AN ANALYSIS OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT ON WIKIPEDIA

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INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

With the increasing use of new digital technologies, the Internet is a common platform which people turn to for information. It not only has the ability to shape the way people think, but due to the wide variety of voices present on the Internet, it has the potential to provide multiple perspectives on the same issue (Fowley & Cathy & Claire & Ed & Thouësny & Sylvie, 2013).   Wikipedia, being the 5th most visited website on the Internet, is not just an information source that millions rely on (Webhostface, 2017), but also facilitates discourse amongst a community of users and editors (Cummings, 2008; Ray & Graeff, 2008). Being a shared resource that anyone can contribute to and edit, Wikipedia ought to be open to various perspectives and interpretations of the same issue. Thus, if Wikipedia wishes to be true to its moniker, "World's Encyclopedia of Knowledge", surely it should seek to represent the World's different perspectives on an issue as well?

Currently, millions of people rely on Wikipedia as a source of information, yet at the same time criticise it for being unreliable and unrepresentative of different views. Even existing literature regarding Wikipedia's reliability as a representative of the different perspectives on stakeholders are varying in their stance. Researchers such as Greenstein (2018), using corpus linguistics, concluded that Wikipedia, as a form of crowd-based knowledge and information source, is not necessarily less representative than information sources written by experts, such as the Encyclopedia Britannica. In contrast, Backer (2017) suggests that there is a liberal slant in Wikipedia's presentation of these issues, disagreeing with Greenstein that it provides a balanced representation of an issue. Wikipedia has even been accused of a gender bias, with 90% of its editors being male (Crawford, 2018). However, all of these studies by Greeinstein (2018), Backer (2017) and Crawford (2018), were mostly limited to understanding how Wikipedia presents national issues, like gun control or taxation, not international ones like geopolitical conflicts, which this study would focus on. Furthermore, the clear conflict in researchers' views of Wikipedia, an increasingly popular information source, shows how there has not yet been any definitive conclusion to the reliability of Wikipedia.

Therefore, this study aims to further evaluate the extent of representation of different perspectives on Wikipedia by analysing the representation of Israeli-Palestinian conflict,

a prominent geopolitical conflict that encompasses many conflicting perspectives given its controversial nature, through Frame Analysis (Goffman, 1974) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995). This would add on to existing literature and provide nuances to Wikipedia's reliability in its representation of contrasting perspectives, specifically in geopolitical conflicts, a previously unexplored area.

SCOPE

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was sparked in 1948, when Palestinian Arabs declared war on Israel in order to establish a unified Arab Palestine. As a result, Israel began occupying the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The conflict has manifested primarily in two intifadas (uprisings to seize back Israeli-occupied territory), first in 1987, and again on a much bloodier level in 2000. Since the Second Intifada, there have been multiple cases of violent conflict, resulting in at least 2500 combined deaths. These territorial conflicts have not been resolved till today.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was thus chosen as a) it has dragged on over an extended period of time, since the 1948s till today. Thus, its deep historical roots and longevity has made it a prominent and regular topic in international news coverage (Zaher, 2009); b) It embodies many contentious issues, where Palestinian's fight for independence is often associated with ideas like like independence, freedom and liberty (Saariaho, 2015; Baidoun, 2014), as well as differing religious ideologies between Israel and Palestine, with Israel being a Jewish State and most Palestinians being Muslim (Mitchell, 2013; Haddad, 2014); c) it can be seen as a representation of the larger conflict between the Arab bloc and the Western Powers, mainly the United States (Zaher, 2009). As a result, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has garnered media attention from countries all across the world, making it suitable for this study on media representation. Additionally, this study will be focused on the developments of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from 2000 to 2018. The starting date of 2000 was selected given the occurrence of the Second Intifada in 2000, which drew vast media coverage and attention across the globe by various media organisations from different countries (Deprez & Raeymaeckers, 2010, Saariaho 2015, Zaher 2009).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the frames (Goffman, 1974) present in the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in *the New York Times, Al Jazeera,* and Wikipedia?
2. Through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), how are the power relations (Fairclough, 1995) between Israeli and Palestine presented in *the New York Times, Al Jazeera,* and Wikipedia?
3. Based on the first two research questions, does Wikipedia present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a balanced manner?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Media Representation of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

