

Representations of Israeli–U.S. Relations in U.S. News Media at the Height of the Israel– Hamas Conflict: A Semantic Prosody Analysis

Dimas Raditya Bagaskara,¹ Muhammad Farihul Qulub², Saddam Reza Hamidi³

¹School of Languages, Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, Monash University, Melbourne 3800, Australia

²Department of Arabic, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang Indonesia

³Humanities Sciences Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: muhammadfarihulqulub@gmail.com

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Abstract: Power dynamics play a role in the construction of public discourse and control the flow of opinion within the public sphere. The current study investigates the U.S – Israeli relations reflected through news media in reporting the Israel-Hamas conflict. The study used corpus linguistics, particularly semantic prosody analysis of 1200 news articles and publications from Cable News Network (CNN) and The New York Times that cover the Israel-Hamas conflict. The study found that the collocates of the word “Israel” are predominantly unfavourable, while the collocates of the word “Palestine” are mostly favourable. The study shows the tendency of American news media to steer public opinion towards Israel’s cause, revealing the U.S.-Israeli relationship that is deeply ingrained in strategic interests, ideological leanings, and political agenda. However, the predominance of favourable semantic prosodies associated with Palestine suggests a shift in public opinion, with increasing evidence of resistance to the mainstream narratives promoted by U.S. media.

Abstrak: Dinamika kekuasaan berperan dalam pembentukan wacana publik dan mengendalikan arus opini di ranah publik. Penelitian ini mengkaji hubungan AS-Israel yang tercermin melalui media berita dalam peliputan konflik Israel-Hamas. Penelitian ini menggunakan linguistik korpus, khususnya analisis prosodi semantik terhadap 1.200 artikel berita dan publikasi dari Cable News Network (CNN) dan The New York Times yang meliput konflik Israel-Hamas. Studi ini menemukan bahwa kolokasi kata “Israel” sebagian besar bersifat negatif, sementara kolokasi kata “Palestina” sebagian besar bersifat positif. Studi ini menunjukkan kecenderungan media berita Amerika untuk mengarahkan opini publik ke arah kepentingan Israel, yang mengungkap hubungan AS-Israel yang sangat tertanam dalam kepentingan strategis, kecenderungan ideologis, dan agenda politik. Namun, dominasi prosodi semantik yang positif terkait dengan Palestina menunjukkan adanya pergeseran dalam opini publik, dengan semakin banyaknya bukti penolakan terhadap narasi arus utama yang dipromosikan oleh media AS.

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1. INTRODUCTION

While public discourse represents public opinion, it is also an indicator of power dynamics, as power controls the flow of opinions in the public sphere based on their own standpoints (Morrison et al., 2019). With the addition of the current advancements in information technology (Lei, 2023), power assumes greater influence in steering the opinion through public discourse in the public sphere. The main principles of journalism are balance, fairness and accountability (Fico & Soffin, 1995). However, news media, as a part of a complex network of public discourse, are never truly neutral (Chatskin, 2026; Masy'al, 2025). In practice, the news media are directed and constructed with underlying biases and agenda, which include social issues, ideological, and political agendas (Entman, 1993; McCarthy & Dolfsma, 2014). The news media are typically constructed by modifying the tone of the story to the desired outcome by tweaking its incorporated elements through highlighting or removing some of its parts (Shultziner & Stukalin, 2021; Soontjens et al., 2023). Reporting a sensitive piece of reportage, such as war and conflict, involves these mechanisms based on their bias by utilising the power of language in reporting news media (Suleiman, 2004).

The “special” relationship between the U.S. and Israel, which is the unique bilateral dynamic and support between the two countries, is deeply ingrained in political interests, ideological alignments, and the dominance and support from pro-Israel constituencies within the United States (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2009). With this, the U.S. media had actively contributed to the flow of opinion in reporting the currently heated Israel-Hamas conflict by demonstrating support towards Israel and framing its adversaries negatively (Bhowmik & Fisher, 2023; Al-Addily & Al Shamiri, 2024), resulting in an unbalanced reportage of the conflict itself (Gilboa & Sigan, 2024; Miladi & Miladi, 2023; Neofytos, 2023).

