

CORPORUM

Journal of Corpus Linguistics

journal homepage: <https://journals.au.edu.pk/ojsrcr/index.php/crc>

The Representation of *Israel* in Pakistani and Western News Reporting: A Comparative Corpus-Based Critical Discourse Analysis

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

CDA, Conflict Reporting, Corpora, Ideological Representation

ABSTRACT

News reporting is not merely the transmission of information; rather, it is shaped by institutional and political ideologies, policies, and socio-political context. This study explores conflict reporting, a significant genre of news reporting. The rationale of the study is to examine the linguistic strategies utilized by Western (BBC, CNN) and Pakistani (DAWN) news outlets to represent 'Israel' in Israel-Palestine conflict reporting ideologically. A corpus of about 1.5 million words was created within the span of ten months from October 2023 to July 2024. Initially, a word list for each selected news corpus was created, followed by frequency and collocation analyses based on MI scores using the Lancsbox 6.0 tool. The quantitative results were analyzed and discussed in light of Van Dijk's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (1996; 2006). The study concludes that while the Western and Pakistani outlets construct Israel as a dominant and militarized actor, the ideological framing of the dominance differs in the media context. Israel is represented by the BBC as a powerful actor involved in militarized actions, normalizing the violence and destructive processes. In comparison, CNN represents Israel as a dominant agent that initiates unrest among the public and the state. On the contrary, DAWN news represented the dominance to highlight Israeli brutal actions and presented Israel as being responsible for the violent actions beyond humanitarian and ethical grounds. This study contributes to expanding the corpus-based discourse literature by emphasizing the importance of an integrated corpus-based methodological framework for examining power structures in conflict reporting. Furthermore, it presents a methodological template for emerging scholars to conduct future research by applying rigorously tested methodologies. Additionally, this study enriches existing knowledge of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

1. Introduction

Media discourse plays a significant role in the construction and portrayal of political realities, ideologies and worldviews,

Contributions:

^{1*} Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Curation, Analysis, Writing – Draft, Writing – Review

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Available online 31 December 2025

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particularly in the context of international conflict (Cotter, 2010; Vis, 2011). News reporting is not an impartial transmission of information; rather, it is formed by institutional ideologies, editorial policies, and socio-political context (Allen & Seaton, 1999). Similarly, conflict reporting not only demonstrates the conflict but also serves as the most powerful tool for shaping public perception and understanding of it (Azher et al., 2021).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the longest and most enduring conflicts, dating back to the late 19th century, when a national Jewish movement, Zionism, aimed to create a Jewish State in Palestine, which was part of the Ottoman Empire at the time (Finkelstein, 2005). The dispute between the Israeli and the Palestinians has intensive origins in various historic events. These are the formation of Israel in 1948, the Six-Day War in 1967 and the First Intifada, which started in 1987 (Ahmed & Mukhtar, 2024). The tension increased because of the gradual increase in the Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the growing influence of Hamas in Gaza. In 2020, the Abraham Accords only made matters more complex, as Israel and some Arab states normalized relations. Hamas, on October 7, 2023, sprang a surprise attack on Israel, which resulted in a mass Israeli military operation in Gaza and the West Bank. This was aggravated, leading to massive violence and terrible humanitarian repercussions (ibid). The escalation of this conflict on 7th October 2023 remains a highly conspicuous and polarizing geopolitical crisis across global media. This has generated significant scholarly interest, with most emphasis on the linguistic aspects of framing the conflict in news reporting.

Therefore, extensive research has been conducted on Gaza conflict reporting, predominantly focusing on Western or Middle Eastern media (Jawad, Azher & Zehra, 2025), often using qualitative approaches. Furthermore, the representation of 'Gaza' has markedly been the center of exploration. In contrast, the discursive representation of 'Israel' in conflict reporting remains underexplored, especially through the corpus-based approach to critical discourse analysis. In this context, this study aims to explore the representation of 'Israel' in news reporting on the Gaza conflict across selected Western and Pakistani news outlets, using a corpus-based approach to critical discourse analysis.

