



## **Ideology in Portraying the Israeli Onslaught on Gaza in August 2022: A Transitivity Analysis of The Hindu and the Washington Post Reports**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This critical discourse analysis (CDA) investigates how The Hindu and the Washington Post (WP) construct their online news in depicting the Israeli onslaught on Gaza in August 2022. Halliday's transitivity system was adopted to explore the hidden ideologies and analyze the textual choice or words' features in the clauses of thirteen (13) news articles from The Hindu and nine (9) from WP. The study's findings indicate that the most dominant processes in both news media were the verbal and material processes. Within the verbal process, it was divided into three sides: Palestinian, Israel and neutral. The findings reveal that both media have common strategies to represent the Israeli and neutral verbal process, while the selected media share similarities and differences in representing the Palestinian verbal process. The findings through the material process suggest that both media show Israel as an actor more than as a goal. They tend to use processes 'verbs' that are associated with extreme violence and less violence with Israel, whereas Palestinian are associated with less violence process, but the process is supported with adjectives, adverbs and numbers to place it in extreme violence. The analysis is then followed by the revealed methods and techniques used by the selected media. Overall, both news media have hidden ideologies to construct their news articles. Based on these empirical evidences, (CDA) appears to play an essential part in understanding the language that is employed in media discourses.

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis; Gaza; Israel; media bias; transitivity; The Hindu; Washington Post;

## INTRODUCTION

In the news media, language plays a crucial role as it is able to form writing practices and speech, as well as ideologies (Issa, 2020). The method of discourse analysis known as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examines the social context in which language is used. A vast number of research has been conducted on media discourse in many fields, but only a few of these studies have considered media bias, particularly bias in the Palestinian national liberation struggle. This study will fill that gap by studying selected articles from one Indian media, *The Hindu*, and one American media, the *Washington Post* (WP), regarding the Israeli onslaught in Gaza in August 2022.

The news media has had an essential role in disseminating news and information to the audience worldwide for a very long time. All forms of broadcast and print media, from television to newspapers, are considered to be part of a media discourse (O'keeffe, 2011). O'Keeffe further elaborates on this definition: this can be spoken or written, which is aimed to the viewer, listener, or a non-present reader. At the same time, Phelan (2016) considered it as not face-to-face communication.

The discourse of the media primarily serves to fit the information needs of a variety of diverse sectors, such as entertainment, organisation, education, politics, business, and similar fields (Suwarno & Sahayu, 2020). According to Fairclough (2015), the news media's discourse is where the relations of power are enacted and exercised.

This implies that the news writer writes the news stories so the contents and relations of the discourse can be manipulated through the diction or phrase patterns 'structures of clauses or sentences.' For example, the writers use the passive voice to omit the actor of the action. Such a manipulations aim to serve or to meet the required criteria that the writer has to follow. Barkho (2008) reported that the BBC news organization (journalists and editors) adheres to a stringent set of facts and language guidelines established by the BBC governor's independent panel report on the impartiality of the BBC's coverage of the Israel and the Palestinians. This report contains an online module—Israel and the Palestinians—by the BBC College of Journalism specifically designed for journalists covering Palestinian news.

The language used in news articles has been and is still a subject that has attracted a great deal of academic study. In this light, Fairclough (1995) argued that news organizations have the ability to influence social identities, social relations, values, beliefs, and knowledge. Thus, the

language has power; it has the potential to influence public opinion and shape governments and political parties, and it might lead to public discourse on a reported issue in accordance with any governmental agenda that may be hidden from the public.

The Palestinian national struggle with Israeli is a world in itself, which, in discourse, is turned upside down: the oppressors are oppressed, the aggressors are victims, the colonizers are natives, language contradicts reality, and the colonizer has become a peacemaker. In August 2022, Israel began a new aggression on Gaza by the assassination of a commander of the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine (PIJ). The aggression lasted for three days and has been widely covered by the news media. I argue that the international media have morally aborted the Palestinian issue through language. Based on this point, the current research aims:

- To explore how Israeli onslaught was depicted in the selected online news stories.
- To reveal the methods and techniques adopted to construct the news articles.

People read the news to be updated on what is going on around them. The language that is used in the news reports is obviously thought by the newsreader to be unbiased and neutral, as the headline seems to be objective. Still, unfortunately, the content might be biased and manipulated. Thus, this leads to a social problem as the events are reported subjectively to serve a hidden ideology. Ali & Rahman (2019) defined bias as when the news reporters write news articles in a prejudiced or partial way in order to assist a specific political party. In this paper, the researcher defines 'bias' as

*A tendency and/or prejudice of a person or group 'X' against a person or group 'Y,' by focusing on or neglecting a particular area either by supporting or opposing it, due to power abuse, to achieve hidden ideology or interest.*

Within this paper, the researcher defines 'news bias' as

*The manipulation of text by the news producers and journalists through the lexical selection and/or focusing or neglecting part of the story, or when the opinions and beliefs affect the news to serve a hidden ideology or interest, which leads to understanding the news in a partial manner, or misunderstanding it.*

The Transitivity system in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a typical method that may be used to analyse clauses both in isolation and in context. To meet the aims of this research, Transitivity will be applied. There are some studies that have applied the transitivity system in

different media to study the Palestinian cause, including Israeli media (Issa, 2020; Qawariq, 2020); Palestinian media (Qawariq, 2020); Palestinian and Israeli media (Qawariq, 2016); American media (Amer, 2015; badah, 2017; Ezzina, 2021); British media (Makmun, 2013); Indonesian and American media (Joharta, 2016; Prihandani, 2016; Suwarno & Sahayu, 2020); American and Arab media (Bello, 2014); and other international media (Adawiyah et al., 2020; Rababah & Hamdan, 2019; Taha & Al-Khanji, 2020). The current study is different from prior transitivity studies in the following ways:

- Transitivity has not been used to explore the media bias regarding the Israel's aggressions on Gaza.
- The Hindu has not explored yet in this context, and WP has not been widely explored in this context.
- The Israeli aggression on Gaza 2022 also is yet to be studied in this context.
- This study depends on CDA to reveal any hidden ideology by employing the transitivity system.