This study explores how U.S. media outlets represent the Israel–Hamas conflict and the potential biases reflected in their reporting. By examining the sociopolitical dynamics that influence news production and employing semantic prosody analysis within a corpus linguistics framework, the research analyses language patterns to uncover the evaluative orientations present in media discourse.

Semantic prosody analysis is a corpus-based study that analyses the lexical tone and bias of words used in a corpus by examining their collocation and concordance lines, and is often used to identify key topics, trends, and their underlying influences (Egbert et al., 2020; Hunston, 2007; Wulff & Baker, 2020). The implementation of semantic prosody analysis in the scope of corpus linguistics is to determine how the tone and delivery of certain words in a discourse affect the perception of their readers. Russnes (2025) in his study on the connection between polysemy and semantic prosody, suggested that the same word combinations in different registers, such as a general register and a football-related register, could bear different prosodies. The outcome of this study is especially important when analysing the semantic prosody of the data, as the data gathered in this study consists of different kinds of news articles, which may use different language registers depending on the topic. Semantic prosody analysis of the verbs accompanying the word “publicity” in the Corpus of China’s English Media (CCEM) revealed that Chinese

journalists and media tend to utilise the verbs to describe Chinese-specific political, cultural, and social concepts, and they also preferred to use positive and neutral prosody compared to negative ones (Huang et al., 2018). These configurations allow the readers of the media to react positively towards English media in China. A similar study investigating the semantic prosody of diabetes discourses in Indonesia had also concluded that the nominal collocations surrounding the term “diabetes” are often perceived as stigmatising and positioning the people with diabetes as victims rather than framing them as individuals to take active measures in taking care of their health (Santyarini & Fajri, 2024). Finally, semantic prosody analysis is also useful in uncovering power dynamics and sociopolitical manoeuvres. Chen and Liu’s (2024) analysis of the semantic prosody and the colligation of V+Reform in China’s General Work Report (GWR) had concluded that the usage and the prosody of V+Reform in GWR reflect China’s plans in their series of reforms and reveal China’s political intention to establish its image to the rest of the world.

In conclusion, semantic prosody analysis serves as a powerful tool in corpus linguistics for uncovering how word choices and their collocational patterns shape meaning, perception, and ideology across different registers and contexts. Within the context of media studies, it highlights the interplay between language, power, and the public’s perception, revealing that the tone embedded in lexical choices is never neutral but deeply tied to broader communicative intentions and societal influences.

Although a growing body of research has examined media framing, ideological positioning, and discourse construction in reporting on the Israel– Hamas conflict, relatively limited attention has been devoted to the semantic prosodies that surround representations of Israeli–U.S. relations during periods of heightened geopolitical tension. Existing studies have demonstrated that news discourse is shaped by recurring lexical patterns and evaluative language that implicitly reflect political alignments and ideological preferences. However, the subtle attitudinal meanings embedded in collocational environments remain underexplored, particularly in the context of U.S. media narratives concerning the strategic partnership between Israel and the United States at the peak of the conflict. Addressing this gap, the present study employs semantic prosody analysis to investigate how U.S. news media linguistically construct and evaluate Israeli–U.S. relations during the most intense phase of the Israel– Hamas war. By uncovering the semantic associations and evaluative tendencies surrounding key lexical items, this study contributes to the broader understanding of media discourse, ideology, and the role of language in shaping public perceptions of international political alliances during armed conflict.

2. METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative study by analysing textual data using corpus linguistics techniques. The data incorporated in this study were 1200 news media and publications from two American media, which are the Cable News Network (CNN) (www.cnn.com) and The New York Times (www.nytimes.com). These two media outlets were selected due to their diverse news coverage and their prominence as major news sources for Americans

(Kunichoff et al., 2024; Yang, 2023; Yu & Yang, 2024). In accordance with copyright and ethical guidelines, the data will be used exclusively for research and educational purposes and will not be published or commercially exploited without prior consent from the parties concerned. The data was gathered using Factiva, a business information and research platform that aggregates licensed and publicly available information dissemination content, such as newspapers, journals, magazines, broadcast transcripts, and photographs from 32,000 different sources across the world ("Factiva," n.d.). As a research tool, Factiva allows researchers to gather hundreds of news articles for a corpus analysis.

Following the trend of the Israeli-Hamas conflict, two searches of English articles from the two news outlets between 6th April and 6th October 2024, in which the first search used the keyword "Israel", while the second search used the keyword "Palestine". The two keywords were specifically chosen as they are the main geopolitical actors that play a role in the conflict. Moreover, the source of the search was specified to CNN and The New York Times, adjusting the parameter of this study. Consequently, two corpora were compiled using the AntConc corpus tool (Anthony, 2004): Corpus A (1,647,877 tokens), which consists of news headlines and publications of the two media from the first search, and Corpus B (1,525,125 tokens), which consists of headlines and publications from the second search.

The analysis was done in three steps, which are the collocation analysis, concordance analysis, and ultimately the semantic prosody analysis. Collocation analysis examines how words co-occur in actual language use and identifies the relationships between terms that frequently appear together (Stubbs, 1995). The collocation analysis started by a search for the term "Israel" in Corpus A, and "Palestine" in Corpus B. Top collocations were identified based on the log-likelihood statistical value, while omitting stop words (the, by, s) that were not relevant for this research. The log-likelihood (LL) value is a statistical measure used in corpus-based textual analysis to determine whether differences in the frequencies of linguistic features across corpora are statistically significant, including both high- and low-frequency items (Dunning, 1993). The LL four-term log-likelihood test with $p < 0.05$ and 3.84 as the critical value was employed to determine whether the co-occurrence of lexical items within a corpus is significantly greater than would be expected by chance.

To determine the semantic prosody, a concordance analysis of the collocations was performed. This step is crucial, as words on their own do not necessarily represent the accurate semantic prosody, and further context through its concordance lines is needed to pinpoint its precise semantic prosody (Grabowski & Trklja, 2024; Wulff & Baker, 2020). Consequently, the semantic prosody of the two news outlets was determined and categorised into four semantic prosodies, which are positive, negative, mixed, and neutral prosodies. These classifications are important to identify how news articles affect the public's perceptions and shape public opinion (Hauser & Schwarz, 2023). Consequently, the semantic prosody classifications reported in this study should be interpreted as reflecting the evaluative tendencies of the top-ten collocates with the highest LL values, rather than the overall distribution of semantic prosodies across the entire corpus.

Table 1. Examples of Semantic Prosody with Data Sample

Semantic Prosody	Data Sample
Positive Prosody	...booms and then silence until the screams. Friday's strike, Israel's military says a precise hit on Hezbollah's...
Negative Prosody	...kidnapped and taken to Gaza. Israel's ensuing war against Hamas in Gaza has killed more than 41,000 people, created a...
Mixed Prosody	...dangerous smear." Demonstrations are also taking place at other campuses. Pro-Palestinian students at Emerson College and the Massachusetts Institute...
Neutral Prosody	...the revised travel ban can take effect pending appeals. December 6, 2017 - Trump recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital and announces plans...