There is a significant amount of research available on the media representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In many American newspapers such as *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, Israeli violence is often portrayed as institutionalised while that of Palestine is portrayed as acts of terrorism. Israeli victims are often more humanised to evoke sympathy, while Palestinian victims are distanced and even ignored at times (Saariaho, 2015; Korn, 2004; Viser, 2003), with no justification for their actions (Zaher, 2009). An analysis of British Newspapers has also shown how a dichotomous and unbalanced representation of the conflict legitimises the actions of Israel as necessary (Wang, 2017). In Flemish newspapers, representation is often in favour of Israel, supporting their actions while repeatedly demonising Palestinians (Deprez & Raemaeckers, 2010). Corpus-based approaches also demonstrate how words with negative implications, such as "terrorist", are often used to describe the Palestinians (Kandil, 2009).

On the other hand, research on Palestine media sources such as *Al Ray* and *Maan* have shown that Israeli violence is portrayed as oppression and subjugation, while Palestinians are portrayed as the victims who suffer from injustice, and even as freedom fighters (Baidoun, 2014). Palestinian violence is often legitimisted in these media sources as well, by claiming that they are rightful owners of the land, and that Israeli citizens are illegitimate occupants (Jawad 2006, Pressman 2003). However, there has not yet been any study on how Wikipedia presents the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its articles.

Frame Analysis

Frame analysis was first coined by Erving Goffman in 1974 as a multidisciplinary social science research method to analyse how people understand situations and activities taking place around them. Goffman (1974) described frames to be culturally determined "lenses" on reality that individuals have and thus, use to interpret the world. It allows analysts to identify specific "chunks of human activity and social behaviour", named "strips", in order to understand the specific frames that they have (Goffman, 1974, p.5).

However, researchers have built on the concept of frame analysis, exploring how frames can be applied in media reports and information sources. Often, the content and message behind each frame is stagnant, remaining constant over time as it is intrinsically tied to the social-cultural context of the situation (Zald, 1996; Benford & Snow, 2000). However, it is the application of these frames in these media reports that is dynamic and subjective to the interest of the journalist (Van Gorp, 2007). Additionally, journalists can strengthen these frames by selecting aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient to the reader (Entman, 1993), thus "framing" the same issue to convey different ideologies.

Van Gorp further explains how the different elements of a specific frame can be organised as a "frame package" and identified in an information source. These elements are the framing devices, latent reasoning devices, and the social cultural context presented along with the "frame package" (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Framing devices refer to the lexical choices made in the construction of a text such as word choice, metaphors, exemplars, descriptions, arguments and visual images (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Latent reasoning devices refer to five main framing functions: problem definition, causal interpretation, consequences, treatment recommendation and moral evaluation (Entman, 1993; Gamson, 1992; Snow & Benford, 1988). The socio-cultural context refers to the details about the background of the issue at hand and helps in forwarding a specific frame.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is a critical theory which studies language as a sociocultural phenomenon on three different levels: a) analysis of discourse; b) analysis of processes of text production, consumption, and distribution; and c) socio-cultural analysis of the discursive event (Fairclough, 1995). It focuses on studying the way social power abuse, dominance, authority, power imbalance, and inequality is created, reproduced and resisted in communicating text and discourse in its social cultural context (Van Dijk 1995, Wodak, 2009). CDA does not have a single fixed approach, but rather, uses various types of theories/methodologies to achieve the common aim of understanding the structural relationships of power, dominance and unequal representation (Wodak, 2009; Van Dijk, 1995), such as analysing the lexical features and transitivity structures of a communicating text (Saariaho, 2015). Lexical features refer to things like the choice of words, vocabulary, metaphors and descriptions, while transitivity refers to the choice of structure in the construction of sentences that show the preference of certain forms of interpretation over others (Montgomery, 1986).

The representation of geopolitical conflicts in information sources is often subjected to power abuse through the deliberate distortion of news and exclusion of details (Cottle, 2006; Kempf, 2002) as geopolitical conflicts are inextricably tied to economic, political and religious ideologies. Thus, media organisations can forward different ideologies in their reporting of the conflict, resulting in an unequal representation of the different parties involved in an issue (Saariaho, 2015). CDA is hence, extremely applicable to this study of media representation.

METHODOLOGY

A selection of four media articles covering the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Two would be selected from *the New York Times*, namely "Israel claims nearly 1000 acres of West Bank land near Bethlehem" (henceforth NYT 1) and "Suicide bombing in Israel Kills 9, Hamas Approves" (henceforth NYT 2). The other two would be from *Al Jazeera*, namely

"Palestinian farmers lose land for failed economic zones" (henceforth AJ 1) and "Tel Aviv Blast Kills 9" (henceforth AJ 2) will be analysed.

