

BBC Coverage of the Aggression on Gaza 2021: Critical Discourse Analysis of Arabic and English Versions

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the trends in the coverage of the BBC website of the aggression against Gaza Strip in 2021, by comparing between its Arabic and English copies, moreover, to reveal the extent of the balance and bias in the news coverage in both languages, the comparison carried out in the Headline level, Multimedia level, Events Narration level, and Sources level. Critical discourse analysis CDA method used in order to uncover the ideological underpinnings of the two copies by shedding lights on the editorial policy trends towards both Palestinian and Isrealian. The Study targeted Six main media materials for analysis, published on the BBC website in both its Arabic and English news website, during the aggression period. The researchers took the sample's representation of all periods of the aggression on Gaza into consideration. News was selected by searching the site's archive in its Arabic and English versions.

Keywords: BBC Website; Aggression on Gaza; News Coverage; Discourse Analysis

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tren liputan situs BBC tentang agresi terhadap Jalur Gaza pada tahun 2021, dengan membandingkan antara salinan bahasa Arab dan Inggris, terlebih lagi, untuk mengungkap sejauh mana keseimbangan dan bias dalam liputan berita di kedua bahasa tersebut. , perbandingan dilakukan pada level Headline, level Multimedia, level Narasi Peristiwa, dan level Sumber. Metode CDA analisis wacana kritis digunakan untuk mengungkap dasar-dasar ideologis dari dua eksemplar dengan menyoroti tren kebijakan editorial terhadap Palestina dan Israel. Studi ini menargetkan enam materi media utama untuk dianalisis, yang diterbitkan di situs web BBC baik dalam situs berita berbahasa Arab maupun Inggris, selama periode agresi. Para peneliti mempertimbangkan representasi sampel dari semua periode agresi di Gaza. Berita dipilih dengan menelusuri arsip situs dalam versi bahasa Arab dan Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Situs Web BBC; Agresi di Gaza; Liputan Berita; Analisis Wacana

INTRODUCTION

Media plays a significant role in highlighting events and has become more capable of influencing due to cyberspace. The emergence of a range of major media institutions that have formed the international media scene has contributed to the growing role of the media by promoting ideas and gaining political support through their coverage of events. Therefore, media becomes one of the most important tools states use in propaganda and influencing societies, especially during the coverage of important events.

Balanced media coverage or news reporting of events creates the institution's features and establishes if it is impartial or not, especially when political events occur that affect public opinion, push it to follow its course, and monitor its implications, which allows these outlets to compete in providing a news service that attracts public satisfaction and achieves professionalism and objectivity, avoiding everything affects its impartiality (Kashkool, 2022).

Journalists and academics pointed out, during a workshop held at the Islamic University in Gaza, that news websites, newspapers, news agencies, and international channels are a tool for making the foreign policy of their countries, as this is evident in their coverage of events and conflicts in many regions, especially the Arab world. Its coverage is considered biased in terms of quality and quantity, and this is due to the flow of information, as well as the interference of states in their editorial policies, especially given what is presented in those media institutions that address their audiences in multiple languages (The Islamic University of Gaza, 2016).

Regarding the Palestinian cause, several studies indicate that the Western media is biased in the coverage of the Israeli narrative. Every time Palestine leads news headlines, the major Western media institutions take off the mask of professionalism and objectivity and appear as Israeli war media, at this moment, the Israeli assaults on unarmed civilians become "clashes", and the Israeli airstrikes on Gaza Strip become a "justified response" and an exercise of the "right of self-defense" in the narrative of the Western media (Khmaisa, 2021).

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), one of the leading Western media institutions, transmits news through several media, including radio, television, the Internet, and mobile phones (BBC News Arabic, 2020), in several languages, primarily English and Arabic. This network has remained and is still concerned with events in Palestine on its various platforms, especially its website in its Arabic and English versions. Since the two versions are directed to two different audiences, published materials vary according to each audience.

While the BBC confirms its commitment to professionalism based on objectivity and impartiality (Landor, 2012), its presenting of the Israeli attacks on Gaza generates several questions about the nature and objectivity of media coverage and the balance between Arabic and English versions of the site in presenting news. In addition to the standards control the institution's dealings with the Israeli attacks, the most recent of which was the aggression on Gaza in May 2021.