These categorisations in table 1 were aligned with the current objective of the study, which is to determine the practices of American media in presenting and framing the two geopolitical entities involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict. The top collocations and their semantic prosody were presented in descriptive statistics. Finally, all findings were analysed and interpreted within the broader sociocultural and political context of the United States, with particular attention given to contemporary public discourse, media narratives, and ideological dynamics surrounding the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict. This contextual interpretation was essential in understanding how linguistic patterns reflected broader political and societal responses to the conflict.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Collocational Analysis

The study has compiled the top 10 collocations of the word "Israel" from Corpus A, and "Palestine" from Corpus B, while omitting stop words that are irrelevant to the purpose of this study. Among the top collocations, two types of words are identified, which are geopolitical entities and war terminologies. Five of these top collocations are geopolitical entities, which are geographical areas, institutions, and people that are associated with an autonomous and distinct political structure. The geopolitical entities referenced in Corpus A include Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shia political movement; Iran; Hamas, a Palestinian nationalist organisation; Lebanon; and Donald Trump, who at the time was serving as President of the United States. The other five collocations are war terminologies often used in public discourse, such as against, attack, war, and missiles. One of the most interesting parts in the corpus is the word Hezbollah as the most salient collocation present within the corpus. With a staggering 1162 occurrences and 1200.487 of log-likelihood value, this indicates that the occurrence is statistically extremely significant, does not occur by chance, and helps shape the whole discourse. The war terminologies are presented in a balanced manner, such as against and attack appear in the top five, and war, attacks, and missiles appear in the bottom five, but they are not as statistically salient as the geopolitical entities mentioned in the corpus.

Table 2. Top collocations from Corpus A

Collocate	Likelihood
hezbollah	1200.487
iran	928.444
against	796.905
attack	787.3
hamas	632.056
lebanon	601.873
war	505.371
attacks	502.418
missiles	480.216
trump	410.518

Based on the collocations themselves, patterns or trends of the corpora can be identified as shown in table 2. The tendency of this corpus to associate the term Israel with war-related terminology and geopolitical entities indicates that it frequently amplifies the Israel–Palestine conflict in the public sphere, often with political interests at play. This phenomenon can be further examined through the lens of semantic prosody, which reveals how each collocation is framed by the media in question.

The following table compiles the top collocations of the term “Palestine” from Corpus B, while omitting stop words that are not relevant within the scope of the current research. Most of the collocations from Corpus B belong to a specific semantic field associated with activism, humanitarian issues, and collective resistance, with some words closely related to geopolitical entities.

Table 3. Top collocations from Corpus B

Collocate	Likelihood
free	731.65
liberation	359.623
justice	342.849
students	311.447
state	227.163
recognize	177.842
pro	154.459
solidarity	136.997
refugees	112.698
organization	105.412

Words such as free, liberation, and justice in table 3 are activism-related terminologies that are the most prevalent in the corpus. Other words with a similar thematic focus include pro, and solidarity which are present in the bottom five collocations in the corpus. Terms related to geopolitical entities are also present in the corpus, such as organization, pro, and state. Finally, a term related to humanitarian issues, which is refugees, is also present in the corpus, despite its low frequency of occurrences. Main points to highlight within the top collocation in Corpus B are the frequency of some words in relation to their log-likelihood values. Some words bear low frequency but

retain higher log-likelihood values. For example, the word justice has 77 occurrences, but it has a 342.8 log-likelihood value. However, the word student has a higher occurrence, which is 112, but it only has a 311.4 log-likelihood value. Since the log-likelihood value detects the statistical significance and the distinctness of a word beyond its raw frequencies, low-frequency words that possess a high likelihood value show indicates its extensive use and thematic focus that shape the corpus (Jucker et al., 2009). Further examination of its semantic prosody will unveil how the top collocations in Corpus B define their stance towards Palestine in the Israel-Hamas media discourse.

3.2 Concordance Lines Analysis and Semantic Prosody

To uncover the ‘aura of meaning’ within the words, a follow-up analysis on the concordance lines of the collocations was conducted. The concordance line analysis is essential to reveal the semantic prosody of the identified collocations, as observing the linguistic environments in which a word repeatedly occurs, researchers can identify whether it tends to carry favourable, unfavourable, mixed, and neutral associations (Grabowski & Trklja, some words tend to shift, depending on the register of the discourse (Russnes, 2025), further justifying the need to scrutinise each concordance line associated with the collocations that shape the discourse. Concordance analysis was carried out using the KWIC function in AntConc. To identify semantic prosodies, the concordance lines were further examined within their broader contexts through the File View function, which provides a comprehensive view of their textual distribution.