Moreover, this study is based on the corpus integrated approach to critical discourse analysis. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has its roots in critical linguistics and examines power structures and ideological representations through linguistic structures (Van Dijk, 1996, 2001, 2006; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 2001). Critical Discourse Analysis is grounded in a qualitative approach that lacks empirical depth, whereas corpus analysis is grounded in quantitative rigor. So, the integration of corpus-based techniques into critical discourse analysis adds quantitative depth to the qualitative dearth (Stubbs, 1997; Baker, 2006). This study follows the integration method, with the quantitative results of the analysis further interpreted through critical discourse analysis. The research objectives and research questions are presented in sections 1.1 and 1.2 to provide a clear understanding of the aims and rationale of the study.

1.1 Research Objectives

The study aims to

- a. Examine the lexical choices used to represent *Israel* in Western and Pakistani News Media Reporting
- b. Identify and compare the ideologies embedded in the discursive representation of 'Israel' across the selected news corpora

1.2 Research Objectives

The study answers the following research questions.

- a. What lexical choices are employed by the Western and Pakistani news mediums to represent *Israel* in the news reporting?
- b. What ideologies are embedded in the discursive representation of Israel in the selected news corpora?

2. Literature Review

Corpus-based studies can be traced back to Stubbs's (1992) research on the role of pronouns in reflecting sexism in the spoken British English Corpus. The representation of women in the British newspaper was explored through the frequency count of selected words (Caldas-Coulthard, 1993). Hunston (2002) notes that studies mostly conducted in the field of corpus-based CDA have adopted the keyword analysis approach proposed by Stubbs (1997).

In media discourse, many researchers (Alnwihe & Al-Abbas, 2023; Amer, 2017; Gholami, Shomoossi, Khazaei & Yousefi, 2023; Hou, 2018; Musa & Waseem, 2015; Liu & Liu, 2019; Rumman & Haider, 2023; Wang, 2023; Yu, Lu & Hu, 2021; Yuhan, 2021) have incorporated corpus-based techniques to explore linguistic patterns in the media discourse. Furthermore, the Israel-Palestine conflict has also gained attention in the past few years, and the researchers have explored this conflict by applying CDA with an ideological lens in a sociopolitical context (Abunahel, 2023; Ahmed et al., 2022; Fitri, 2023; Heni & Chandra, 2022;

Jawad, Azher & Zehra, 2025; Markkula, 2025; Nurromadini & Suganda, 2024). All these studies are conducted to understand the conflict or the representation of events in the newspaper, thereby creating a gap for the current study. This study is an in-depth corpus-based exploration of the representation of “Israel” in Western and Pakistani news reporting over 10 months.

The previous studies that have integrated corpus-based techniques into critical discourse analysis of Israel-Palestinian reporting follow a pattern of studying the presentation of this conflict in news outlets. Kandil (2009) compiled a corpus of Arab, British, and American newspapers to study the portrayal of this conflict, using the WordSmith tool in light of the CDA approach. The study concluded that BBC and Al-Jazeera covered Palestinian sufferings, whereas CNN focused on the broader concept of terrorism. Furthermore, Kandil (2009) emphasized methodological rigor and claimed that this synergy approach is a suitable methodology for future valid CDA research.

Building upon this idea, Montgomery (2016) conducted a corpus-based analysis of a 22,500-word corpus collected from stories published in the New York Times. The study explored ideological orientation in the discourse through a transitivity analysis from a CDA lens. It was concluded that the New York Times presented the Israeli actions as legitimate, whereas Palestinian actions were presented as aggressive and violent. Failla (2023) followed the technique utilized by Montgomery (2016) and merged transitivity analysis, CDA approach and corpus analysis to study the linguistic patterns of the Israel-Palestine conflict news reporting in the five news outlets: The Guardian, The Times, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and Al Jazeera English. The state's geopolitical interests were presented in the findings, and the British newspaper maintained its focus on critically evaluating human suffering. American newspapers, especially the New York Times, presented a pro-Israeli narrative, whereas Al-Jazeera news outlined the Palestinian suffering.