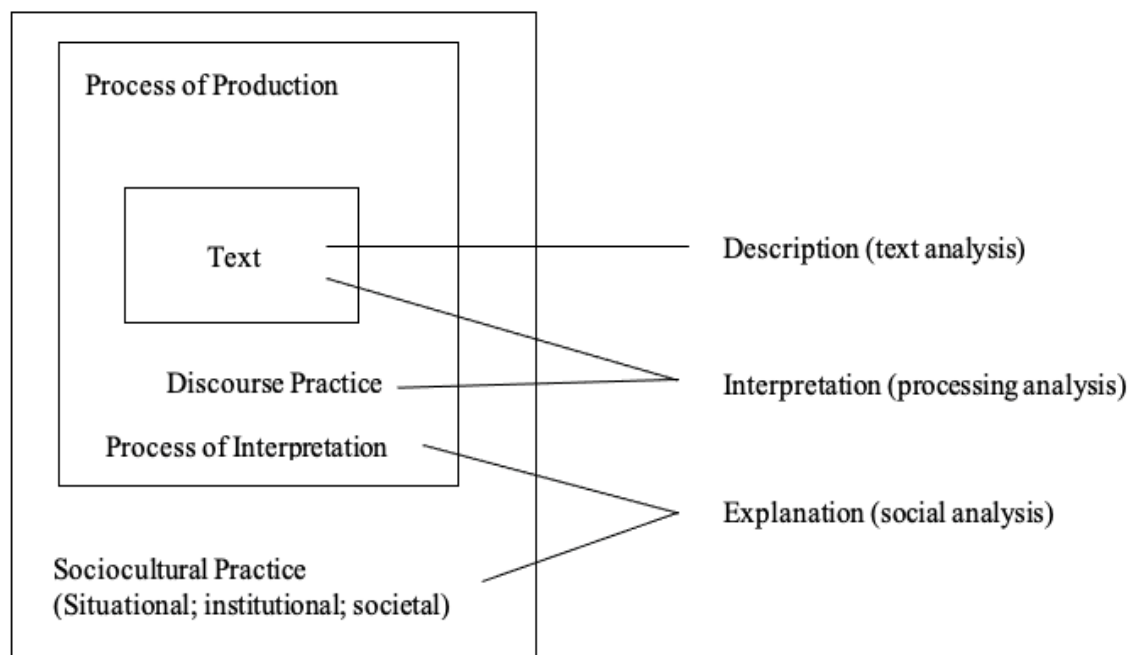
The media in India and the USA might have different views regarding the Palestinian national struggle with Israel. It is clearly known that India has strong ties and old relationships with Palestine since its recognition of Palestine in 1988 (Rubinoff, 1995), and has growing relations with Israel. Also, it is commonly known that the USA is a friend and ally to Israel (Bass, 2004) and tends to support it rather than Palestine (Berrigan, 2009). This tantalizing relationship motivated the writer to conduct this research to examine some news stories related to Palestinian national struggle with Israel. By selecting the news media, the research aim to answer the following questions:

- I. What are the methods and techniques adopted to construct the news articles?
- II. How is transitivity used by selected media?

From the linguistics' perspective, the media discourse analysis's goal is to identify the problematizing of power relations in society, the hidden ideology of the text, and the existence of bias (Cotter, 2015). In order to do this study and meet its aim, CDA is considered an appropriate approach to investigating media bias. This research adopted the CDA approach, which is based on two views: the context of language use, and the language and ideology (Fairclough, 2013).

CDA sees the language either in its written form or spoken form as a form of “social practice” (Chilton, 2004). Van Dijk (2015) has defined CDA as “a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.” CDA has been applied in many different fields to analyze various objects, such as media discourse; see (Ramanathan & Hoon, 2015; Sofyan & Zifana, 2019; Tang, 2021; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2016). Also, some studies have applied CDA to study the Palestinian national struggle with Israel; see (Baidoun, 2014; Kandil, 2009; Sanz Sabido, 2015; Suwarno & Sahayu, 2020; Wang, 2017).

Fairclough (1989, 1992) has conceptualized a model called the “three-dimensional model”; these dimensions are known respectively as description, interpretation, and explanation. For a critical conclusion on discourse to be constructed, each of these processes must be carried out simultaneously. In Fairclough's model, as shown in figure 1, the three stages of analysis are further explained, with 'description,' concerned with text analysis, and 'interpretation' which deals with processing analysis. At the same time, 'explanation' focuses on social analysis.



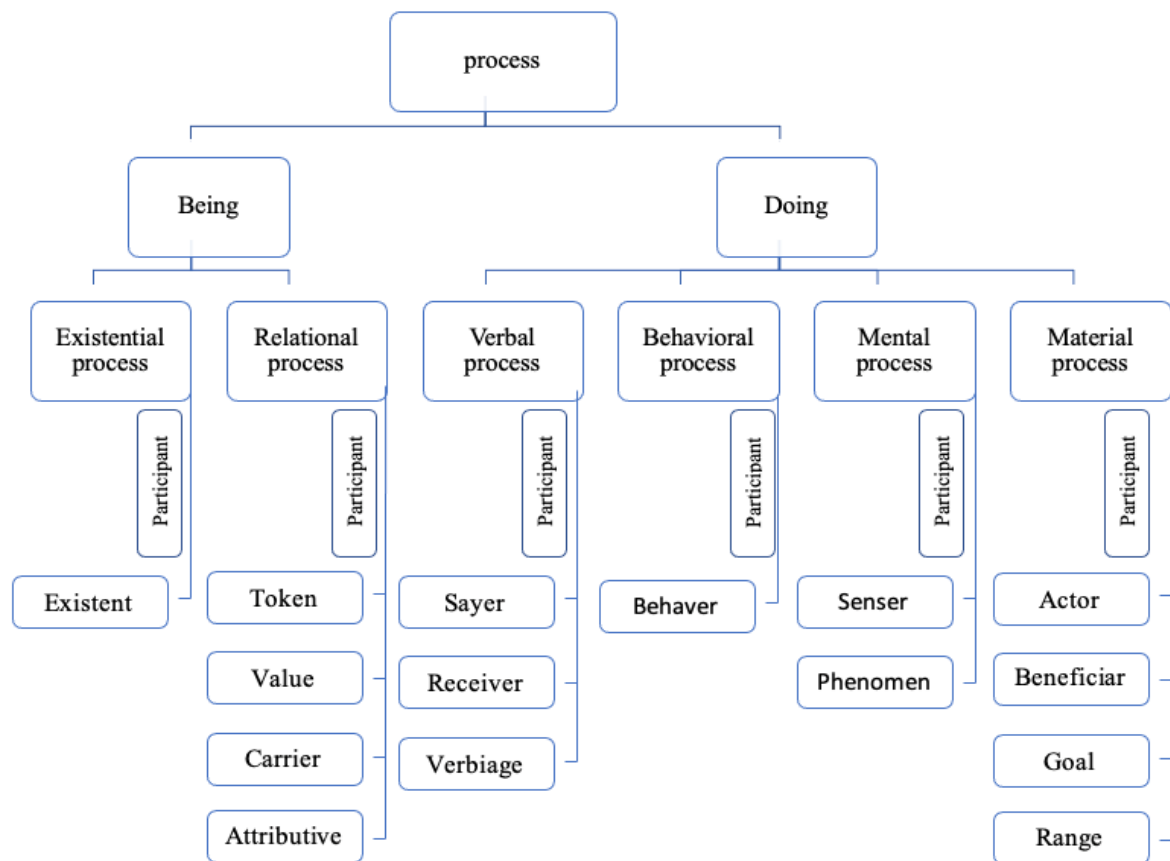
**Figure 1: The Three-Dimensional Model of Fairclough**

Within CDA, this research adopts Halliday’s (1994) theoretical framework, which SFL, to analyze the text of news articles. Using SFL in critical linguistics to explain the representation of bias in mass media discourse has made significant progress. Halliday (1994) has identified

what he calls “metafunction”, which is comprised of three major approaches in the SFL, used to identify the meaning of texts. These are simultaneously expressed in any language used. Metafunction is categorized as follows: ideational function is in charge of ‘constructing world representations’; interpersonal function is in charge of ‘constituting social interactions’, while the textual function is in charge of ‘producing coherently structured texts and communicative events.’