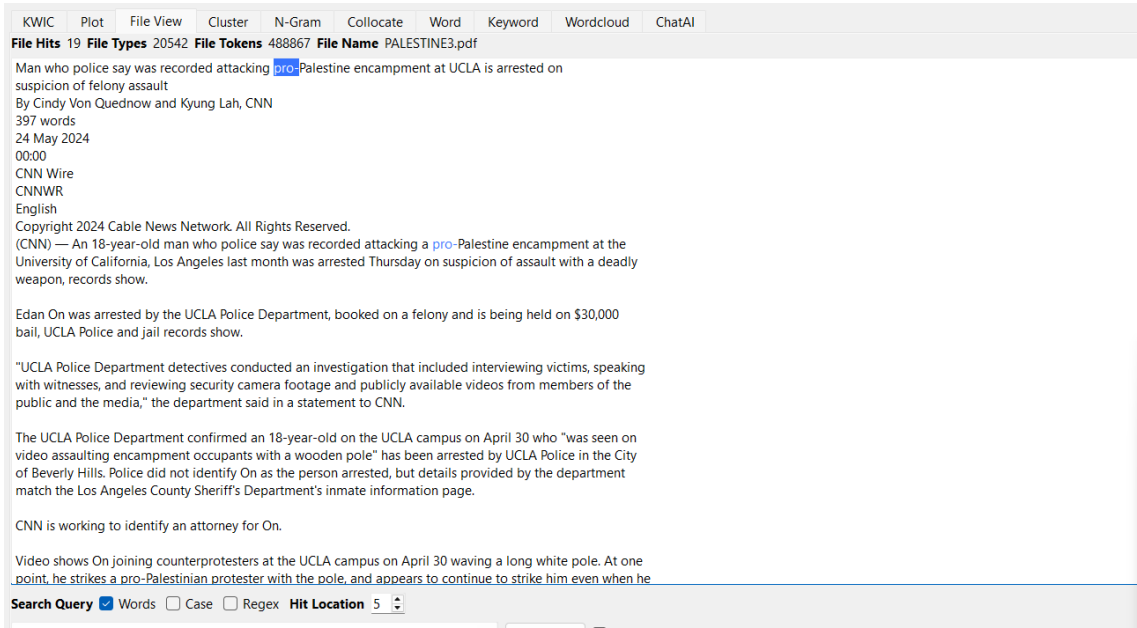
Fig. 1. The KWIC function for Concordance Lines Analysis

The screenshot displays the AntConc KWIC (Key Word In Context) function interface. The top navigation bar includes tabs for KWIC, Plot, File View, Cluster, N-Gram, Collocate, Word, Keyword, Wordcloud, and ChatAI. The main interface shows a list of concordance lines for the search query 'palestine'. The table has columns for File, Left Context, Hit, and Right Context. The search results are sorted by frequency, with the top hit being 'protesters'.