The New York Times was chosen as it is the most widely-read American newspaper. Since America is not only a strong ally of Israel (Zaher, 2009; Mitchell, 2013), but also has a prominent Jewish population, this means that *the New York Times* is likely to have a pro-Israel stance (Flesher, 2009). On the other hand, *Al Jazeera* was chosen as it is more likely to represent Palestine's views as it is owned by Qatar, a country that has shown staunch support for the Palestinians, with it being Gaza's (a self-governing Palestinian territory) main economic sponsor (Stratfor Analysis, 2017).

Crucially, one article selected from *the New York Times* would correspond with one article selected from *Al Jazeera*, both covering the same issue. This allows for a fairer comparison of the different perspectives on a specific incident. With a total of 4 articles, there would be two such pairs. NYT 1 and AJ 1 would be about the same instance of Israeli aggression, while NYT 2 and AJ 2 would cover an instance of Palestinian aggression. This was done to facilitate comparison of the reporting and portrayal of violent actions carried out by both Israel and Palestine.

These articles would first be subjected to frame analysis, specifically the design by Van Gorp (2007). Key messages, themes, subjects and actors named, title, and tone of the text are identified, and based on these characteristics, a specific frame is assigned. In an iterative process, these categories are further refined in order to make them distinct with respect to the 3 elements in a "frame package": the framing devices, latent reasoning devices and social cultural context of the issue. Next, by looking specifically at the lexical elements and transitivity structures of the media articles through the lens of CDA, I would be able to analyse how the power relations of Israel and Palestine are presented in these articles. After this same analytical process has been applied to Wikipedia, it would be compared with *the New York Times* and *Al Jazeera* to better understand the similarities and differences in how the conflict is presented. Finally, I would consolidate and synthesise my comparisons and analysis to place Wikipedia on a spectrum in terms of its reliability, with one end being completely pro-Palestine, the middle being neutral, and the other end being completely pro-Israel, to evaluate Wikipedia's reliability in presenting this conflict and the power relations between Israel and Palestine.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frame Analysis

Below are the "frame packages" present in *the New York Times*, *Al Jazeera,* and Wikipedia on the issue of Israeli aggression and Palestinian aggression.

Issue 1: Israeli Aggression

Article (s)	AJ 1 and Wikipedia
Frame	Injustice - Rights
Problem Definition	State sovereignty and basic rights of Palestinian people hurt
Causal Interpretation	Israeli occupation of land, destruction of Palestinian homes and infrastructure
Consequences	Infringes their sovereignty and right to self-determination, unfairly harms Palestinians
Treatment Recommendation	PA Leaders and other countries should provide aid to Palestine and condemn Israel's actions
Moral Evaluation	Seek Justice and equality; Protect the basic rights of Palestinian citizens and the country's right to self-determination
Lexical Devices	AJ 1: "Brutal Crackdown", "Captive to Israel", "Historically the breadbasket of Palestine", "way of life, ancient and diverse heritage", "Resistance against settler colonial project", "last frontier of freedom" Wikipedia: "Entitled to all of West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem", "severe deprivation of their rights" "forbidden and politically inconceivable"

Article (s)	AJ 1 and Wikipedia
Frame	Economic Harm - Agriculture
Problem Definition	Reduced Palestine's agricultural capacity, Put Palestinians out of work
Causal Interpretation	Israeli aggressive confiscation of Palestinian land, uprooting olive trees, poisoning of livestock, and contamination of cultivated fields and wells
Consequences	Food insecurity, national GDP negatively affected, Farmers lose their source of income, livelihoods destroyed
Treatment Recommendation	PA Leaders and other countries should provide aid to Palestine and condemn Israel's actions

Moral Evaluation	Protect the basic welfare of Palestinian citizens: ensuring food, source of income for them
Lexical Devices	AJ 1: "Farmers livelihoods," "50% of Palestinian households suffer from food insecurity", "Threatening", "dispossess farmers" Wikipedia: "Unemployment rates have increased and the agriculture sector has become the most impoverished sector", "confiscation of land", "destruction of wells"