Based on SFL, Martin et al. (1997) suggested three systems for analyzing clause meaning: The mood system, which shows how a speaker or writer talks to or interacts with their audience; the transitivity system is about how experiences and actions are represented in the meaning of words; and the theme system is concerned with the message construction and situational context. This study will be limited to the transitivity system.

Halliday & Matthiesen (2004) mentioned three main parts to the transitivity system: process system; participants system; and circumstance system, which are considered the fundamental components to establish a clause grammatically. This study will be limited to analysing the process system. The process system in transitivity is classified into the six types, as seen in figure 2. These six types can be categorised into two parts: the process of doing and the process of being. The process of doing consists of the material process, which concerns the act of doing; the behavioural process, which concerns behaving; the mental process, which concerns thinking/ sensing acts, and the verbal process, which concerns about saying. While the second category is the process of being, which involves the existential process, which is the act of existence and the relational process, which is the act of being and having. Each process of the transitivity system indicates the role of participants, which allows for distinguishing the function of each word, as seen in figure 2.



**Figure 2: Type of Process and its participants**

The current study is only concerned with the verbal and material processes, as they are dominated by the selected media. The verbal process is described as the process of saying, which Halliday explained it as "on the borderline omental and relational processes." This process can be expressed as the relationship between concepts and ideas built in the human mind/ consciousness and the thoughts enacted in the form of language. With participants, the term 'Sayer' refers to the one doing the talking, 'Target' indicates the person being spoken to, and 'Verbiage' or 'Said' describes what is said. The reporting clause of a statement can shape the ways in which the reader interprets the information that is provided. Martin et al. (1997) argued that verbal clauses stand for 'saying' processes; however, this umbrella term also encompasses nonverbal semiotic procedures like asking, demanding, offering, and proclaiming (showing, indicating). There is a preponderance of action (doing) and speech (saying) clauses in the selected news stories, which may be deduced from the conspicuous verbal and material processes involved in the discourse creation of these reports.

According to Martin et al. (1997), clauses with material processes provide a context in doings and happenings. It is simply a required physical activity, with the help of limbs to be done.

Material clauses can be specified by the verb used in the context that express any actions. It covers both concrete and abstract actions (Martin et al., 1997). According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), material clauses can be found in transitive and intransitive phrases; either one has a different ideology. The former is characterised by an action 'doing,' (with a participant as an object 'Goal'), whereas the latter represents an event 'happening,' (the participants are not included as an object). In other words, with 'doing,' there is goal and with 'happening,' there is no goal. Transitive and intransitive phrases serve various purposes, and as a result, there are valid reasons in favour of selecting one of them over the other. In addition, the idea of being a participant in material clauses is comparable to the roles that are played in grammar, such as the subject and the object.

The participants in material processes are classified in figure 2 above, namely, 'Actor', who does the action; 'Goal', the entity to which the process is directed to (impacted by a doing); 'Range', the element that specifies the domain of the process (the scope of a happening); and 'Beneficiary,' to whom or for whom the process is said to take place (benefiting from the doing). In its most basic form, the material clause contains two participants: the Actor, who acts as a doer (carrying out an action), and the Goal, which functions in the same way as an object would (receive an action). Based on Halliday's transitivity system as a reference point, we can say that both of them almost always take the form of noun phrases, and these phrases can either have an active voice, passive voice or middle voice. This study will be limited to active and passive voice.

In the light of media bias, the current study will use The Hindu and WP as a case study to examine any hidden ideology. The selection was based on their popularity, ideological stances, political orientation, and daily circulation. According to the Alliance for Audited Media, the Washington Post has a daily circulation of around 231,169 copies; the Indian Audit Bureau of Circulations, the daily Circulations of The Hindu is 1,415,792 Daily, and is considered the second-largest English daily in India. The data was collected manually from their websites in the month of August, 2022. The Hindu published 13 news articles pertaining to the topic under study, while WP published only nine articles, from 5 August to 12 August 2022. All the published articles regarding the aggression in 2022 were considered in the analysis.

Fairclough's "three-dimensional frameworks" theory is followed to present this critical study, with the help of transitivity to reveal media bias. The following criteria were used to guide the discussion of the aforementioned frameworks and the study's aim:



- The transitivity structures in The Hindu and the WP.
- The adopted methods and techniques in constructing the news in The Hindu and the WP.

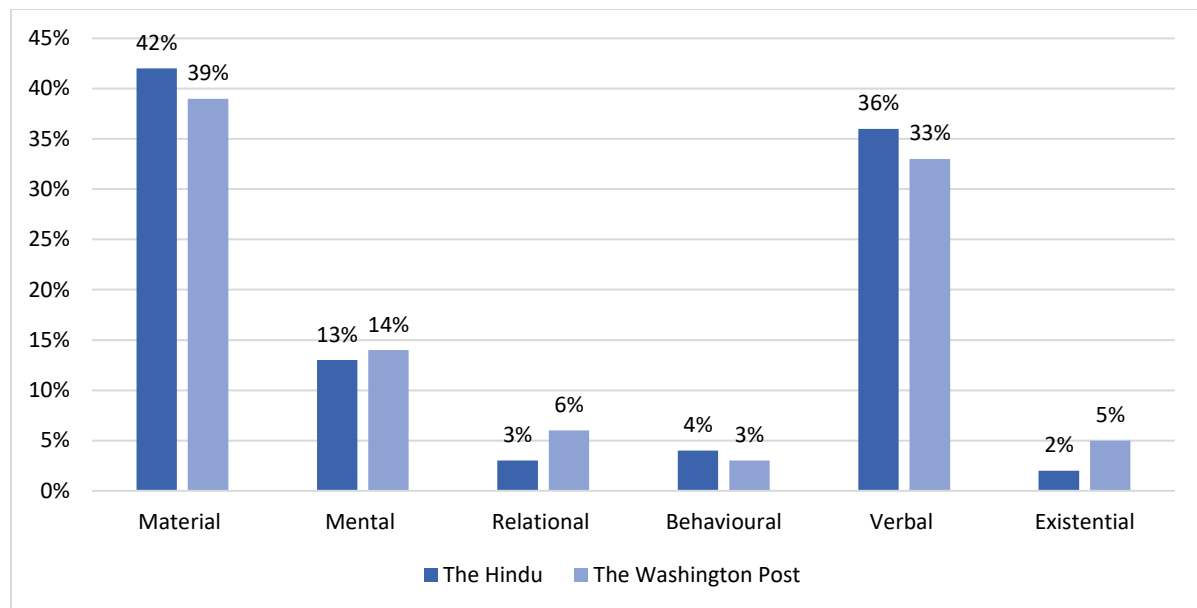
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the transitivity structures, the discussion began by elaborating on the encoded data. All types of processes were found in the selected news stories, as in figure 3. The analysis starts in section one, where it highlighted the most dominant processes for further discussion, which are verbal and material processes. Then, it is followed by section two, where it conducted in-depth analyses of Israeli, Palestinian and neutral verbal processes and their subcategories. Section three concentrates on the material process, which is also divided into two subsections: the representation of Israel and the representation of Palestine, and it is followed by the applied methods and techniques. The data were given citations at the end of each quotation because the data were categorised under the common theme, as the following: (Name of the source, published date, and paragraph number), as we can see from excerpts 1 to 53.