Recently, BBC has been exposed to criticism for its clear bias towards Israel during the aggression. British Disaster Relief Committee, the Islamic Initiative Committee in Britain, and other parties criticized the BBC coverage of the aggression, describing it as a failure to highlight the extent of human suffering on the Palestinian side resulted from the aggression, and it in an unprofessional and unbalanced manner means to rely prominently on Israeli sources in its tales, in contrast to very limited sources that represent the Palestinian narrative in media materials (Turki, 2011).

Therefore, this study aims to identify the trends of coverage of the aggression on Gaza in 2021 on the BBC website, in comparison between its Arabic and English versions, the method of narrating events, revealing the sources that were relied upon, the personalities that were focused on, and checking the balance of news reporting and its bias towards The Palestinian resistance in both versions, and an analysis of the trends and implications of the editorial policy of the study site towards the Palestinian cause.

The following are some previous studies that are relevant to this article. Hamdan (2010) identifies the BBC news channel's coverage of the Palestinian struggle, Qanoua (2017) identifies the image of Palestinian resistance in the Jerusalem Post, Roehl (2021) analyzes the image of Israeli media in German digital media, Galal & Galander & Auter (2008) identifies the image of the US in Arab media and its position on the Palestine-Israel conflict, Segev & Miesch (2011) identified the degree of bias in news content on European websites and to analyze negative and positive words about the Palestine-Israel conflict, Gaber & Thomas (2009) identified objectivity BBC coverage of the Israeli war in Lebanon in 2006, Ningrum (2019) identifies the coverage of the BBC and CNN websites in Indonesia

about the martyrdom of the Palestinian nurse Razan Al-Najjar, Ezzina (2021) identifies the image of Palestine in Western media represented by the BBC and CNN, and Harper-Jones (2015) identifies the BBC's coverage of Israel's aggression on Gaza in 2014.

This study presents a new addition as it is distinguished from previous studies in that it compares two versions of the same news site, where this information targets two different audiences. Then it clearly shows the differences in the editorial policy between the two versions towards the aggression on Gaza, and the Palestinian cause as a whole. The problem of the study is to identify trends in coverage of the aggression on Gaza in 2021 on BBC, in comparison between its Arabic and English versions. Therefore, main question is what are the trends in coverage of the aggression on Gaza in 2021 on the BBC website, in comparison between its Arabic and English versions? The significance of the study comes from the scarcity of Arab studies and research that dealt with the coverage of the aggression on Gaza in the English-speaking British media and compared it to the Arabic coverage.

METHODS

The study relies on a qualitative approach, in order to analyze the data critical discourse analysis (CDA) method is applied, the study aims at comparing the English news articles and their Arabic equivalents, by conducting an in-depth qualitative analysis of the media materials related to the aggression on Gaza in 2021, which was published on the study site, the comparison carried out in the Headline level, Multimedia level, Events Narration level, and Sources level. CDA used in order to uncover the ideological underpinnings of the two news sites by shedding lights on the site's editorial policy trends towards both Palestinian and Isrealian.

The study targeted Six main media materials for analysis, published from 11/5/2021 to 21/5/2021 on the BBC website in both its Arabic <http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/> and English <http://www.bbc.com/news> website, with three news stories in each website of simultaneous events, published between (11-12 pm) during the study period, and the news that was chosen came on three days: (The first day 11 /5/2021, the sixth day 5/16/2021, the eleventh day 5/21/2021). The researchers took the sample's representation of all periods of the aggression on Gaza into consideration, to include the beginning, middle, and end. News was selected by searching the site's archive in its Arabic and English versions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The First Day of the Aggression: (11/5/2021) at 23:30

1. Headline

Arabic Version:

- The aggression on Gaza led the main news in the Arabic version.
- The headline in the Arabic version (Netanyahu announces the expansion of military strikes in the Gaza Strip).

English Version:

- The aggression on Gaza led the main news in the English version.
- The headline in the English version (Rockets target Tel Aviv after Gaza tower destroyed).

Discussion:

- Reading the headlines in the two versions, the difference in the framing of the news starts with Gaza Rockets in the English version. In contrast, the Arabic version focused on Netanyahu's announcement of war, and it is also noted that the headline in the English version when referring to the destruction of one of the towers in Gaza, did not directly mention who was responsible for its destruction, although it was later mentioned that the tower was destroyed by Israeli warplanes in a commentary accompanying the video in the news.

2. Multimedia

Arabic Version:

- The news in the Arabic version included four pictures (distributed equally on the Palestinian and Israeli sides), in addition to an illustrative map of the holy sites in Jerusalem.
- The news in the Arabic version included one video mentioning several Israeli personalities.