Article (s)	NYT 1 and Wikipedia
Frame	Danger - Palestinian Violence
Problem Definition	Safety and security of that area compromised, Israeli teenagers kidnapped
Causal Interpretation	Teenagers kidnapped by Palestinians, specifically Hamas
Consequences	Safety compromised; Potential for danger caused by Hamas and more casualties as a result
Treatment Recommendation	Israel, as a reaction to such dangers and acts of violence, should occupy these areas to ensure safety; necessary act of self-defence
Moral Evaluation	Ensure that safety in that area is maintained, Prevent the Hamas from committing acts of violence
Lexical Devices	NYT 1: "Three Israeli teenagers kidnapped", "punishment,", "Hamas, the Islamic group", "Compensation for settlers and punishment for Palestinians" Wikipedia: "Buffer in case of future aggression", "security concerns"

Article (s)	Wikipedia
Frame	Legality - No Official Prohibition
Problem Definition	Israel's actions are condemned even though they are legal and just
Causal Interpretation	Palestine and other countries call their actions violent and unproductive for peace negotiations

Consequences	Israel unable to peacefully continue what they are doing
Treatment Recommendation	Countries should stop condemning their actions and support them
Moral Evaluation	Ensure that Israel as a country has the freedom to carry out actions that are perfectly legal and just
Lexical Devices	"Lack of any valid diplomatic agreement", "land to be in dispute", "legality of settlements...Article 2 and 49 of the Geneva Convention, as well as UN Security resolution 242"

Issue 2: Palestinian Aggression

Article (s)	AJ 2
Frame	Danger - Israeli Violence
Problem Definition	Safety and security of Palestinians threatened; requires immediate action to ensure that safety is maintained
Causal Interpretation	Israel carries out acts of violence and aggression against Palestinians
Consequences	Safety of Palestinians compromised, increased amount of casualties and death of Palestinian citizens
Treatment Recommendation	Palestine must retaliate with aggressive actions as well to prevent further attacks from israel, protect Palestinian citizens from being harmed
Moral Evaluation	Seek justice and equality for Israel's actions against Palestinians, protect the basic rights and welfare of Palestinian citizens
Lexical Devices	"Recent Israeli military strikes in Northern Gaza that left 18 Palestinians dead", "One palestinian was killed and two wounded by an Israeli artillery shell in the Northern Gaza strip town of Bait Lahya", "Israeli military has been firing towards areas"

Artice (s)	NYT 2, Wikipedia
Frame	Palestinian Violence - Rationale

Problem Definition	Increased number of acts of terrorism and aggression carried out by Palestine against Israel
Causal Interpretation	Political instability and poor economic situation in Palestine has allowed for Palestinian terrorist groups such as Hamas to take control of the government
Consequences	Safety and lives of innocent Israeli citizens further threatened
Treatment Recommendation	Condemn such acts of terrorism; Retaliate using acts of violence that hinder Palestine's ability to continue such acts of terrorism
Moral Evaluation	Protect the basic rights and welfare of Israeli citizens, ensure that such acts of terrorism are prevented
Lexical Devices	NYT 2: "Palestinian ministries, controlled by Hamas", "Terrorist attacks", "Palestinian terrorist groups, including Hamas", same school of terrorism", "Hamas took control of Palestinian Authority", "barbaric acts of terror" Wikipedia: "Scores of suicide bombings and terrorist attacks, Palestinian terrorist attack", "notorious terrorist attacks", "house demolitions of terrorist operatives"

Article (s)	NYT 2, Wikipedia
Frame	Palestinian Violence - Negative Outcomes
Problem Definition	Safety and lives of innocent Israeli citizens threatened
Causal Interpretation	Palestine carrying out acts of aggression and violence against Israel
Consequences	Safety compromised, huge amounts of casualties due to such acts of aggression
Treatment Recommendation	Condemn such acts of terrorism; Retaliate using acts of violence that hinder Palestine's ability to continue such acts of terrorism
Moral Evaluation	Protect the basic rights and welfare of Israeli citizens, ensure that such acts of aggression are prevented

Lexical Devices	NYT 2: "Blood pooled on the sidewalk and speckled the sides", "murderous terror", "suicide bombings", "60 people were wounded, including two cousins" Wikipedia: "One in five Israelis have lost a friend or relative in a Palestinian terrorist attack", "53 Americans have been killed and 83 injured by Palestinian violence", "murder of 11 Israeli atheletes during the 1972 Olympic games"