Furthermore, the Israel-Palestinian conflict took another turn on 7th October, 2023, drawing researchers' attention to the area once again. Multiple studies have been conducted on this conflict (Naeem, 2025; Sarwar & Qasim, 2025; Xue, 2024), with an overall focus on the Israel-Palestine Conflict, which flared up again on October 7, 2023. Naeem (2025) conducted a study by comparing editorials from the UK-based newspaper The Guardian and the Pakistani newspaper The DAWN regarding the Israel-Palestinian conflict spanning October 8, 2023, to November 8, 2023. The study concluded that DAWN uses highly emotive lexical choices to represent Israeli actions as Genocidal and Palestinian victimhood, whereas The Guardian utilized normalized language to address the same events. This study is limited to qualitative analysis of only one month of data from Dawn and The Guardian, which designates a research gap filled by the present study of investigating the representation of ‘Israel’ in western and Pakistani news reporting by using comparative corpus based techniques to explore a big size corpus of 1.5 million words over a span of 10 months to generalize the findings.

Similarly, Sarwar and Qasim (2025) analyzed 600 news headlines using the UAM Corpus Tool, drawn from three Western (The Times, New York Times, Frankfurter Rundschau) and three Eastern (Arab News, Dawn, Tehran Times) sources. A transitivity approach was applied, and the results show that Western news agendas have repeatedly used material and verbal processes to assign agency to Israeli participants, employing more judgmental language and largely monoglossic patterns of engagement that favor institutional or authoritative voices. On the other hand, Eastern media headlines show a propensity towards relational and existential processes that preempt Palestinian suffering and moral interpretation of circumstances. Such representations are also characterized by higher lexical density, the use of scholarly vocabulary, and heteroglossic engagement strategies that incorporate multiple perspectives. Overall, this work indicates that news headlines constitute ideologically charged spaces in which linguistic decision-making exercises perform regionalized worldviews, thereby solidifying geopolitical prejudice and underscoring the greater role of language in media framing in the context of conflict discourse.

Furthermore, Xue (2024) investigated China's stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by examining China Daily's coverage from April 7, 2023, to May 16, 2024. The reports are initially explored using the AntConc corpus tool for frequency analysis in thematic analysis and collocation analysis of linguistic strategies. The quantitative results were further analyzed through the lens of the Discourse Historical Approach to CDA. The study concluded that China expressed concern about people's security and humanitarian aid, and called for a peaceful resolution of the war through the two-state solution. Brattoli (2023) conducted a corpus-based critical discourse analysis of 100 news reports published between October 2023 and 2024 to examine how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was framed in international media. The study revealed that American media constructed Israel as a powerful and legitimate state, often attributing responsibility for violence to Palestine, thereby reflecting a pro-Israeli ideological stance.

These studies explore a limited dataset across multiple nationalities, and the comparative study of Western and Pakistani news reporting on a large corpus remains unexplored. So the current study bridges the gap by analyzing Israeli representation in Western and Pakistani news reporting, adopting a comparative corpus-based approach to critical discourse analysis.

3. Materials and Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to analyze the discursive structure of the ideological representation of ‘Israel’ across selected Western and Pakistani news outlets. The corpus was compiled by collecting news reports from CNN, BBC, and DAWN using the search keywords ‘Israel/Israeli’ in the Israel-Gaza war section on each channel’s website. The data were collected over 10 months, from October 2023 to July 2024. Each article relevant to the Israel-Palestinian conflict was selected through initial scrutiny, and a separate file for each corpus was maintained, containing almost half a million words. Each corpus file was manually cleaned, and line breaks were removed using Textfixer. The corpus files were tokenized and analyzed through Lancsbox 6.0. Hence, the corpus’s general statistics are presented in Table 01 below.

Table 1

General Statistics of CNN, BBC, and DAWN after Tokenization

	CNN	BBC	DAWN
Token	507981	490670	506502
Types	19225	20117	21379
Lemmas	16468	17350	18505

The corpus files were annotated as CNN_OCT23_JUL24, BBC_OCT23_JUL24, and DAWN_OCT23_JUL24. The timeline of data collection is significant, as it marks the beginning of another violent turn in this long-standing conflict with the October 7th event.

Furthermore, two western outlets (BBC and CNN) and one Pakistani outlet (DAWN) were selected; however, comparability was achieved through corpus design rather than numerical symmetry (McEnery & Hardie, 2011). The size and context of each corpus are balanced, as each corpus contains 50,000 words gathered during the same period of the conflict. BBC and CNN were selected to reflect internal diversity and heterogeneity in the Western media discourse (UK vs. US), thus making representativeness more robust and eliminating overgeneralization. In contrast, DAWN, the most popular English-language newspaper in Pakistan, was selected as an agenda-setting source and as the discourse of the high elite Pakistani media. In this way, analytical comparability is achieved in the study through equal corpus size and a controlled sampling criterion, rather than equal outlets.