### Section one: highlighting the most dominant process

Figure 3 illustrates that both news coverage forms generally share similarities in their construction of the news stories by utilising the same structures of transitivity. The ratio of transitivity in The Hindu is dominated by material process, which accounts for 42% of it. It was followed by the verbal process by 36%. In comparison, WP accounts for 39% of the material process and 33% of the verbal processes. This indicates that material and verbal processes dominate the selected media. Thus, they have been found to be a key to concluding the overall implied meaning of the content. So, the discussion centres primarily on analysing them, in addition to the participants in those processes.

The analyse found 127 verbal processes in The Hindu and 97 in WP, which made up 36%, and 33%, respectively, of the total result. In both media, the verbal process is categorised under three main categories, namely: Palestinian, Israeli and neutral. The Palestinian verbal process in both media was under two types: the officials and the eyewitness sides. These two types were also found to be essential for further elaboration, which will be an analysis under the Palestinian verbal processes. The Israeli sides were found only officially; there was no eyewitness side. Also, the neutral side, which is not affiliated with either Palestinian or Israeli sides, is also considered, such as analysts, sources, U.N. officials, and President Biden.



*Figure 3: Transitivity structures in The Hindu and Washington Post*

## Section two: verbal processes

### Representation of Israel through Verbal Processes in both media

The verbal process reveals that WP and The Hindu share similar strategies to represent the Israel onslaught on Gaza in August 2022. Their strategies can be broken down into two main configurations: Justifying the Israeli attacks and Justifying the civilians' murdering. The first strategy is a salient one that aims to portray Israel's aggression on Gaza as justified action against an imminent threat from PIJ. This can be understood as legitimizing the Israeli attacks, as seen through the first four excerpts. The second strategy in both media aims to justify the Israeli murdering of innocent people and children. The voices in both news sources essentially supported Israel and justified the murdering. It also aims to acquit Israel by focusing on the verbal process that justifies their action by blaming the Palestinian rockets. These verbal patterns can be illustrated in excerpts 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (below).

**First strategy: justifying the Israeli attacks.** The selection of whom to quote has ideological significance as it expresses an ideology, places an idea to the public, creates an image, and distinguishes the Sayer from others. The reporting clause of a statement can shape the ways in which the reader interprets the information that is provided. Richardson (2007) argues that verbal processes in news reports statements are very important when attempting to analyse ideology. The structure of the verbal process, followed by the selected media, aims to justify the Israeli attack on Gaza, as they claim to be targeting only military sites, not citizens' property. The Israeli military is primarily engaged in operations against potential threats. In

this view, Israel deals more with verbal clauses, demonstrating the large contribution of defending their activities in Gaza through the verbal process. This is because the selected media focuses more on Israel's statements - 'verbal phrases'. These clauses show that both media likely depict Israel as having the right to defend itself from what is called an “imminent threat,” and that Israel is not responsible for the aggression. This also serves to legitimize the Israeli attack on Gaza. In the contents of verbiage, Israel is shown as a power who aims to defend itself from posing an immediate danger and threat to Israel from PIJ.

1. (SAYER) An Israeli military spokesman (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) it launched the strikes in response to an “imminent threat”. (Hindu, Aug 5, 22, P10).
2. (SAYER) The Israel Defense Forces (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) shortly after the strikes that it was attacking militants belonging to Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza. (WP, Aug 5, 22, P5).
3. (SAYER) The Israeli army (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) it had struck more than 140 Islamic Jihad targets. (WP, Aug 7, 22, P9).
4. (SAYER) Yair Lapid (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) his country launched the attacks based on “concrete threats.” (Hindu, Aug 6, 22, P5).

**Second Strategy: justifying the Israeli murdering of civilians.** The brutal attacks of Israel on Gaza have never distinguished between the Gazan people. This was clearly seen during their previous aggressions from 2008 to 2022. The majority of the verbal process are taken from quotations made by Israeli political and military figures to indict PIJ as being responsible for the killing in Gaza by both media. The selected news media have the same ideology to justify Israel's murdering of the Gazan people. This is clearly seen through the focused and direct quotations of Israeli speakers, and that is explained in the verbiage as the excerpts in 5, 6, 7, and 8 demonstrate. Also, there was a great focus on the verbal process that accuse the PIJ's rockets by both media, as being responsible for the Israeli aggression. So, both media attribute responsibility to PIJ for causing deaths among Gazan people.

5. (SAYER) The Israeli military (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE)<sup>1</sup> an errant rocket fired by Palestinian militants killed civilians. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P7).

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<sup>1</sup> Projections in the verbiage will not be analysis due to space limitation, and this is limited to show the verbal processes.

6. (SAYER) The military (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) it investigated the incident and concluded “without a doubt” that it was caused by a misfire on the part of Islamic Jihad. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P8).
7. (SAYER) The Israeli military (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) its review of video of that incident showed it was caused by a misfired Islamic Jihad rocket. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P4).
8. (VERBIAGE) “We have concrete data that it was their rocket,” (VERBAL PROCESS) said (SAYER) Lt. Col. Richard Hecht. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P6).

### **Representation of Palestine through Verbal Processes in both media**

The structure of oral activities representing the Palestinian side has found a significant difference in both media. In other words, WP and the Hindu have similarities and differences in representing the Palestinian side through the verbal process, which will be analysed in the following subsections. The similarities were found in both media in common themes such as showing suffering, showing the power of Palestinian resistance, attributing responsibility to Israel, and reporting martyrs. At the same time, there are a few themes have been included by WP and neglected by The Hinde, such as quotations, ceasefire, Palestinian unity, and eyewitnesses. This marks the differences.

**Showing suffering.** Gaza City has been suffering from a suffocating siege since 2007 (Abunahel, 2021), which has resulted in a humanitarian crisis at all levels and sectors of life. Since then, Gaza is faces an electricity shortage because Israel controls the incoming fuel to Gaza. During Israel's aggressions on Gaza, the health sector suffers from this problem. The Hindu and WP show the suffering of the Gazan people through the official oral activists, as seen in excerpts 9 and 10. The verbiage in the mentioned examples seems to illustrate the amount of suffering at the health level. In this way, both news media fairly represented the Gazans' suffering.

9. (SAYER) Officials (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) it would take time to restart the 75-megawatt generator that provides much of the strip's eight hours of electricity a day. (WP, Aug 8, 22, P5).
10. (SAYER) Mohammed Abu Selmia, director of the Shifa hospital, the largest in Gaza, (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) hospitals faced shortages after Israel imposed a full closure on Gaza earlier this week. (Hindu, Aug 5, 22, P17).