Unjustified Act of Aggression VS Justified Act of Self-Defence

Wikipedia portrays Israel's actions as a justified act of self-defence. This can be seen through the presence of "Danger - Palestinian Violence" frame to reason and justify Israel's action of taking Palestinian land. This portrays their actions as a rational, reactionary security measure, rather than an act of senseless violence. NYT 1 also employs the frame of "Danger - Palestinian Violence" to place Israel on the moral high ground. On the other hand, the rationale behind Israel's actions and the "Danger - Palestinian Violence" frame is not present at all in AJ 1. This shows how in contrast to Wikipedia, AJ 1 does not attempt to provide a moral justification for Israel's actions, but instead, criticises it for being unjustified. Additionally, the Wikipedia article employs the "Legality - No Official Prohibition" frame. This is not present in both NYT 1 and AJ 1. This frame is used to further legitimise the actions of Israel as one that is just and law-abiding instead of an act of aggression.

However, for Palestine's actions, similar to NYT 2, Wikipedia portrays it as an unjustified act of aggression. This can be seen through the lack of explanation for the rationale of Palestine's actions, unlike that of Israel's actions. In contrast, AJ 2, which employs the "Danger - Israeli Violence" frame to justify Palestine's actions. This frame portrays Palestine's actions as an act of self-defence and resistance against Israeli violence instead of an act of aggression. On the other hand, the "Danger - Israeli Violence" frame was barely present at all throughout the entire Wikipedia article, with the only line mentioning Palestine's rationale for such actions being "committed violent actions around the globe on the pretext of a struggle against Israel." However, the word "pretext" immediately diminishes this justification by suggesting that it is simply an excuse for the violent actions they carry out. Thus, the rationale of Palestine's actions are almost completely disregarded, presenting their actions as unjustified.

Downplayed and Minimised VS Reinforced and Amplified

The negative impacts of Israel's actions are often downplayed and minimised in Wikipedia. Although the "Injustice - Rights" frame employed in AJ 1 is present in Wikipedia as well, the repeated use of the phrase "Palestinians claim that" to describe this frame creates a sense of skepticism and suggests that these impacts are not completely factual and legitimate. When it comes to describing Israel's stance, Wikipedia uses words like "considers" and "define", making these impacts seem more

legitimate. Though the "Economic Harm - Agriculture" frame employed in AJ 1 is also present in Wikipedia, the severity of such economic harm is not fleshed out as clearly as that of AJ 1. It neither humanises nor evokes sympathy for the Palestinian people impacted by these policies, but instead, cites general statistics such as "Over the past 10 years, unemployment rates in Palestine have increased", "Unemployment rates peaked in 2008 when they reached 41% in Gaza". In contrast, AJ 1 uses phrases such as "vulnerable farmers", "families" and "livelihoods", humanising them as victims of oppression and suffering. Therefore, although these statistics present in Wikipedia do support the "Economic Harm - Agriculture" frame, it clearly lacks the humanisation present in AJ 1, and in fact, dehumanises their suffering as general trends and statistics, downplaying and minimising the negative impacts of Israel's actions. This is further reinforced through the labelling of the victim of Israel's actions. Instead of them being Palestinian people or even farmers, the victims are labelled as "agriculture sector" and "Palestinian agriculture". This clearly dehumanises their suffering and does not evoke sympathy to clearly flesh out the impacts of Israel's actions.

By contrast, the negative impacts of Palestine's action are clearly fleshed out and even amplified in the Wikipedia article. From the section headers of the article itself, only 1 section describes Israeli violence. In contrast, 3 sections describe Palestinian violence, titled as "Israeli security concerns", "Palestinian violence outside Israel", "Palestinian violence against other Palestinians". Thus, the employment of the "Palestinian Violence - Impact" frame is evident, similar to the that of NY 2. This frame is further expanded upon by stating examples of violence committed to actors other than Israel, and even their own people, Palestinians. This not only amplifies the negative impacts of Palestine's actions, but also presents Palestinian's actions as irrational due to them being targeted at their own people as well. This is further reinforced through the humanisation of the victims of Palestinian violence through the label "relatives or friends" and "Israeli child" thus evoking a greater amount of sympathy for the victims of Palestine's actions. This is unlike that of AJ 2, with the reporting of this incident and its impacts is relatively brief and the article only having 462 words. As a result, less sympathy is evoked for the victims of Palestine's action in AJ 2. However, this humanisation of the victims of Palestinian violence is present in NY 2, with information such as "60 people were wounded, including 2 cousins, David Manshirov, 17, and Jahoun Ismilov, 17". This goes a step further by including personal details of these victims, such as "Mr. Manshirov said his family, which emigrated 3 years ago from Georgia, the former Soviet Republic, was poor, so they had no choice but to keep working at the restaurant". This is similar to Wikipedia as it humanises the victims of Palestinian violence as well, thus evoking sympathy for these victims who suffered from the suicide bombings by Palestine.