The quantitative analysis was conducted using Lancsbox 6.0. Initially, a wordlist of each corpus was created to check the rank and frequency of the content word ‘Israel’ in each corpus. Afterwards, the frequency analysis of the selected words from the wordlist was performed, followed by the MI analysis in the GraphColl tab of the Lancsbox 6.0 interface. The word ‘Israel/Israeli’ was used as a node word, and the MI default threshold was selected, including the span of five words on both sides. The top-ranked collocates were studied using the KWIC (keywords in context) feature in Lancsbox 6.0 in light of Van Dijk’s (1996; 2006) approach to critical discourse analysis, which supports the qualitative paradigm.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the wordlist exhibit that the word ‘Israel’ is ranked in the number two or three of the content words across three selected corpora, which indicates that the frequency is high and there is a great margin to study the representation of ‘Israel’. The raw wordlists of the three corpora are shown below.

Figure 1
Wordlist of CNN

Corpus	CNN	Frequency	Dispersion	Type
Type	Frequency: 01 - Freq	Dispersion: 01_CV		
the	32741.000000	0.000000		
to	14864.000000	0.000000		
of	13905.000000	0.000000		
in	13010.000000	0.000000		
and	12793.000000	0.000000		
a	10408.000000	0.000000		
that	6563.000000	0.000000		
on	5700.000000	0.000000		
said	5176.000000	0.000000		
gaza	4566.000000	0.000000		
for	4513.000000	0.000000		
is	4220.000000	0.000000		
israel	4008.000000	0.000000		
with	3307.000000	0.000000		
israeli	3286.000000	0.000000		
it	3107.000000	0.000000		
as	2987.000000	0.000000		
hamas	2986.000000	0.000000		
have	2962.000000	0.000000		
was	2935.000000	0.000000		
has	2933.000000	0.000000		
are	2774.000000	0.000000		
by	2680.000000	0.000000		
from	2605.000000	0.000000		
he	2416.000000	0.000000		
at	2240.000000	0.000000		
an	2214.000000	0.000000		
not	2136.000000	0.000000		
us	1984.000000	0.000000		
were	1926.000000	0.000000		
be	1883.000000	0.000000		
been	1857.000000	0.000000		
they	1851.000000	0.000000		
we	1755.000000	0.000000		

Figure 1 illustrates the highly frequent words in the CNN news corpus. The content words are outlined to demonstrate the clarity of the list.

Figure 2
Wordlist of BBC

Corpus	BBC	Frequency	Dispersion	Type
Type	Frequency: 01 - Freq	Dispersion: 01_CV		
the	30580.000000	0.000000		
of	13363.000000	0.000000		
to	13305.000000	0.000000		
in	12198.000000	0.000000		
and	12052.000000	0.000000		
a	10320.000000	0.000000		
that	5544.000000	0.000000		
on	5457.000000	0.000000		
said	4718.000000	0.000000		
for	4252.000000	0.000000		
is	4139.000000	0.000000		
it	4124.000000	0.000000		
gaza	4080.000000	0.000000		
israel	3676.000000	0.000000		
have	3116.000000	0.000000		
he	2957.000000	0.000000		
has	2952.000000	0.000000		
with	2926.000000	0.000000		
as	2855.000000	0.000000		
by	2806.000000	0.000000		
hamas	2791.000000	0.000000		
israeli	2783.000000	0.000000		
been	2695.000000	0.000000		
were	2596.000000	0.000000		
are	2391.000000	0.000000		
had	2362.000000	0.000000		
from	2315.000000	0.000000		
people	2268.000000	0.000000		
at	2205.000000	0.000000		
an	2198.000000	0.000000		
not	2125.000000	0.000000		
be	1980.000000	0.000000		
they	1851.000000	0.000000		

Figure 2 illustrates the highly frequent words in the BBC news corpus. The content words are outlined to demonstrate the clarity of the list.

