international conflict, society needs to know about the conditions and development of the conflict in order to foster understanding, awareness, and humanitarian responsibility. Therefore, the information broadcast to the public should be reliable and truthful information.

The media plays an important role in broadcasting in-depth information to improve people's skills to actively participate and be critical in looking at the world's latest issues. Based on Law No. 40 of 1999 concerning the Press, it is stated that the media is responsible for conveying correct information in an objective, balanced, and impartial manner (Government Regulation, 1999). Meanwhile, the principles of press freedom in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 19 emphasize the importance of freedom of expression and the right to seek, receive, and disseminate information (International Law Making, 2006). However, according to Lestari (2022) the media plays a big role in shaping people's perceptions and views in interpreting an event because the media is not a neutral entity and can have bias in its reporting. This is in line with the large number of mass media reporting about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which is either part of the opposition or supports one of the parties involved. Furthermore, based on competition, the media industry is accustomed to framing an event based on audience, editorial policies, and ideological perspectives, each of which has different media (Machin & Thornborrow, 2003).

Each party involved has its justification for what happened and which party violated the other party's rights. Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International are news organizations with wide global reach and diverse audiences. Al Jazeera Arabic, based in Qatar, is often associated with a Middle Eastern perspective (Rahmawati, 2017). Meanwhile, CNN International, which is based in the United States, is usually considered to represent a Western point of view. So, Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International have the opportunity to present news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with different approaches and framing.

Framing analysis from a media ideology perspective is significant for identifying how the media frames events, issues and social actors. According to Entman (1989) framing, the media selects certain aspects of an event or issue to report and determines how to interpret and present it to the public. In this case, media framing can play with public opinion, strengthen existing perceptions or even create new opinions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International frame the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the perspectives of these two media and their influence on their audiences.

Other research on media framing in reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been found in several studies, including research from this research that focuses on the way the mass media represents Hamas and Israel through mass media reporting using descriptive qualitative approaches. The difference with this research lies in the object and approach. This research focuses on news texts from Aljazeera and CNN and uses a corpus approach to process data. The second research was from Yuliani (2017) is this research focuses on uncovering the ideology of the online media Aljazeera and Alarabiya in presenting news about the caliphate discourse, especially after the proclamation of ISIS in 2014. The difference in this research lies in the object and focus of the study. The third research focuses on the image of Prabowo Subianto which is presented on Republika.co.id. so that the research differs in the research object.

Based on three previous studies, this research aims to complement previous research related to media framing, particularly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The research objective is to understand Aljazeera and CNN's strategy in framing and reporting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to examine the impact of the news on public perception. Researchers will uncover patterns in the two media by identifying differences in word choice, news focus, and point of view.

2 Method

This research is qualitative descriptive to provide an in-depth understanding of *the framing* of Aljazeera and CNN in reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This research uses content analysis methods to analyze news articles from Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International. The research data is in the form of news texts on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict reported by Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International. Data was collected by downloading news texts from the official websites of the two media, then converting them into *TXT format* and then giving them different names based on the media's name and the report's date. Data that meets the criteria is entered into a special Antconc corpus to see the frequency of words in the news discourse. The text is analyzed independently without being linked to anything other than language by using several keywords related to conflict and potentially showing partiality. For example, the frequency feature on AntConc shows that Al Jazeera Arabic uses the word *القصف* (*al-qasfu*) or Bombing which appears 2.2%, being the word with the most occurrences after the words Israel and Palestine. This word shows that Al Jazeera is trying to frame that Palestine is a victim of the ongoing conflict. Next, the data generated from the Antconc corpus was analyzed using Robert N. Entman's *framing model analysis*. The stages of Entman's *framing analysis* consist of; *define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and treatment recommendations*.

3 Findings and Discussion

Based on the data collected and processed using the AntConc corpus application, the main findings were obtained through the analysis of word frequency from both Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International.

3.1 Word Frequency

Word frequency analysis helps identify the most frequently used words in the news corpus from Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International media. Table 1 show the research findings.

Table 1. Frequency table for Al Jazeera Arabic words

Word Frequency	Translation	Percentage
فلسطين (falistin)	Palestine	3.0%
الإسرائيلي (al-israili)	Israel	2.8%
الإحتلال (al-ihtilal)	Occupation	2.5%
القصف (al-qasfu)	Bombing	2.2%
المقاومة (al-muqawamah)	Resistance	1.9%

The most frequently occurring words include “الاحتلال” *al-ihtilal* (occupation), “القصف” *al-qasfu* (bombing), “المقاومة” *al-muqawamah* (resistance), and “فلسطين” *falistin* (Palestine).