English Version:

- The news in the English version included six pictures distributed equally on both sides, in addition to an illustrative map of the holy sites in Jerusalem.
- The news in the English version contained two videos, with an infographic showing the events chronologically.
- The first video showed scenes of the destruction of the Hanadi Tower, then scenes of the Palestinian resistance firing rockets. The second video was a digital story summarizing the events in Jerusalem and included audio and video information about the two sides presented by the BBC correspondent in Jerusalem (Yolland Neal).

Discussion:

- Images on both sides focused on the effects of the destruction, while the images in the English version took on a humanitarian aspect showing the suffering of people on both sides. The news in the English version was also distinguished by the presence of a time infographic to display the events chronologically, which is a good addition to its coverage.
- The video in the Arabic version included several personalities, most notably Netanyahu justifying his government's position, in addition to interviews with Israeli demonstrators in Jerusalem, while the video did not include any Palestinian personality.
- In the English version, the video had no reporter on the Palestinian side.
- The video in the English version included a relative balance by linking rockets firing as a response to the destruction of the tower. However, the image in which rockets appeared suggests to the viewer the equality of power on both sides, which is contrary to reality.
- The news in both versions included hypertext additions and hyperlinks to enrich the content.

3. Events Narration

Arabic Version:

- The beginning of the news focused on the Israeli side, highlighting the number of dead and injured.
- The reference to the Israeli victims came through the site's correspondent. However, for the victims on the Palestinian side, the source was unknown.
- The news referred to the martyrdom of seven Palestinians in Beit Hanoun due to an explosion whose cause was not clear. While the Palestinian narration was not mentioned
- The news referred to the Israeli army spokesman's statement that it took precautions and used precision weapons to protect civilians, and confirmed that most of the victims were members of armed groups.
- The news gave attention to the statements of the Israeli army spokesman.
- The story presented the condemnation of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, of the Israeli aggression.

English Version:

- When referring to the Israeli airstrikes on Palestinian residential towers, there was an emphasis on mentioning the army's warning to civilians to evacuate the building.
 - While the news in the English version referred to the suffering of the Israelis in detail, it did not show any of the Palestinian humanitarian sides as a result of the aggression.
 - It used the passive voice more than once in the context of talking about the Israeli airstrikes and destruction of the towers.
 - In the English version, the Israeli victims were mentioned before the Palestinians with more details about them, such as their age.
 - In The English version, the opinion of the political analyst (Jeremy Bowen) was included with his picture.
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Discussion:

- The news in the English version was not consistent with the Israeli narrative describing Hamas or the Palestinian resistance as terrorism.
- The Israeli victims were mentioned before the Palestinians in both versions. The news relied on a reporter on the Israeli side but unknown sources on the Palestinian side.
- The English version referred to Ismail Haniyeh's statement, while the Arabic version referred to the statement without referring to Haniyeh.
- The news in the Arabic version indicated that seven individuals died in Beit Hanoun due to an explosion for an unknown reason. This may cause ambiguity for the reader, and the site did not verify it. It is important not to neglect that the news indicated the statement of the Ministry of Health about the martyrs including children among them.
- The news in the Arabic version indicated that the Israeli army confirmed that it avoided targeting civilians, but was not matched by any clarification from the site to confirm that. While it ignored the Palestinian narration.
- It mentioned the occupation's warning to citizens before bombing the towers, which indirectly conveys to the reader that the occupation is keen on the lives of citizens. This is contrary to reality due to the number of civilian victims, especially women and children.
- The news in the Arabic version gave space to the Israeli narrative by presenting many details in the context of justifying the bombing and the number of victims on the Palestinian side.
- The Palestinian sources usually came late, especially in the English version.
- Presenting an opinion of a political analyst in the English news is a valuable addition that enhances the coverage of the English version. This gives it an advantage over its Arabic counterpart, which did not have any opinion or analysis of the events.
- Presenting the events chronologically in the news through the infographic in the English version was successful and accurate, which was missed in the Arabic version.

4. Sources

Arabic Version:

- The news in the Arabic version included the following sources: (BBC correspondent in Jerusalem, the Israeli Prime Minister, Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army Aviv Kochavi, and Army Spokesman Jonathan Conricus). While the sources on the Palestinian side were unknown such as: (Hamas and Palestinian health officials said).