Figure 3

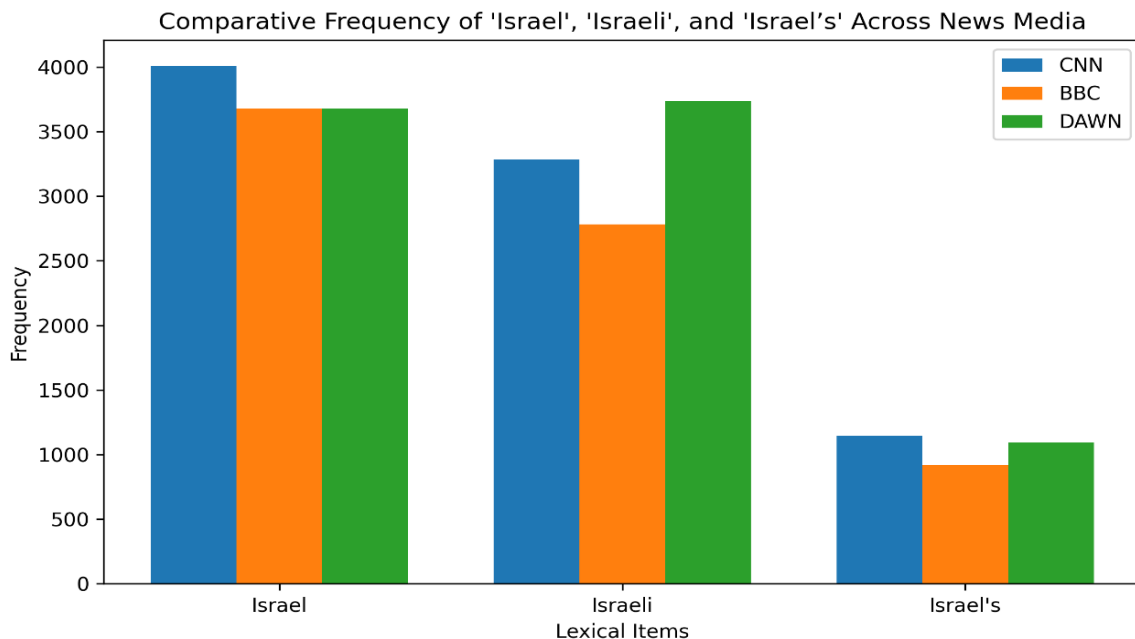
Wordlist of DAWN

Corpus	DAWN	Frequency	Dispersion	Type
Type	Frequency: 01 - Freq	Dispersion: 01_CV		
the	32745.000000	0.000000		
of	14737.000000	0.000000		
in	13596.000000	0.000000		
to	13451.000000	0.000000		
and	12773.000000	0.000000		
a	10741.000000	0.000000		
on	6248.000000	0.000000		
said	5063.000000	0.000000		
gaza	5328.000000	0.000000		
that	4968.000000	0.000000		
for	4918.000000	0.000000		
israeli	3736.000000	0.000000		
israel	3677.000000	0.000000		
is	3455.000000	0.000000		
with	3304.000000	0.000000		
it	3109.000000	0.000000		
as	2985.000000	0.000000		
by	2787.000000	0.000000		
was	2785.000000	0.000000		
has	2597.000000	0.000000		
an	2480.000000	0.000000		
have	2433.000000	0.000000		
from	2325.000000	0.000000		
he	2205.000000	0.000000		
palestinian	2189.000000	0.000000		
at	2180.000000	0.000000		
are	1944.000000	0.000000		
hamas	1899.000000	0.000000		
had	1892.000000	0.000000		
people	1874.000000	0.000000		
were	1867.000000	0.000000		
its	1777.000000	0.000000		
not	1706.000000	0.000000		
be	1647.000000	0.000000		
been	1600.000000	0.000000		

Figure 3 illustrates the highly frequent words in the DAWN news corpus. The content words are outlined to demonstrate the clarity of the list.

The results presented in Figures 1, 2, and 3 indicate that the lexical items ‘Israel/Israeli’ rank among the top four content words in the wordlist generated with Lancsbox 6.0 from the self-compiled news corpus of CNN, BBC, and DAWN. Mu & Ma (2022) argue that the high frequency of lexical items indicates discursive centrality and agenda-setting in news reporting, and corpus tools clarify the corpus’s central dimension and aid in furthering critical insights into media discourse. Building on this idea, it is significant that the lexical item ‘Israel/Israeli’ serves as the primary topical focus through which the Israel-Palestine conflict is framed and interpreted.