**Showing the power of Palestinian resistances.** Since the beginning of the Israeli onslaught on Gaza in August 2022, Israel declared that their operations were targeting the PIJ and not Hamas or even the Gazan people. Such a claim is refuted by the number of civilian martyrs and the number of destroyed houses. Israel began its operation by assassinating PIJ's leaders. The selected news articles show PIJ's power and victory regardless of the losses they had, through the PIJ's verbal process. Through the verbiage in 11 and 12, power and victory are seen by firing rockets, and the loss of the PIJ's leader will not hamper its progress.

11. (VERBIAGE) "In an initial response to the assassination of our leader, Taysir al-Jabari and his comrades, our fighters fired dozens of missiles at enemy towns," (SAYER) Palestinian Islamic Jihad (VERBAL PROCESS) said in statement. (WP, Aug 5, 22, P12).
12. (SAYER) Islamic Jihad leader Ziad al-Nakhalah (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) the militant group remained strong, despite losing two commanders. "This is a victory for Islamic Jihad," (SAYER) he (VERBAL PROCESS) said. (Hindu, Aug 9, 22, P17).

**Attributing responsibility to Israel.** PIJ was alone facing Israel during this aggression. Even though Hamas did not participate in the resistance to the Israeli aggression, Hamas took part in the oral activities through its speakers to highlight Israel's full responsibility for their crimes. In the contents of verbiage, as seen in 13 and 14, the target is clearly stated as 'Israel.' Attributing responsibility to Israel for murdering the people in Gaza is rarely seen in both media, in comparison to Israel's claims.

13. (SAYER) Eyad al-Bozom, (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) Israel "bears full responsibility for this crime and all the crimes it commits during its brutal aggression against our people in the Gaza Strip." (WP, Aug 11, 22, P22).
14. (SAYER) Fawzi Barhoum (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) "the Israeli enemy, who started the escalation against Gaza and committed a new crime, must pay the price and bear full responsibility for it." (Hindu, Aug 6, 22, P22).

**Reporting martyrs.** Generally and undoubtedly, the official's voices are the accurate sources to depend on to cover the victims. Quoting the officials' voices makes it "authentic to the audience" (Hossain, 2015). News media take a pronounced interest in covering martyrs,

particularly during wartime. Both news media included the Palestinian martyrs and wounded in their coverage as indicated in excerpts 15 and 16. This is seen in clearly through the verbiage.

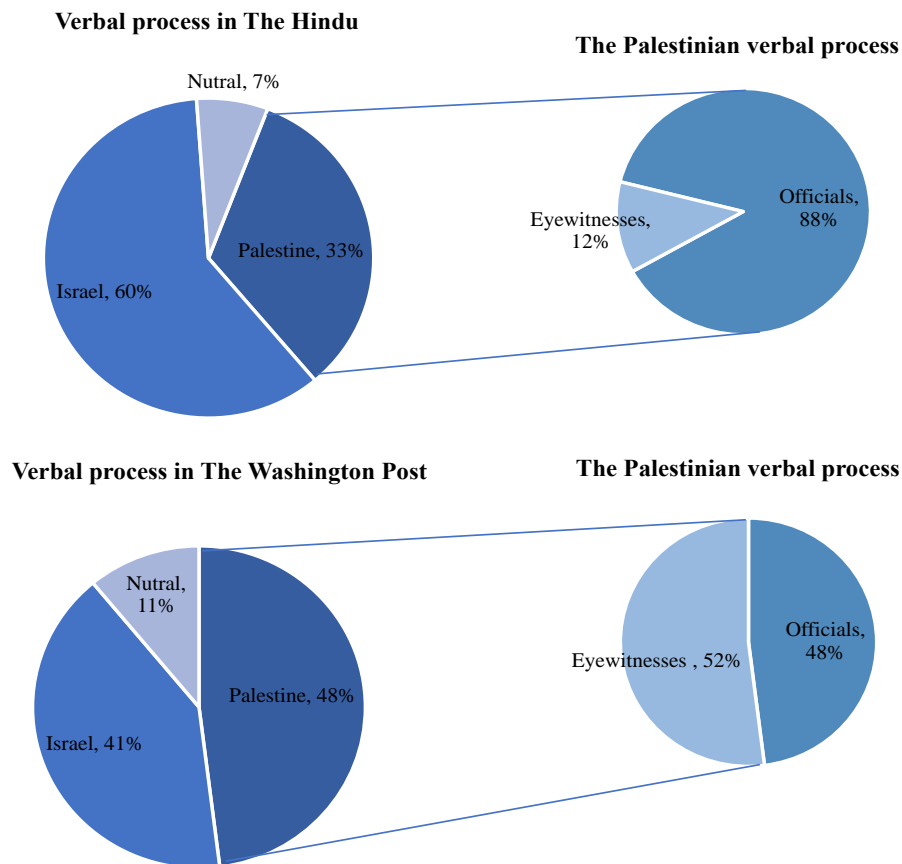
The analysis found several Sayers who are associated with the verbal process to report the martyrs; these include: The Hindu (The Gaza Health Ministry, armed factions, Gaza's Health Ministry, Health Ministry, The Palestinian Health Ministry, Palestinian officials.); WP (The Palestinian Ministry of Health, Palestinian Islamic Jihad statement, Palestinian officials, Gaza Health Ministry, Palestinian media.). Both media relied on different sources to cover martyrs. Sometimes, the same sources are addressed by different names as (The Gaza Health Ministry and The Palestinian Ministry of Health). This kind of approach used by the media is an ideology in itself. Naming a source in Gaza as "The Gaza Health Ministry" gives the ruling government in Gaza an indication of being a separate government, and legal and recognized authority. When it is named as 'The Palestinian Ministry of Health,' it indicates that the source was well addressed, and Gaza is not a separate government. There is one Health Ministry in Palestine, and that is the correct name to be used.

15. (VERBIAGE) The operation also killed at least 10 other Islamic Jihad members, as well as three members from other Gaza-based militant organizations, (VERBAL PROCESS) according to (SAYER) an Islamic Jihad statement issued Monday. (WP, Aug 8, 22, P8).

16. (VERBIAGE) The total number of Palestinians killed in the latest flare-up rose to 49, including 17 children, (VERBAL PROCESS) according to (SAYER) Gaza's Health Ministry. (Hindu, Aug 12, 22, P1).

The following subsections will illustrate the differences.

**Quotations.** As shown in figure 4, the verbal process is dominated by Israel in The Hindu, while the verbal process is dominated by Palestine in WP. In other words, the role of Sayer is dominated by Israeli speakers/organisations in the Hindu; the Hindu depends more to quotes the Israeli Sayers, while WP depends more to quotes the Palestinian Sayers. The Palestinian verbal process in The Hindu was dominated by officials' voices, which made up 88% of the total Palestinian verbal process. Conversely, WP was dominated by the eyewitness side by 48%. This indicates that The Hindu focused on Israeli rather than Palestinian voices. In other words, The Hindu gives Israel more space to show its voice. On the other hand, WP gives more space to Palestinian voices, with a great focus on the eyewitness side, which will be analysed in the last subsection.