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 PALESTINE2...	n0035x LA County declines to charge man recorded attacking	pro-	Palestine protesters at UCLA, refers case to city attorney'
2 PALESTINE3...	in Gaza. We have heard very similar demands made by	pro-	Palestine protesters at campuses across the nation. On the
3 PALESTINE3...	we spoke with the leader of the same group of	pro-	Palestine protesters at UF in Gainesville, a group that
4 PALESTINE3...	in Gaza. We have heard very similar demands made by	pro-	Palestine protesters at campuses across the nation. On the
5 PALESTINE2...	Monday morning. "Cops have gathered at Beinecke Plaza, where	pro-	Palestine protesters urging Yale to divest from military weapons
6 PALESTINE2...	Monday morning. "Cops have gathered at Beinecke Plaza, where	pro-	Palestine protesters urging Yale to divest from military weapons
7 PALESTINE3...	Monday morning. "Cops have gathered at Beinecke Plaza, where	pro-	Palestine protesters urging Yale to divest from military weapons
8 PALESTINE3...	Monday morning. "Cops have gathered at Beinecke Plaza, where	pro-	Palestine protesters urging Yale to divest from military weapons
9 PALESTINE3...	seen in places like Columbia University, and UCLA. And nine	pro-	Palestine protesters were arrested Monday evening on the University
10 PALESTINE3...	in Gainesville, about two hours away from here, where nine	pro-	Palestine protesters were arrested Monday evening on campus. On
11 PALESTINE3...	We spoke with a leader of the same group of	pro-	Palestine protesters Friday, a group that has published the
12 PALESTINE2...	for permits that were not approved by the city. "The	pro-	Palestine protesters have gotten multiple permits, including a march,
13 PALESTINE6...	term professional consequences has also been a theme among	pro-	Palestine protesters since the beginning of the war. Shortly
14 PALESTINE3...	ek5e009hp Man who police say was recorded attacking	pro-	Palestine encampment at UCLA is arrested on suspicion of

Below the table, the Search Query is set to 'palestine' with options for Words, Case, and Regex. The Results Set is set to 'All hits' and the Context Size is set to '10 token(s)'. The Sort Options are set to 'Sort to right', 'Sort 1 1R', 'Sort 2 2R', 'Sort 3 3R', and 'Order by freq'.

Fig. 2. File View Function for Semantic Prosody Analysis



3.3 Corpus A: Israel the Protagonist

The semantic prosody analysis reveals that U.S. media discourse frequently positions *Israel* as a central actor in the Israel– Hamas conflict, reflecting broader sociopolitical narratives associated with the U.S.– Israel relationship. Corpus evidence indicates that the node word *Israel* does not consistently exhibit favourable semantic prosodies; rather, its collocational patterns are predominantly associated with lexical items relating to conflict, violence, military operations, and geopolitical developments. These findings suggest that the semantic environment surrounding *Israel* is shaped more by representations of the conflict and its international ramifications than by overtly positive evaluations. Consequently, the semantic prosody of *Israel* reflects the discursive construction of the conflict and the wider geopolitical context in which it is reported. Moreover, the semantic prosody properties of the Israeli- Hamas situation and certain geopolitical situations revolving around the heightened conflict.

Table 4. Semantic prosody from Corpus A

Collocate	Likelihood	Prosody
hezbollah	1200.487	Negative
iran	928.444	Negative
against	796.905	Mixed
attack	787.3	Negative
hamas	632.056	Negative
lebanon	601.873	Negative
war	505.371	Negative
attacks	502.418	Mixed
missiles	480.216	Negative
trump	410.518	Neutral

The unfavourable prosody of the word involves actors that are involved in the Israeli-Hamas conflict as shown in table 4, particularly Hezbollah, Hamas, Iran, and Lebanon. The collocations that accompany the word *Israel* are predominantly the representations of numerous actors, in the form of countries and organisations, that are involved in the conflict, such as Hezbollah, Iran, Hamas, and Lebanon. All of these agents are the main actors involved in the Middle Eastern theatre. Due to the U.S. support towards Israel's cause, numerous proofs further justify their negative framing towards these agents, such as the close ties between the two organisations of Hezbollah and Hamas in the conflict (Pfaff, 2024), and the strained relationship between Iran and Lebanon and the U.S. and Israel (Clayton & Zanotti, 2024; Wang et al., 2024; Zanotti, 2023). Thus, based on the concordance lines, the U.S. tend to wrap these actors in a negative light, using negative connotative words such as "conflict", "targeting", "fighting", "intolerable", and "unacceptable". One of the interesting prosodies observed in this study is the semantic prosody of Hamas, the paramilitary organisation that poses as the main threat towards both Israel and the U.S. in the Israel-Hamas conflict (Reis & Wald, 2024; Shamo-Nir, 2024; Zanotti & Sharp, 2024). Despite possessing mostly unfavourable prosody, the U.S. media in this study gave a mixture of both positive and negative collocations that further support Israel's cause. For example, the U.S. media painted Hamas with a negative connotation towards their actions, such as "atrocities", and gave positive connotations, such as "counteroffensive" to frame Israel's response towards Hamas' attack.