Furthermore, in CDA, the repetition of discursive items does not merely indicate topical relevance; it is also considered a mechanism through which social actors are foregrounded and normalized in discourse (Khosravini, 2010; van Dijk, 1996, 2006). In this light, the highly frequent term “Israel/Israeli” marks it as a dominant actor in the conflict narrative that shapes the power structure of agencies within the conflict. Furthermore, the findings of frequency analysis depict that the representation of Israel is exhibited with three lexical items that are repetitively used in the selected news corpus, as ‘Israel’, which implies geopolitical agency, ‘Israeli’ foregrounding action, and *Israel’s outlining possessiveness and claim*. The comparative frequency analysis is demonstrated in the figure 04.

Figure 4*Comparative Frequency Analysis*

As demonstrated in the figure 04, “Israel” has a high frequency across all three corpora, which contributes to foregrounding and topicalization through a CDA perspective. The adjectival and possessive forms (Israeli, Israel’s) are found noticeably comparable. DAWN illustrates the greater use of the form ‘Israeli’, which functions as an agent, aligning with a discursive tendency that directly associates actions, responsibilities, and consequences with Israeli actors. CNN demonstrates the higher use of ‘Israel’ as a noun, which implies the state-centric representation, authority and legitimacy. Furthermore, ‘Israel’s’ as a possessive form reinforces agentive positioning in conflict reporting. The possessive forms or lexical constructions are significant in highlighting discursive function, attributing control, ownership and responsibility. Hence, the socio-cognitive perspective of van Dijk (2006) CDA holds that repeated lexical patterns contribute to the topicalization and normalization of an action, thereby normalizing Israel’s central role in the conflict while potentially marginalizing alternative perspectives.

The lexical units ‘Israel, Israeli and Israel’s’ represent distinct discursive and grammatical functions: “Israel” highlights geopolitical agency; “Israeli” adjectivally foregrounds identical actions of Israel; and ‘Israel’s’ marks agency attribution, which encodes responsibility, ownership, and causality. LancsBox 6.0 (GraphColl module) was used to perform collocation analysis. The nodes representing Israel, Israeli, and Israel as discourse-functional units of actor representations and agency encoding were examined individually. Furthermore, Mutual Information (MI) has been chosen as the measure of association because it quantifies the strength of lexical bonding rather than relying on frequency-based significance. Since the research focuses on semantic framing and ideological construction, MI remains suitable for detecting evaluatively salient collocates, which are not necessarily the most common but do have discursive significance and meaning.

The collocation network based on the mutual information (MI) statistics of the words Israel/Israeli(s) in the BBC news corpus are mentioned in the table.

Table 2*High MI Score Collocates of Node Israel/Israeli(s) in BBC*

BBC	Word	MI Score
1	Prisons	7.6
2	Warplanes	6.7
3	Kills	6.7
4	Detain	6.6
5	Bulldozers	6.4
6	Raid	6.3
7	Appalling	6.1

These collocates of the node ‘Israel/Israeli’ indicate a domain of violence, military operation, destruction and control in the lexical semantic domain. The recurrent associations with the lexical item ‘Israel/Israeli’, such as *warplanes, kills, raids, and bulldozers* foreground the representation of Israel as a powerful actor in the violent and destructive process. The framing of Israel within the discourse of control, confinement and surveillance is portrayed through the collocates *prisons and detain*. The adjective ‘appalling’ (MI = 6.1), in addition to being action-oriented and militarized, provides a significant finding: it indicates the presence of moral judgment within the conflict reporting discourse. Furthermore, the presence of the word ‘appalling’ in the repeated collocates aligns with the CDA’s emphasis on how discourse encodes values, judgments, and ideological positioning to construct a normative stance that provokes condemnation, criticism, or moral reflection. In sum, the collocation patterns represent ‘Israel’ in a discursive environment that is characterized by conflict, force, and ethical evaluation. The analysis of these collocations in KWIC confirms the ideological implication of presenting Israel as a powerfully dominant actor involved in the military action, torture, violence and destructive process.