**Figure 4: Division the Verbal Process**

**Ceasefire.** When it comes to a ceasefire, the role of achieving it is sometimes passivated or activated in favour of both sides of the conflict or to one side to achieve a hidden ideology. This is clear from excerpts 17 and 18. WP allocated the role to the Palestinian and Israeli sides to achieve a ceasefire. This is illustrated through the verbiage in “agreed” to the ceasefire. (Within this subcategory, one Israel verbal process was intentionally added to show a comparison on both sides, see example 14). On the other hand, The Hindu excluded the role of the Palestinian and Israeli sides and confined it to the mediator, as in excerpt 27. This leads to an understanding that there is discretion for news writers and editors to decide whom to quote and what to quote.

17. (SAYER) The Islamic Jihad militant group (VERBAL PROCESS) said in a statement (VERBIAGE) that it had agreed to cease hostilities. (WP, Aug 7, 22, P2)

18. (SAYER) Israel (VERBAL PROCESS) said in a statement (VERBIAGE) that it agreed to the cease-fire (WP, Aug 7, 22, P3).

**Palestinian unity.** WP showed the unity of the Palestinian factions through Hamas members' oral activities. This can be seen through the 'Sayer,' who are all Hamas members, as in 19 and 20. As stated earlier, according to Israel, the aggression was targeting PIJ, but Hamas showed unity through its oral activities. In contrast, The Hindu did not touch on this topic at all.

WP seemed to fairly represent both sides of the story. On the other hand, The Hindu showed sensitivity to this theme to be covered. The Hindu has criteria to cover the Palestinian national struggle with Israel, as it decides what to cover or what to quote. This example indicates that the news is socially constructed (Fowler, 1991), because it selects what to cover and what will not be covered. The construction of the news reports is based on the ideology of the Hindu. The attempts to omit some quotations and help to create distorted and blurred images of current events, which can lead to misunderstanding in some cases.

19. (VERBIAGE) The “Joint Room” was activated when it came time to implement the cease-fire that went into effect late Sunday, (VERBAL PROCESS) said (SAYER) Basem Naim, head of Hamas’s political division. (WP, Aug 11, 22, P18).

20. (VERBIAGE) “The resistance, with all its military arms and factions, is united in this battle and will say its word with full force,” (SAYER) Hamas (VERBAL PROCESS) said in a statement. (WP, Aug 5, 22, P17).

**Eyewitnesses.** The news writers do not generally witness the events they are trying to cover; rather, they depend on eyewitness to recount the events in a thorough and vivid manner that portrays their presence at the events (Van Krieken et al., 2015). The eyewitnesses accounts are essential for the new reporting to create proximity to events and a feeling of authenticity; The eyewitnesses are a lens to see the events to be narrated. Based on figure 4 above, WP is relatively balanced in quoting the eyewitness and the official side, while The Hindu did not focus on eyewitnesses. Quoting the eyewitnesses helps to make the news newsworthy to the reader; it legitimise the news reporting; engages the reader with the events emotionally; ensures the truthfulness of the coverage, and broadens the news coverage in an honest manner. The following excerpts in 21 and 22 show the eyewitnesses.

21. (VERBIAGE) A strike in the Jabalya killed at least five people, including four children, (VERBAL PROCESS) according to (SAYER) witnesses. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P4).



22. "Warned us? They warned us with rockets and we fled without taking anything," (VERBAL PROCESS) said (SAYER) Huda (eyewitness). (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P14).

### **Representation of the Neutral Side through Verbal Processes in both media**

The neutral side was assigned three roles in both media, namely: emphasizing, condemning and achieving ceasefires. The first role focuses on Hamas's power and ability, regardless of the time, as claimed, as in excerpt 23. In 24, it focuses on the power of the Palestinian rockets. The second role comes as 'condemning,' to condemn the Palestinian rockets, not the Israel attacks on Gaza as excerpt 25. The third role is achieving and welcoming the ceasefire, as examples 26 and 27. This assigns Egypt, the USA and United Nations an active role in achieving a ceasefire. To put it another way, the neutral side appeared in both news media to support Israel against Palestine. In this sense, the neutral parties did not pass any objective judgments on the situation. This makes a clear bias towards Israel. The neutral sides must have a neutral opinion.

The discourse strategies demonstrated that the neutral parties' lexical choices are biased toward Israel. Conversely, they did not show any sympathy for Palestine or even mention the physical, psychological, and economic impact of the Israeli onslaught on Gaza. Thus, the structures come across as being less objective in tone. On the other hand, no negative statements or critical remarks were made about Israel. As depicted in the excerpt, the verbiages seem to criticize Palestine and support Israel.

23. (SAYER) Analysts (VERBAL PROCESS) say, (VERBIAGE) Hamas has not had time to fully replenish the supply of rockets it fired in the last war, a possible disincentive to engage in another major battle now. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P22).
24. (SAYER) Sources (VERBAL PROCESS) said, (VERBIAGE) after a weekend-long pounding of Palestinian targets by Israel triggered longer-range rocket attacks against its cities. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P1).
25. (SAYER) The U.N. special envoy to the region, Tor Wennesland, (VERBAL PROCESS) said: (VERBIAGE) "The launching of rockets must cease immediately, and I call on all sides to avoid further escalation." (Hindu, Aug 6, 22, P16).

26. (SAYER) President Biden (VERBAL PROCESS) said in a statement Sunday night (VERBIAGE) that he welcomes the cease-fire announcement. (WP, Aug 7, 22, P28).
27. (SAYER) Diplomats from the United Nations and Egypt (VERBAL PROCESS) said (VERBIAGE) they are working to calm tensions. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P19).

## **Section two: material process**

Due to space limitations, the material process will be limited to Israel and Palestine. This section is divided into two subsections: representation of Israel and representation of Palestine through the material process in both media. The extra excerpts aim to cover most of the process used by the selected news articles. Generally, each verb was taken as an example, and repeated verbs were avoided.

### **Representation of Israel through Material Processes in both media**

In the list from 28 to 39, it might be observed that 'Israel' is the actor who is doing the action 'process' towards the goal 'Palestine.' The process's meaning of 'killed' in 28 and 29 is completely different from the meaning of 'murdered or assassinated'; the final meaning is the 'soul was lost.' The used verb did not exactly describe the action of how the killing was. The verb 'kill' might carry the meaning of causing death (intentionally or unintentionally). However, Israel intentionally assassinated two commanders and murdered five people. In this case, The Hindu and WP are not truly describing the action of death.

By taking the material processes in 30, 31, and 32, for example, we will see also the processes are associated with some violence by the actor towards the goal. Another point that would be taken into consideration is the process 'launch' can be used in legal operations such as 'launching a satellite into the air' or 'launching a ship for the first time.' However, using 'launch' with a rocket or missile is perfectly correct, but it neither describes the actor's offensive action nor the effect on the goal. On the other hand, in 30, the meaning carries large legal and important activity. The material process here is used to legalized the act of the actor. In 32, it might be understood as 'something has fallen vertically', but it carries the degree of deliberately.