Critical Discourse Analysis

<u>Power Relationship between Israel and Palestine</u>

Across the New York Times, Al Jazeera and Wikipedia, Israeli acts are depicted as legitimised. All of these information sources use labels such as "Israeli military", "Israeli Foreign Ministry", "Israeli Occupation", "Israeli forces", "Israeli security forces", "Israeli defence officials", "Israeli government", and "military and settler use", thus portraying Israel as a rational, state-based actor. However, the institutionalisation of Palestine and the portrayal of the power relationship between Israel and Palestine is different across Wikipedia, Al Jazeera and the New York Times. This results in the portrayal of Palestine as a rational actor being varied across all articles.

Wikipedia presents the power relationship between Israel and Palestine as an unequal one. This is shown in the description of Palestine's actions. Even though labels such as "Palestinian Authority" are present, this institutionalisation of Palestine is delegitimised by frequently associating it with labels such as "Hamas" or "Hamas-led". "Hamas" is a individual Palestinian group often associated with violence and even terrorism. Thus, the grouping of such phrases together delegitimises Palestine by deeming it an irrational actor, in contrast to the institutionalisation that legitimises Israel as a rational actor. This can also be seen in the New York Times. While some such labels are used as well, for instance, "Palestinian Interior Ministry" and "Palestinian Authority", these labels are followed up with phrases such as "Hamas" and "Hamas-led". Thus, grouping labels associated with violence and irrationality with the Palestinian government portrays them as irrational and violent as well. On the other hand, Al Jazeera often institutionalises Palestine with labels such as "Palestinian Organisation" and "resistance fighters", but rarely uses labels such as "Hamas" or "Islamic Jihad". This unequal power relationship can also be seen in one of the headers for a section which describes Palestinian violence: "Israeli security concerns". This title places Israel on the moral high ground, as a state actor only seeking to ensure security for the country. Palestine is presented as merely a "security concern", suggesting that she is an irrational, immoral and individualistic actor, only seeking to carry out unnecessary acts of terrorism that threaten Israel's security.

On the other hand, the label of "Israeli government" and "military" suggests a collective state action. Thus, this portrays the actions of Israel as a rational and systematic governmental action, juxtaposed to the individual, irrational actions of Palestine. Additionally, this presents Israel as the dominant power and authority, similar to how it is presented in the New York Times. This presents Israel as an upholder of justice while casting Palestinine as a wrongdoer in this situation, giving Israel authority to enact "punishment" on Palestinians who "cause violence", implicitly denying Palestine's right to self-determination and legitimacy as an independent country. This is unlike Al Jazeera, where the power relations between them are presented as much more equal. Specific descriptors like "resistance" present this conflict as a constant struggle for control, rather than a power dichotomy where Israel is seen as the overwhelmingly dominant power and authority. "Resistance" also suggests that Palestine has the agency and ability to fight back against Israel's oppression of them. Thus, Wikipedia presents an unequal power relationship, with Israel being favoured as more legitimate.

Blame, Responsibility and Agency

In Wikipedia, the actions of Israel are presented in a transactive model that diverts blame and responsibility away from them and focuses on other parties involved instead, similar to NY 1. For instance, this can be seen in the section discussing the criticism of Israel's actions as "undermining the viability of a two state solution". Throughout the entire paragraph, none of the sentences, except the first, places the label of "Israel" at the very front. Instead, attention was diverted to other actors involved, such as "Britain", "foreign ministers of the European Union", "UN Security Council", "The Quartet". Even when attempting to describe Israel's actions, they are called a "settler march" and "military occupation", without even mentioning the word "Israel". Therefore, the negative criticism of "undermining the viability of a two state solution" is diverted away from Israel. This is unlike that of AJ 1, where the actions of Israel are presented using a transactive model that places "Israel" at the very front of the sentence (e.g. "Israel has destroyed over 800,000 olive trees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory"). This places emphasis on Israel as the party at fault and responsible for the acts of aggression carried out against Palestine. The impact of "food insecurity" is clearly fleshed out after this as well, further assigning blame and responsibility to Israel.