- **الاحتلال** *al-ihtilal* (**Occupation**) appeared at 2.5%, indicating a strong focus on the theme of occupation by Israel.
- **القصف** *al-qasfu* (**Bombing**) had an appearance percentage of 2.2% respectively, highlighting the suffering and casualties on the Palestinian side.
- **المقاومة** *al-muqawamah* (**Resistance**) appears at 1.9%, describing acts of resistance as heroic.

Table 2. CNN International word frequency table

Word Frequency	Translation	Percentage
Conflict	Conflict	3.1%
Israel	Israel	2.9%
Attack	Attack	2.6%
Hamas	Hamas	2.4%
Gaza	Gaza	2.2%

The words that appear most frequently include conflict, Israel, Hamas, attack, Gaza, and defense. **Conflict** had the highest percentage with 3.1%, reflecting a neutral approach to conflict. **Israel** and **Hamas** appear at 2.9% and 2.4%, indicating equal attention to the two main actors. Words such as **attack** and **Gaza** show a focus on military action with percentages of 2.6% and 2.2% respectively (see Table 2). Based on this analysis, the differences between the media *framing* of Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International are clearly visible. Al Jazeera uses more words related to occupation and

resistance which tend to emphasize Palestinian suffering, while CNN International focuses more on aspects of the conflict and the main actors by using the words Israel and Hamas.

3.2 Robert Entman Media Framing

Define Problems. Al Jazeera discourse with the title “يوم عار في جيبين 7 Oktober 2023 إسرائيل (yaum ‘ar fi jabin israili)” (Haaretz, 2023) relates to the Hamas counterattack in Israel on October 7, 2023. Al Jazeera utilized the phrase “يوم عار في جيبين إسرائيل” yaum ‘ar fi jabin israili (“a day of shame for Israel”) as the headline, aiming to depict Israel’s failure to anticipate the sudden assault launched by Palestine. Linguistically, the term “عار” (‘ār) is a noun that signifies “exposed shame,” “disgrace,” “embarrassment,” “defect,” or “humiliation” (Mu’jam al-ma’ani, n.d.). In this sentence, “عار” (‘ār) functions as the predicate (khabar), referring to the state or condition of the subject, which is “يوم” yaum (day). The use of such powerful language clearly indicates that Al Jazeera sought to deliver a strong critique of the Israeli government, particularly targeting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, by portraying his failure to manage the attack and protect his citizens.

Furthermore, Al Jazeera further exposes the weaknesses of the Israeli military, as reflected in the following discourse:

وتهكم الكاتب من إطالق الجيش الإسرائيلي اسم “عملية السيوف الحديدية” على ما يقوم به حالياً “من تصد للهجمات الفلسطينية، قاتلاً إن هذه العملية هي في واقع أمرها “عملية سقوط السراويل (هأرتس، 2023)

Wa tahaqqama al-kātib min iṭlāqi al-jaysh al-Isrā’īlī isma “‘amaliyyati al-suyūfi al-ḥadīdiyya” ‘alā mā yaqūmu bihi ḥālīyyan min taṣaddīn lil-hajamāti al-Filasṭīniyya, qā’ ilan inna ḥādhihi al-‘amaliyyah hiya fī wāqi’ amrihā “‘amaliyyatu suqūṭ al-sarāwīl.

The author mocks the Israeli military’s designation of the “Iron Swords Operation” for its current response to Palestinian attacks, stating that this operation is a “pants-dropping operation.” The above discourse employs the term عملية سقوط السراويل (amaliyah suqut al-sirawil), which literally means the “pants-dropping operation.” The word سقوط (suqūṭ) linguistically translates to “fall,” “collapse,” “downfall,” “decline,” “failure,” and “disqualification” (Mu’jam al-ma’ani, 2024a). In this context, سقوط (suqūṭ) refers to the collapse of something related to reputation, dignity, or power. The term “failure” is often used in political discourse to describe a moral collapse within a government.

The word السراويل (sirāwīl) linguistically means “pants” (Mu’jam al-ma’ani, 2024b). In a cultural context, pants are understood as garments that preserve honor or dignity. Thus, in the context of this discourse, the figurative use of the word السراويل (sirāwīl) carries the meaning of exposing shame or losing dignity. When examined more closely, the phrase عملية سقوط السراويل (amaliyah suqut al-sirawil) (“pants-dropping operation”) conveys a strong message and reflects a critical view of the Israeli military’s failure. Therefore, the Al Jazeera news article attacks Israel and its military strength, portraying

this framing as an attempt to delegitimize Israel's military power while simultaneously eroding its credibility and dignity in the eyes of the public.