Also, The Hindu used a variety of verbs in which it would draw a picture of the actor 'Israel' to appear in a level of extreme violence. In 33, 34, and 35, we have the processes 'pound,' 'hit,' and 'struck,' which indicates that the action was done heavily and repeatedly; quickly and forcefully; and forcibly and deliberately, respectively. When it comes to material processes, the lexical choices made by newspapers are just as powerful an indicator of the distinct political viewpoints they have embraced. (Simpson, 1993). This kind of representation and selection of lexical choices by The Hindu demonstrate that the actor is doing extreme violence.

By comparing the two processes in 36, 37, and 38 in both media, we will realize that they are used to describe the act of destroying homes. In both examples, Israel is the actor who has done the action. Both processes have the same degree of violence, but I would argue that 'demolish' has more power of violence, as it means to destroy a building completely. Furthermore, the process in 38, as WP uses it, carries more or less the same meaning as excerpt 37, while the process in 36 means the building was crushed. By examining 39, the material process 'arrest' has a negative impression towards the actor by considering its circumstance. The verb 'arrest' is associated with action that is related to war, conflict and violence, which is used in military and justice circumstances.

28. (ACTOR) Israeli airstrikes (MATERIAL PROCESS) killed (GOAL) two top Islamic Jihad commanders in Gaza. (Hindu, Aug 12, 22, P5).
29. (ACTOR) A strike in the Jabalya (MATERIAL PROCESS) killed at least (GOAL) five people. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P4).
30. (ACTOR) Israel (MATERIAL PROCESS) launched a wave of airstrikes on Friday. (Hindu, Aug 12, 22, P4).
31. (ACTOR) Soldiers also (MATERIAL PROCESS) launched a wave of arrests targeting suspected (GOAL) Islamic Jihad members. (WP, Aug 8, 22, P13).
32. (ACTOR) fighter jets (MATERIAL PROCESS) dropped two bombs (GOAL) on the house. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P12).
33. (ACTOR) Israeli jets (MATERIAL PROCESS) pounded (GOAL) militant targets in Gaza.(Hindu, Aug 6, 22, P1).
34. (ACTOR) Another strike on Saturday (MATERIAL PROCESS) hit (GOAL) a car. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P11).
35. (ACTOR) Israeli warplanes (MATERIAL PROCESS) struck (GOAL) four residential buildings in Gaza City (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P10).

36. (ACTOR) Israeli airstrikes (MATERIAL PROCESS) flattened (GOAL) homes in Gaza. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P1).
37. (ACTOR) Israeli troops (MATERIAL PROCESS) demolished (GOAL) the homes of two Palestinians. (Hindu, Aug 9, 22, P21).
38. (ACTOR) A missile (MATERIAL PROCESS) destroyed part of (GOAL) the Palestine Tower apartment building. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P14).
39. (ACTOR) Israel (MATERIAL PROCESS) arrested (GOAL) an Islamic Jihad leader. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P13).

### **Representation of Palestine through Material Processes in both media**

This subsection will examine the material processes that are used in portraying the Palestinian as an actor. The process in 40 and 41 carries the same meaning as discussed above. However, the processes are distinguished by the adverb and adjective in 40 and the number in 41. This attempt aims to show the degree of the action in which it was done or how it was done. In 42, 43, and 44, the processes were supported by the numbers to show the degree of violence. So, using an adverb, adjective and numbers aims to show the degree of violence of what the rockets might cause.

The process of 'rain' in 45 can mean an endless variety of things. It brings to mind an incalculable number of rockets. In 46, it indicates the continuation of the action, with a large number of rockets. The constant barrage of rocket fire creates the impression of a massive military attack. It conjures up visions of uncountable, unlimited, and steady objects descending, which is hardly an accurate depiction of the rudimentary rockets used by the resistance. These verbs 'rain' and 'barrage' have evolved to be used to describe unguided rockets, which may cause some minor damages that are almost negligible, and occasionally cause injuries; they rarely , result in the death of a person. The rain or the barrage of rockets cannot in any meaningful manner correspond to Israel's continuous bombing of Gaza during the Israeli aggressions on Gaza from 2008 to 2022, which has resulted in a large number of deaths and a significant number of homes and infrastructure destroyed.

The process in 47 carries another meaning of launching the rockets; the writer wants to say that the rockets put Israel in place, which makes it unable to act or function properly. The conclusion draw would mean that 'Israel is paralysed by the rockets.' Finally, in 48, the process is clear as it aims at Jerusalem, the verb carries the meaning of 'forcibly' and 'deliberately', but it still has less violence compared with 45, 46, and 47.

The process in the Palestinian material process in The Hindu and WP can be divided into extreme violence as in 45, 46, and 47, and less violence as in 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, and 48. Within the less violence, it is supported by numbers, adverbs and adjectives to make it extreme violence. Overall, the Palestinian material process are all used to show extreme violence.

40. (ACTOR) Gaza militants (MATERIAL PROCESS) regularly launched (GOAL) rounds of rockets into Israel. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P19).
41. (GOAL) More than 100 rockets (MATERIAL PROCESS) were launched from Gaza. (WP, Aug 5, 22, P13).
42. (ACTOR) Militants in Gaza (MATERIAL PROCESS) fired about 580 rockets (GOAL) toward Israel. (Hindu, Aug 8, 22, P25).
43. (ACTOR) Militants (MATERIAL PROCESS) fired more than 449 rockets (GOAL) toward Israel. (WP, Aug 6, 22, P3).
44. (ACTOR) Islamic Jihad (MATERIAL PROCESS) lobbed some 1,100 rockets (GOAL) toward Israel. (WP, Aug 8, 22, P22).
45. (ACTOR) Rockets (MATERIAL PROCESS) rained on (GOAL) Israel. (Hindu, Aug 6, 22, P1).
46. (ACTOR) Palestinian rocket (MATERIAL PROCESS) barrages (GOAL) into southern Israel. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P1).
47. (ACTOR) The rockets (MATERIAL PROCESS) have paralysed (GOAL) much of southern Israel. (Hindu, Aug 7, 22, P5).
48. (ACTOR) The rockets (MATERIAL PROCESS) targeting (GOAL) Jerusalem. (WP, Aug 7, 22, P17).

### **Sections three: applied methods and techniques**

Once again, The Hindu and WP show similarities in the news construction by applying some methods and techniques, such as assigning responsibility to non-human beings, targeting the Israel onslaught against Gaza militants, and using passive voice. Throughout the process and analysis of the selected news media, a certain number of hidden ideologies were revealed.

#### *Targeting the Israel onslaught against Gaza militants*

Through their news reports, The Hindu and WP target Israel's aggression on Gaza against Hamas or PIJ, or generally, against militants. This kind of representation justifies Israel because Hamas and PIJ are recognized by the USA as terrorist organisations. Doing this also legalises the aggression as it targets the terrorist organisations, not the civilians. This can be illustrated

in 49 and 50, which have been repeatedly used in their articles. Furthermore, The Hindu and WP tend to represent the militants in Gaza as ‘territory's militant’ as in 51 and 52. WP extended its description and called PIJ as ‘ideologically extreme’ as in 53.