Furthermore, the events of the war are normalized, which aligns with Naeem’s (2025) findings mentioned in section 2. He analyzed the news from a UK-based newspaper, ‘The Guardian’ and the institutionalized strategy of UK-based news media reported in the study aligns with the BBC’s neutralized representation of ‘Israel’ as a powerful military state. The current study also notes a difference in UK-based news coverage of the event, as Naeem (2025) highlights that The Guardian presents a normalized, institutionalized version of the conflict. In contrast, the current study depicts that the BBC utilizes a normative description of the representation of Israel by condemning the brutal acts. Which enhances the meaning that the BBC does not present a pro-Israeli narrative, but it outlines the institutionalized voice of condemning the violent acts of war.

The collocates of the node Israel/Israeli reveal a pattern of CNN mentioned in the table 3.

Table 3

High MI Score Collocates of Node Israel/Israeli(s) in CNN

CNN	Word	MI Score
1	Protestors	8.1
2	Illegally	7.5
3	Inflammatory	7.1
4	Raided	6.8
5	Snipers	6.6
6	Obstruction	6.1
7	Incursion	6.1

The collocates in the CNN news corpus, using the nodes Israel/Israeli, depict a picture that is more event-driven and interactional, emphasising moments of confrontation, legality, and public dissent. The sequence of events is presented as a series of episodic encounters depicting violence and resistance. This relationship between violence and resistance foregrounds clashes between state forces and civilians. The KWIC exploration of these words indicates the role of the public against Israel’s role in suppressing and responding to dissent. This suggests that CNN mostly portrays Israel as a troublemaker and as instigating unrest between the public and the state. The collocate ‘illegally’ is a powerful evaluative marker, as the Israeli occupation, Israeli actions, and Israeli settlements in Gaza are presented within a broader frame of international law and moral accountability.

Furthermore, the adjective ‘inflammatory’ outlines the attributive expression of provocation or escalation, which pins the discourse of blame. The collocates ‘raided’, ‘snipers’, and ‘incursion’ portray the aggressive actions of Israel in CNN news reporting. These words also prominently signify military actions and their consequences.

Additionally, the collocate ‘obstruction’ signals the representation of Israel as a restrictive body in relation to humanitarian processes. Hence, the KWIC exploration of these words aids in understanding the ideological construction of Israel in CNN news reporting, and it is concluded that Israel is framed not only as a participant in the conflict, but also as a dominant actor whose actions are represented as provocative, restrictive and legally questionable.

The collocation pattern in DAWN news reporting is discussed in Table 4.

Table 04

High MI Score Collocates of Node Israel/Israeli(s) in DAWN

DAWN	Word	MI Score
1	Jails	7.7
2	Raiding	7.3
3	Mortar	7.1
4	Brutality	7.1
5	Kills	6.9
6	Raided	6.9
7	Forces	6.8

The results of collocation analysis based on MI of the node Israel/Israeli in the DAWN corpus reveal a highly critical and violence-based discursive construction. The theme of confinement and incarceration is depicted through the collocate 'jails', which directly implies that Israel is presented as a center of control that deprives liberty. The collocates 'raiding and raided' are highly action-oriented, which emphasize military aggression and forceful intrusion. The emergence of the collocate 'mortar' foregrounds the aggressive mode of Israeli actions utilizing high-impact weapons. The collocate association with the word 'kills' intensifies the representation of the event, which links Israel to the lethal outcomes and the narrative of violence is foregrounded. Furthermore, the collocate 'brutality' as a noun indicates a moral dimension as the word carries condemnation and moral judgment. This shows that DAWN not only reports events but also classifies actions within an ethical evaluative framework. Hence, Israeli actions are portrayed as morally reprehensible, aligning with the discourse of violence and injustice in the DAWN news corpus on conflict reporting.

The Findings of the study demonstrate that while all three news outlets represent Israel as a dominant agent in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the intensity, nature and ideological orientation of collocational patterns vary significantly. The study of collocates in context demonstrated that the BBC adopts a neutralized institutional tone of reporting the war by presenting the negative actions of Israel and the sufferings. In contrast, CNN foregrounds the legality of events, presenting public protests as a means of moral accountability. DAWN news, by contrast, pinpoints condemnatory and humanitarian discourses. Despite the differences, all three news outlets present Israel as a dominant actor in the conflict. This concludes that overall, the Western news media presents Israel as a powerful agency in the conflict, by outlining the militarized power and the power of creating unrest within the state-public relationship.