On the other hand, the actions of Palestine are presented with a transactive model that clearly assigns blame, responsibility and agency to Palestine, similar to NY 2. For example, "Palestinian suicide bombers have targeted civilian buses, restaurants, shopping malls, hotels and marketplaces". This follows a transactive model that brings to fore the actor, "Palestinian suicide bombers", with the impacts of such actions fleshed out by giving a list of places affected. However, in AJ 2, the actions of Palestine are presented using a transactive model that does not clearly assign blame, responsibility and agency. This can be seen in the title of the article, "Tel Aviv blast kills nine". Palestine, as the perpetrator of this action, is not mentioned at all. Instead, details like the location of the incident, "Tel Aviv", is placed at the front of the sentence. Thus, this diverts attention and blame away from Palestine as the actor who carried out such suicide bombings, reducing emphasis on Palestine as the actor who is responsible for these suicide bombings.

CONCLUSION

At first glance, it does seem that Wikipedia recognises the different perspectives that Israel and Palestine have, presenting the conflict in a balanced manner. It incorporates the "Economic Harm - Agriculture" frame, acknowledging the negative impacts of Israel's actions. Similarly, when it comes to Palestine's actions, Wikipedia incorporates the "Palestinian Violence - Impact" frame to show the deaths and suffering caused by their aggrssive actions. Furthermore, when it comes to presenting the rationale of their actions, Wikipedia employs the "Danger - Palestinian Violence" frame to portray Israel's actions as an act of self-defence against Palestine. For Palestine, Wikipedia includes the rationale for Palestine's actions, an act of resistance against the oppression by

Israel. Thus, Wikipedia seems to present this conflict in a balanced manner, placing it in the middle of the spectrum.

However, a closer look at the linguistic features and lexical devices used by Wikipedia show how it favours Israel's stance and actions over that of Palestine. When it comes to the portrayal of Israel's actions, a) the rationale for the action is clearly provided and further substantiated, thus justifying it; b) the negative impacts of the action are downplayed, making them seem less harmful; and c) the actions are presented with a transactive model that diverts blame, responsibility and agency away from Israel as the perpetrator of such violence. However, when it comes to the portrayal of Palestine's actions, a) the rationale for the action is not evidently fleshed out at all; b) the negative impacts of the action are amplified, making them seem more harmful to others; and c) their actions are presented with a transactive model that assigns blame, responsibility and agency to Palestine as the perpetrator of such violence. Thus, although the different perspectives of Israel and Palestine are stated in Wikipedia, Israel's stance is far more clearly presented and supported than that of Palestine, placing Wikipedia closer towards Israel than Palestine in the spectrum.

Additionally, Wikipedia presents the power relationship between Israel and Palestine as unequal, portraying Israel as a rational, legitimate, state-based actor who only carries out necessary acts of self-defence against Palestine, an irrational, illegitimate, individualistic actor that carries out unnecessary acts of terrorism and aggression against Israel. As a result, Wikipedia is placed even further towards the right in the spectrum, slanting towards Israel over Palestine. However, in comparison to *the New York Times* and *Al Jazeera*, both of which having a clear bias towards their respective countries, it is still slightly more balanced as it does mention the different perspectives of both countries, albeit in an unfair manner.

Pro - Palestine	Neutral	Pro- Israel
Al Jazeera	Wikipedia	*NYT*

At first glance, the average reader who is not conscious of these subtle linguistic features and nuances in the way Wikipedia presents this conflict would falsely assume that Wikipedia fairly represents the perspectives of both countries, when in reality, it subtly favours Israel's stance over that of Palestine. Therefore, while Wikipedia claims to "contain all the knowledge of the world", it does not present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, an international, geopolitical issue, in a balanced manner that fairly accounts for the perspectives of the different stakeholders.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Due to the subjective nature of this study as a result of its large reliance on qualitative analysis and interpretation, as well as the limited number of articles and news organisations analysed, one cannot generalise the results nor assume that this applies

in all other instances of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Nor can one assume that this can be applied to all other conflicts as well. However, the findings can help to provide nuances in the representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Wikipedia as well as the reliability of Wikipedia as a fair and representative source of information.

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