49. *Israel and Gaza's militant Hamas rulers have fought four wars.....* (Hindu, Aug 5, 22, P2)

50. Hamas and Israel engaged in an 11-day conflict. (WP, Aug 8, 22, P16)

51. An 11-day war between Israel and the *territory's militant Hamas* rulers last year. (Hindu, Aug 9, 22, P3)

52. Designated as *terrorist organizations* by the United States. (WP, Aug 11, 22, P3).

53. While Hamas and Islamic Jihad are allies, the latter is seen as more *ideologically extreme*. (WP, Aug 8, 22, P17)

### **Assigning responsibility over something that is not a human being.**

Replacing the human action with a non-human entity by the news writers is a strategy followed by The Hindu and WP to conceal the identities of the perpetrators. Instead of assigning responsibility to the individuals who were responsible for the act ‘doer,’ the journalists pointed the finger at ‘the operation,’ ‘strike,’ ‘fighter jets,’ and ‘missile’ in excerpts 15, 21, 32, and 38, respectively. Both news media mixed between assigning responsibility to human and not human, but WP tend to use this strategy more than The Hindu.

### **Using passive**

In the process of analysing the text, one of the most important distinctions to make is between the operative (active voice) and receptive (passive voice). The transitive action process has been overused when it comes to reporting martyrs. This was seen clearly in 15, 16, 21, 28, and 29, where the action was constructed without an agent. Due to the fact that the actor in this process cannot be identified, the outcome is fraught with a certain amount of ambiguity and imprecision. It is very evident that we are only informed about the subjects who were affected by the reported event (the persons who were killed), but not the active agent that caused the incident. This title does not include any reference to the Israeli in any capacity, whether as a doer or an actor.

Using the passive structure results in a significant amount of ambiguity, representing the writer's ideology. The writer wants to avoid placing the Israeli in the position of having to murder, and he also wants to create the idea that what happened was natural. So, this is the

implementation of the writers' ideological background to avoid mentioning the doer. The answer to the actor's absence might be found by inquiring who was responsible for the deaths of the women and children in Gaza. In terms of transitivity, the Israeli missile, soldiers, and air force were removed in order to deceive the readers about the violent transitive action taken by Israel.

## CONCLUSIONS

The current critical discourse study concentrates on the portrayal of Palestine and Israel in the coverage of both *The Hindu* and *The Washington Post*. The research findings were interpreted and described through the transitivity system to explore if there is any bias on either side. The explanation of the selected news outlets reveals that both news outlets follow the same transitivity to construct their news articles, which are dominated by verbal and material processes.

Through the verbal process, the selected news media tend to have the same strategies to represent Israel. These strategies justify the Israeli attack on Gaza and justify the murdering of civilians. Such justifying allows Israel to keep a picture of itself as having the right to defend itself from an imminent threat, and as not responsible for the aggression. This also comes in the form of legitimizing the attack. At the same time, *The Hindu* follows a pattern of text selection and text exclusion and inclusion because it selects what to cover and what not to cover. Such a pattern reveals a 'double standard' of news coverage. There was no significant difference in the representations of the verbal process found in the selected media. They attempt to suppress key details and vital information that might have helped readers better comprehend the Israeli assault on Gaza.

WP and *The Hindu* have similarities and differences in representing the Palestinian side through the verbal process. The common similarities in the selected news articles are concentrated on showing suffering, showing the power of Palestinian resistances, attributing responsibility to Israel, and reporting martyrs. The selected news media has addressed the Sayer who reports the martyrs with different names, such as *The Gaza Health Ministry* and *The Palestinian Ministry of Health*, which reveals another ideology by the media.

On the other hand, there are some differences between the selected media, which they found in quotations: *The Hindu* relies more on Israeli quotations, and the WP relies more on Palestinian quotations. (1) Quotations. At the same time, within the Palestinian quotations,

The Hindu focused more on the official's voice and ignored the eyewitness sides, roughly speaking. At the same time, WP focused more on the eyewitness voice than the officials. The Hindu tended to lean heavily on statements made by Israeli officials as their primary source of information. That draws clear evidence of 're-contextualisation' (Fairclough, 2003). On the other hand, WP almost gives equal room to the Palestinian official speakers and witnesses to show their voices. This concludes that WP fairly represented the Palestinian through its verbal process, while the Hindu tends to show bias toward Israel through its verbal process. (2) Ceasefire: WP assigned the Palestinian and Israeli sides an active role in achieving a ceasefire through oral activities, whereas The Hindu assigned the role to the mediators, and the role of Palestinian and Israel was absent. (3) Palestinian unity: WP shows the Palestinian factions as united parties and not divided, as the onslaught was targeting PLJ and not Hamas. In contrast, The Hindu does not show unity through the Palestinian oral activities.

The role of the neutral side was seen in (1) Emphasizing; they give more attention to Hamas's power and ability and to the power of the Palestinian rockets. (2) Condemning the Palestinian rockets. (3) Achieving ceasefires. Through the verbal process, the neutral side shows a great bias toward Israel.

Generally, the findings of the material process conclude that The Hindu used a variety of verbs to construct its news articles, while WP used less variety of verbs. The process used in the selected news articles on the Palestinian and Israeli sides can be divided into verbs with extreme violence and verbs with less violence. The lexical choices made by The Hindu tends to demonstrate the actor 'Israel' who is doing extreme violence.

The selected news article tends to show Israel as an actor (who does the action), rather than a goal. Both news media represented Israel with more action. On the other hand, Palestine was associated more as a goal rather than an actor. This might be regarded as the selected news media attempt to construct an image of the Palestinian who is definitely to be the victim of Israel's action. When considering the goal, it was discovered that a significant number of Palestinian civilians were the targets (the goal of Israel's action). This may indicate that the news organisations were trying to cover the reality that a large number of innocent individuals or regular civilians were victims due to Israel's aggression. Israel was associated with processes that tend to be linked with extreme violence and less violence. In contrast, Palestinians are associated with processes linked with less violence, but it is supported with adjectives, adverbs, and numbers to place it in extreme violence.



The examined transitivity revealed a certain number of hidden ideology as a strategies such as (1) Targeting the Israel onslaught against Gaza's militants (Amer, 2015, 2017). (2) Assigning responsibility over something that is not a human being. (3) Using passive voice (Finlay, 2018). The first strategy aims to legitimize the aggression (Tasseron & Lawson, 2022) as it is targeting only terrorist organizations (Levitt, 2004), as claimed. Both media described the militants in Gaza as 'territory's militant'. The second strategy is to hide the human actor, and assign it to non-human, or using the actor without giving it identifications, such as 'soldiers' or 'missiles. This strategy has been applied more by WP more than The Hindu. The third strategy is applied more by both news media when it comes to cover the Palestinian martyrs; they aim to hide the doer through the use of passive voice.

Overall, the selected news media have different ideologies and sensibilities in constructing their news, in addition to different methods and techniques. Based on the similarities, the news media is follows a certain ideology. Also, the news writers and editors are responsible for forming the bias because different writers show different news construction.

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