English Version:

- Sources in the English version on the Israeli side such as: (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz). On the Palestinian side, most of the sources were unknown such as: (Hamas, which controls Gaza, the Hamas-run health ministry says, Palestinian fighters) despite the reference to the source (Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh said), which came at the end of the news.

Discussion:

- News in the Arabic and English versions focused on the sources on the Israeli side while neglecting the sources on the Palestinian side.
- On the Palestinian side, most sources were unknown except a brief statement by Ismail Haniyeh that focused on the threat of the occupation with the resistance's ability to respond without referring to the aggression and its crimes.
- News in the English version of the statement of the only Palestinian source did not mention anything other than the threat directed at the occupation. While the full statement included the reasons for the brutal Israeli aggression and the Palestinians' self-defense.

The headline in both versions shows the difference in framing the news, and the researchers believe that this indicated the imbalance in the coverage of the site. This was evident by neglecting the party that bombed the towers in the news in the English version and using the passive verb in the headline. Even though the news text indicated that the bombing was made by Israeli warplanes. These results are consistent with the study of Hamdan (2010), which concluded that the BBC conceals information that supports the Palestinian narrative, as well as ignoring news of repeated Israeli attacks.

We can say that there is a balance in the use of multimedia in both versions. While the English version, there was an additional video and adding the site's correspondent. This indicates that the coverage of the English version was relatively better than the Arabic on many points such as adding a political analyst's opinion.

The site focuses on highlighting the Israeli narrative and giving it more attention whether through the diversity, arrangement of sources, or referring to the victims and suffering on the Israeli side more clearly than on the Palestinian side. This is consistent with the (ROEHL) study (2021), which concluded that the news coverage of German digital media focuses on the presence of Israeli sources, and important personalities such as the Prime Minister.

The researchers believe that this news in its two versions includes a relative bias, as it lies in some details in the news, the method of narrating, presenting events, and focusing on some words and terms. This is consistent with what the expert in political discourse, media language, and translation, Dr. Mushir Amer, confirmed that media language used shows bias towards the Israeli side in terms such as (Hamas Islamic Militant Groups) conveying to the reader that there is an armed group that is faced by a state and an army (IDF). Furthermore, adding religion to the case leads the audience to evaluate these armed groups negatively in what is called (Negative Evaluations). Headlines such as: (The war on Hamas) or (The war on the armed groups that rule Gaza) carry negative implications for the Palestinian resistance in favor of the Israeli narration. In addition to neglecting some concepts such as the concept of the occupation of the lands of the 67, the occupied lands, apartheid against the Palestinians of the 48, the contexts of siege, and the Palestinian resistance that came to restore Palestinian rights. All of this comes in the context of the negative language towards the Palestinian side, which is called (Over Tones).

The researchers noted that the news in both Arabic and English versions did not mention a correspondent on the Palestinian side. This caused receiving information from the Israeli side, and this is not compatible with the study of Harper-Jones (2015) which showed that the BBC relied on correspondents on both sides during its coverage of the Israeli aggression on Gaza in 2014.

The Sixth Day of Aggression: (5/16/2021) At 23:30

1. **Headline:**

Arabic Version:

- The aggression on Gaza led the main news in the Arabic version.
- The headline in the Arabic version: (Gaza and Israel: Netanyahu pledges to "continue the attacks with full force" on Gaza).

English Version:

- The aggression on Gaza led the main news in the English version.
- The headline in the English version: (Israel Gaza conflict: Netanyahu says strikes to 'continue at full force')

Discussion:

- The site is concerned with covering the aggression on Gaza by publishing it as a main news item on both versions.
- The Headline was similar in both versions, noting that events in the Arabic version were named (Gaza and Israel). However, in the English version, they were named (Israel Gaza conflict).

2. **Multimedia:**

Arabic Version:

- The news in the Arabic version included three photos, two from Gaza and one from Ashkelon. The photos focused on victims and the results of the bombing.
- There were no other media in the news except some hyperlinks.

English Version:

- The news in the English version included three photos, two from Ashkelon and one from Gaza. The photos focused on victims and the results of the bombing.
- There was a video at the beginning of the news, which covers the victims on both sides, presenting a human story that shows the suffering of both sides.
- The news included an illustrative map of Palestine in addition to a timeline infographic.