...spurred horror at the Israeli military response to Hamas's atrocities, accusations of genocide and war crimes, and widespread protests in the United States and beyond. – Excerpt 1. Hamas' negative framing

Israel's counteroffensive against Hamas in Gaza, a narrow coastal strip, would take at least a year, or two, or three. – Excerpt 2. Israel's positive framing.

The mixed prosodies observed in this corpus are a result of polarised views of the two news outlets on the same topic. For example, while the word "attacks" hold unfavourable prosody in the Israeli-Hamas conflict, the U.S. media painted the attacks done to Israel as being "unacceptable" framing the discourse surrounding it with unfavourable collocations. At the same time, the U.S. media would add modifiers which favourable collocations, such as "swiftly" and "extensive", to glorify Israel's attacks towards its adversaries.

For just under a year, Israel has been fighting Hamas in Gaza, in an effort to dismantle the militant group after it led brutal attacks on Israel on Oct. 7 last year. – Excerpt 3. Hamas' negative framing on their attacks towards Israel.

Last month, Israel swiftly escalated its attacks on Hezbollah, remotely detonating the group's pagers and walkie-talkies, launching extensive airstrikes. – Excerpt 4. Israel's positive framing on their attacks towards Hezbollah.

Finally, the neutral prosody observed in this corpus is the word “trump”, which refers to the U.S. president Donald Trump that were in office during the conflict. Within the discourse, Donald Trump’s statements are entirely political, particularly his personal stance towards Israel, based on his belief in recognising Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel.

3.4 Corpus B: Palestine (Not) the Antagonist

As opposed to Israel, the word “Palestine” in this corpus (see Table 5) possesses mostly favourable semantic prosody, therefore framing the geopolitical actor as “not the antagonist”. This is caused by the growing negative sentiment in the U.S. towards Israel in the Israel-Hamas conflict, with the main goal of stopping Israel’s military aggression. These are Pro-Palestine movements, and they have formed numerous social campaigns in the U.S., such as BDS (boycott, divest, and sanction), which demands that people would stop consuming or associating themselves with companies that support Israel’s cause (Deeb & Winegar, 2024; Dasha et al., 2024). Positive prosodies, such as the words “free”, and “justice” dominated discourse and public opinion, shifting the focus from Israel to Palestine as the actual victims caught in the crossfire, by calling for the cessation of oppression caused by Israel’s military campaigns. In addition, the word “state” in this study uniquely bears positive prosody, despite being a neutral word. In this case, the word “state” is used by the people and agencies that recognise Palestine as a state. Furthermore, the word is laden with positive collocates that further cemented is favourable prosody.

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said: "We will recognize the state of Palestine for peace, coherence and justice." – Excerpt 5. A statement from Spain’s PM on upon recognising Palestine as a state.

Finally, the word “refugees”, which usually holds a neutral and negative prosody, shifted to a favourable prosody as the word is strongly associated with the United Nation’s efforts in handling the humanitarian crisis in Palestine as a result of the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict.

Table 5. Semantic prosody from Corpus B

Collocate	Likelihood	Prosody
Free	731.65	Positive
Liberation	359.623	Negative
Justice	342.849	Positive
Students	311.447	Mixed
state	227.163	Positive
recognize	177.842	Mixed
pro	154.459	Negative
solidarity	136.997	Negative

refugees	112.698	Positive
organization	105.412	Mixed

The unfavourable prosodies in this discourse underline extreme and radical organisations related to the Israel-Hamas conflict, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which is a Marxist organisation within the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) (Haugbolle & Olsen, 2023). Being a radical movement, the news media naturally emphasise their actions by highlighting their public negative remarks and statements, and giving them unfavourable connotations.