Furthermore, the Western media stays aligned with the institutional goal of presenting humanitarian concerns without blaming the agency directly and by normalizing violence as the outcome of the war. On the contrary, the Pakistani media portrays Israel and Israeli actions as immoral and unjust, adhering to the discourse of violence. The findings align with Naeem (2025), who concludes that the UK-based news reporting shows institutionalized voice in addressing the event, whereas the Pakistani news reporting highlights the sufferings of Palestinians. Similarly, the findings of the study resonate with those of another study by Sarwar and Qasim (2025), who argue that Western news media use a balanced approach to present the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, highlighting humanitarian concerns while portraying Israel as a powerful state. In contrast, the Eastern news reporting presents a clear concern towards Palestinian sufferings and outlines the violent actions of Israel.

5. Conclusion

Based on van Dijk's Ideological Discourse Analysis, specifically the concept of the ideological square (focusing on positive self-presentation and negative other presentation), this study illustrates that the representation of Israel in Western and Pakistani news coverage is structured by systematic lexicalization, agency attribution, and evaluative focus. The corpus evidence shows that Israel is always built as a militarized and powerful player, but the ideological construction of that power differs among media outlets.

The findings of the research conclude that the lexical choices utilized by the BBC place Israel in a negative discursive frame as the dominant actor responsible for the violent actions. The KWIC analysis of the collocates indicated that BBC reports the war in a neutral stance, simply reporting the events, sometimes avoiding assigning blame to the actors. It further frames Israel in a strong militarized discourse, owning the gadgets and power to destroy infrastructure. Killing is the direct consequence of a war, so the BBC mentions this violent action in a manner that identifies the normalized negative actions of Israel in a neutral way. Overall, Israel is represented by the BBC as a powerful actor, but the dominance is normalized within the logic of military engagement and state

action.

Equally, CNN creates an image of Israel as a strong state actor but incorporates a more emphasizing evaluation with the use of lexical terms associated with protest, illegality and political turmoil. CNN utilizes the lexical choices demonstrating the chain of events that started with public protests representing the negative role of Israel and Israeli settlements on the Palestinian land, highlighting the illegality of action on a broader level of international Law. CNN represents Israel as a troublemaker and as an agent that initiates unrest among the public and the state. The contextual study of the collocates expounds that CNN uses the militarized discursive choices to highlight the massive military power of Israel. In this case, the concept of negative other-presentation is expressed in terms of legalistic and political criticism rather than direct moral criticism. The discussion challenges Israeli behavior under international law, implying an ideological stance that predetermines instability and responsibility. Concluding, Israel is represented as a dominant actor who is not only a militarily powerful agent in the conflict, but it is also framed as an agent whose actions generate social and political unrest.

In contrast, the DAWN news corpus is loaded with the lexical choices that aggressively present Israel as an extremely negative agent and actor in a condemnation manner. The violent experiences of the confined Palestinian prisoners are highlighted, highlighting the brutality of Israeli armed forces. Hence, the narrative of violence is presented in the DAWN news corpus, representing Israel as a dominant, brutal and unjust actor. Overall, a shared concept of power is ideologically associated with Israel in the three selected corpora, as Israel is represented as a dominant actor in the conflict. However, the divergence lies in how this dominance is interpreted. The BBC normalized it through institutional framing, CNN contested it through moral evaluation, and DAWN condemns it through humanitarian and ethical discourse.

The study contributes to the existing body of literature on conflict reporting and highlights the significance of a corpus-based, integrated approach to critical discourse analysis. It adds to the research on conflict reporting in various important aspects. Primarily, it shows the usefulness of combining corpus-based techniques with Critical Discourse Analysis and how mass lexical facts can be used to uncover power patterns systematically. It also challenges the conduct of a subsequent study on the way institutional media cultures control assessment, especially where neutrality is publicly proclaimed but discursively bargained.

The comparative framework utilized in this study can be extended in future research by including more media outlets in South Asia or the Middle East, time series across various stages of conflict, or additional multimodal dimensions of representation. Furthermore, audience perceptions of the conflict can also be included, which might help better understand the circulation of discursive patterns, keeping in view van Dijk's (2006) socio-cognitive model. In general, the research highlights that media portrayals of geopolitical actors should not be viewed as a mirror of the real world but rather understood as an organized space of ideological production. In systematic lexical and collocational patterning, news discourse shapes the political imagination of conflict, legitimacy, and power through world politics.

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