Discussion:

- Although both versions included three pictures, the English version was biased towards the Israeli side regarding the number of pictures. Moreover, one of the pictures included the effects of the bombing of a Jewish temple in Ashkelon.
- The English version contained a video clip, a map, and a timeline infographic, which added value to the coverage compared to the Arabic version.
- The video in the English version shows human suffering and damage on both sides, noting that the duration of the video was a minute and a half. A full minute was to cover the Israeli side, and 30 seconds were left to cover the Palestinian side, bearing in mind that victims on the Palestinian side are the most.

3. Events Narration:

Arabic Version:

- The news in the Arabic version began with the statements of the Israeli Prime Minister about the events.
- The site's correspondent works on the Israeli side only through coverage and interviews.
- The news in the Arabic version did not mention any reference to the Palestinian victims.

English Version:

- The news in the Arabic version began with the statements of the Israeli Prime Minister about the events.
- The news mentioned the number of Palestinian victims at the latest event. While it mentioned the number of Israeli victims number since the beginning of the events.
- In the English version, the news included a subheading in the middle of the news: (Sunday was the deadliest day so far) indicating that that day was the deadliest among the events. Another subheading at the end of the news (What happened during the UN meeting?) in A reference to what happened during the United Nations meeting to discuss the development of the situation.
- The news indicates a ramming attack by Palestinian youth in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem.
- The news included an opinion and analysis of the BBC's diplomatic correspondent (Paul Adams) where he talked about the chances of reaching a ceasefire between the two sides.

Discussion:

- The beginning of the news in the Arabic version focused on the statements of the Israeli Prime Minister, and this time may be due to its association with the headline of the news. Noting that most of the site's coverage in both versions presented the Israeli narration first.
- News in both versions relied on the site's correspondent on the Israeli side only.
- Events narration was more organized in the English version, as the news was divided according to topics and events such as specifying a part of the news to display field developments, and another part to cover the United Nations meeting, as well as opinion and analysis. all of this was missing in the Arabic version.
- The English version was more balanced than the Arabic in presenting the human side of the Palestinian victims, especially regarding the massacre of (Ashkentna) and (Abu Al-Auf) families.
- The coverage in the English version was clearly better compared to the Arabic, and this was evident through the narration of the details of events on both sides. In addition, the reference to the Palestinian human side such as mentioning (Ashkentna and Abu Al-Awf) families.
- Adding an opinion and analysis in the English version affirms the advantage of the English version over the Arabic version.

4. Sources:

Arabic Version:

- The Arabic version's news began with an Israeli source (Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) during his statement to the BBC correspondent and ended with an Israeli source as well (Former Defense Minister Naftali Bennett).

- It also included an Israeli source (Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Gilad Erdan) in addition to an unknown source (the Israeli army).
- The news did not include Palestinian sources except the Palestinian Foreign Minister, Riyad Al-Maliki.

English Version:

- In the English version, the news included various Israeli sources such as (Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) and an unknown source (The Israeli military).
- On the Palestinian side, the news included several sources: Riyad Eshkuntana, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki, in addition to an unknown source (Gaza officials, Hamas-controlled health ministry).

Discussion:

- In the Arabic version, the news lacks all kinds of sources, while there were many Israeli sources from the news introduction to its ending.
- Sources in the English version are various. The news focuses on Israeli officials and ignores most of the sources from Gaza.

The news related to the aggression on Gaza is still at the lead in both versions, adding the aggression as the main news. This is consistent with Harper-Jones's (2015) study that analyzed the BBC's coverage of the Israeli aggression on Gaza in 2014. It concluded that the BBC emphasizes the events in Palestine. In addition, the study of Qanoua (2017) found that foreign newspapers are interested in Palestinian resistance. Such as Jerusalem Post. Both versions used multimedia, but it was better in the English version was adding video, timeline infograph, and so on. Other than comprehension aspects of the subject and its coverage, and adding analytical opinion.

The site presents the Israeli side's justifications for their airstrikes and the victims as mentioning airstrikes comes only with justifications. Dr. Mushir Amer, an expert in political discourse, the language of the media, and translation, confirmed this, indicating that following the BBC's coverage of the news of the Palestinian issue, it frames events beginning with a Palestinian action followed by an Israeli reaction. In addition, it focuses on presenting the Israeli point of view, justifications, and clarifications, especially in the English version. As he explained, this is a clear bias. Both researchers see that while it was expected from the Arabic version to focus more on the events, and it did, the English version was better in several aspects.