Inside the encampment they were more forthright, and posted signs for the terrorist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. – Excerpt 6. PFLP’s negative framing with the word “terrorist”.

A similar pattern can be observed in the words “solidarity” and “pro”, which are frequently used to denote organisations and movements advocating for the Palestinian cause. Nevertheless, the discourse predominantly emphasises the adverse responses directed at these groups, as evidenced by their co-occurrence with negatively charged collocates such as “endanger”, “fear”, “harassment”, and “arrest”.

It was also a tense week at the University of Florida in Gainesville, about two hours away from here, where nine pro-Palestine protesters were arrested Monday evening on campus. – Excerpt 7. Pro-Palestine negative framing by highlighting their arrest.

Mixed semantic prosodies in this discourse reflect the polarised perspectives and complex political dynamics surrounding the Israeli–Hamas conflict. The words “student” and “organisation” primarily refer to university students and groups expressing support for the Palestinian cause. However, the discourse also foregrounds negative portrayals of these actors through their association with collocates such as “altercation”, “suspended”, and “demanded”. Another notable example is the word “recognize”, which reveals conflicting attitudes toward the recognition of Palestine as a state. This mixed prosody is reflected in its co-occurrence with words such as “not”, indicating opposition, and “readiness”, suggesting support or willingness to recognise Palestinian statehood.

3.5 Implications: US-Israeli Relationship Reflected through Public Discourse

Based on the findings discussed above, U.S. media discourse appears to shape public perceptions in ways that are generally favourable toward Israel. Previous studies have noted that power framing often functions to marginalise particular groups rather than empower them (Morrison et al., 2019). The present analysis similarly reveals discursive patterns that reinforce the position of the U.S. government in supporting Israel while simultaneously marginalising groups and actors that oppose this stance. Specifically, Israel is frequently constructed as the primary protagonist in the Israeli–Hamas conflict, with military operations and war-related activities associated with Israel often

accompanied by favourable collocational patterns. In contrast, actions undertaken by opposing parties are more commonly framed through unfavourable collocations. Such representations may contribute to stronger public support for Israel, thereby reinforcing the influence of public opinion on the formulation of pro-Israel policies (Koplow, 2011). The dominant favourable semantic prosodies attached to Palestine indicate an emerging shift in public sentiment, characterised by increasing resistance to the prevailing media narratives constructed by the U.S. media. However, the analysis of the semantic prosody associated with Palestine also revealed several instances of semantic prosody shifts, particularly where lexical items that typically carry favourable associations occurred within unfavourable discursive environments. These shifts suggest the presence of competing ideological positions within the discourse and highlight the complexity of media representations of the conflict.

4. CONCLUSION

This study seeks to examine how power operates in the control and construction of discourse, as well as how such discourse reflects broader political landscapes and sociopolitical phenomena, through the analysis of semantic prosody in American publications and news articles. By investigating recurring collocational patterns and evaluative meanings embedded within media language, the study aims to uncover the subtle linguistic mechanisms through which ideological positions are reinforced and normalised in public discourse. In particular, the research focuses on the relationship between the United States and Israel, exploring how American media outlets linguistically frame the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in ways that may encourage audiences to align more closely with Israeli perspectives.

The study argues that news media play a significant role in shaping public perception by selectively emphasising certain lexical associations and evaluative patterns. Countries, groups, and organisations that oppose Israel are frequently represented through collocations carrying negative or unfavourable semantic prosodies, thereby constructing them within frames of threat, violence, extremism, or instability. Such linguistic patterns contribute to the reproduction of dominant political narratives and the legitimisation of particular ideological stances within mainstream discourse.

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