It is evident that the news is highly biased toward Palestine. The report highlights Israel's failure and exposes the weaknesses of its military without offering a counter-narrative from the Israeli side, thereby omitting any balance or completeness regarding the actual events. Once again, the framing and ideology presented by Al Jazeera demonstrate a clear bias toward one side, showing empathy for Palestine while critically assessing Israel's actions.

In the CNN International discourse with the title "Hamas' attack on Israel is an indisputable act of terrorism" (Ghitis, 2023) report, CNN International uses the phrase "indisputable act of terrorism" to delegitimize the actions of Hamas. The use of the term "terrorism" carries a globally negative connotation, and this strong framing leads to the portrayal of Hamas' actions as violent acts intended to instil fear in the public, which can no longer be justified.

Furthermore, the narrative within the article employs diction that points directly to acts of violence. This can be observed in the following discourse:

"Inside Israel, they went after soldiers and civilians, even posting videos on social media, as the world saw evidence of how they targeted, hunted down, and brutalized Israelis of all ages." (Ghitis, 2023).

The discourse above uses the terms "targeted, hunted down, and brutalized," which emphasize the brutality and indiscriminate nature of the attacks on Israel. This discourse has the potential to reinforce the negative framing of Hamas' actions.

Just like the narrative presented by Al Jazeera Arabic, CNN International does not provide a Palestinian response in its report, even though such omission reduces the completeness of the coverage or event. This suggests that both media outlets Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International are inclined toward one perspective and do not offer space for the other side to respond.

Like the narrative constructed by Al Jazeera Arabic, CNN International also does not provide a Palestinian response in its report, even though this omission reduces the completeness of the coverage or the event. This indicates that both media outlets Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International tend to lean toward a single perspective and do not provide space for the opposing side to voice its views.

Diagnose Causes. The second component of Entman's framing theory involves diagnosing the causes of the identified problem. Al Jazeera Arabic's coverage often links the causes of the conflict to Israeli military actions and policies. Phrases such as "القصف الإسرائيلي" *al-qasfu al-israili* (Israeli bombing) and "العدوان الإسرائيلي" *al-'udwanul israili* (Israeli aggression) are often used to describe Israel's actions. This choice of language suggests a narrative of one-sided aggression, in which Israel is portrayed as the primary perpetrator of violence. This framing influences audiences to view the state of Israel as the primary cause of Palestinian suffering, emphasizing military action as the core issue driving this conflict.

In contrast, CNN International's framing tends to diagnose the conflict as a result of the actions of both parties. The network frequently uses terms such as " Hamas militants" and " Israeli defense", indicating a dual perspective that recognizes aggressive actions on both sides. This dual framing is consistent with the narrative that both sides contribute to the cycle of violence, with Hamas often portrayed in terms of militant activity and rocket attacks, while Israel is portrayed as responding with military actions such as airstrikes. This approach tends to distribute responsibility more evenly, depicting conflict as the result of a complex interaction between two opposing forces.

Make Moral Judgment & Treatment Recommendation. The final aspect of Entman's framing model involves making moral judgments and suggesting solutions. Al Jazeera Arabic often depicts Palestinians as victims of Israeli occupation and policies. The use of emotive terms such as " الشهداء " as-shuhada (martyr) and " ضحايا " *Dohiyan* (victim) along with narratives of civilian casualties emphasizes a moral framing that sympathizes with the Palestinian cause. The solution frequently suggested in Al Jazeera's coverage involves resistance to the occupation, suggesting that Palestinian actions, including armed resistance, are a justified response to oppression.

On the other hand, CNN International tends to adopt a more balanced moral stance, often presenting perspectives from both Israel and Palestine. The moral judgments in CNN's framing are less clearly one-sided, reflecting a more nuanced view of the ethical dimensions of this conflict. The network often suggests solutions that include a diplomatic settlement and ceasefire, emphasizing the need for both sides to engage in dialogue and negotiations. This approach suggests that resolution may be achieved through peaceful means rather than through continued violence.

Overall, framing analysis using Robert Entman's theory reveals significant differences in the way Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These differences highlight the influence of media framing on public perception and the importance of critically analyzing news sources to understand the underlying narratives they convey.

4 Conclusion

This research shows that *the framing of* news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is strongly influenced by the media context behind it. By using corpus analysis via AntConc, this research succeeded in identifying significant differences in word choice and frequency of word usage between Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN International. Al Jazeera often uses the words Occupation, Martyrs, Bombing, Resistance, and Palestine to describe siding with Palestine and showing support for the Palestinian struggle and depicting Israel as an invader. Meanwhile, CNN International uses more neutral language such as Hamas, Israel, Attack, Conflict, and Gaza, which shows an effort to maintain balance in its coverage by describing the actions of both parties, namely Israel and Palestine, without giving emotional emphasis and taking sides on one side.

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