There is a prevailing trend on the site toward ignoring the sources on the Palestinian side, whether official or unofficial. Whereas, there were several Israeli sources, from the news introduction to its end. This is consistent with (ROEHL 2021) study which indicated the bias of Western media is toward the Israeli narration. Such as the German digital media, which works to show Israel positively. It is worth mentioning that the director of the BBC office in Gaza, Rushdi Abu Al-Ouf says that the anonymity of Palestinian sources may be forced due to events, or that it may be at the request of the source himself. The researchers see that some Palestinian official sources are unnecessarily anonymous, as it is illogical for a Palestinian official source such as the Ministry of Health or other sources that show figures and statistics to request not to mention him!

Events narration in the English version was more balanced regarding the Palestinian human aspect. This gives objectivity to the site coverage, and this is consistent with the study of Gaber & Thomas (2009) showing that BBC's coverage of the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006 was biased towards the Israeli side sometimes, but it was objective in general. Adding opinion and analysis in the English version affirms the advantage of the English version over the Arabic version in coverage. The Arabic version lacked such kind of additions that support the news, enrich the content, and bring the reader closer to the event and its repercussions.

The Eleventh Day of the Aggression: (5/21/2021) At 23:30

1. **Headline:**

Arabic Version:

- The aggression on Gaza led the main news in the Arabic version, on the eleventh day of the aggression.
- The headline in the Arabic version: (Gaza: ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas enters into force).

- The news had two subheadings: (What did the two sides say? What did Biden say?).

English Version:

- The aggression on Gaza led the main news in the English version, on the eleventh day of the aggression.
- The headline in the English version: (Israel-Gaza ceasefire holds despite Jerusalem clash).
- The news had two subheadings: (What have the two sides said about the truce? What position did the US take?).
- Version: (Israel Gaza conflict: Netanyahu says strikes to 'continue at full force')

Discussion:

- The aggression on Gaza still grabs an interest in the site in both versions even on its eleventh and last day.
- The headline in both versions was relatively similar. However, the English version added the Jerusalem clashes and linked them to the ceasefire. On the other hand, the Arabic version focused on Gaza as the scene of events.
- Adding sub-headings to the news in both versions enhances the coverage, as the reactions to the events from various sides were covered.

2. Multimedia:

Arabic Version:

- The news in the Arabic version included three pictures, one of the ceasefire celebrations in Gaza, another of an Israeli inspecting the damage in his home, and a personal photo of US President Joe Biden during his speech from the White House regarding the ceasefire in Gaza.

English Version:

- The news in the English version included two pictures of the destruction and bombing results, a picture on each side.
- In the beginning, the news included a video of clashes between Israeli soldiers and worshipers on the Temple Mount after the ceasefire was announced. Another clip was about celebrations in Gaza streets.
- The news included a map of Palestine and a timeline infographic.

Discussion:

- Adding pictures was balanced in the news in both versions.
- The English version had the advantage of multimedia, especially video and timeline infographic over the Arabic version.
- The video in the English version was a scene of events with no explanation or text from the site, or even a reporter's comment.

3. Events Narration:

Arabic Version:

- In the Arabic version, the news began with a reference to the ceasefire (after 11 days of airstrikes that killed 240 people, most of them in Gaza). Without pointing out that the number of dead on the Israeli side was very low and incomparable for the Palestinian side.
- Regarding the number of victims on both sides, the news used statistics, data, and figures issued by the Israeli side.
- Since sources regarding the numbers of victims of Hamas, the news indicated that Hamas did not mention figures indicating the damage caused to its fighters.
- The news conclusion focused on the statements of US President Joe Biden, commenting on the declaration of ceasefire.
- One of the pictures was of Palestinians celebrating in Gaza streets. On the Israeli side, the picture was of a person inspecting the destruction of his house after the bombing.

English Version:

- The news in the English version indicated at its beginning that the clashes on the Temple Mount broke out after the Palestinians threw stones at the officers and rioted. So, the Israeli police took repressive measures in response.
- The news described East Jerusalem as occupied.

- The news indicated that the clashes took place at Al-Aqsa Mosque, noting that it is a holy site for Muslims and Jews.
- Some of the phrases emphasized in its language that Hamas began firing rockets. (Hamas began firing rockets after warning Israel to withdraw from the site).
- The news included the opinion and analysis of the BBC's diplomatic correspondent (Tom Bateman) who spoke about the ceasefire between the two sides.
- The news presented a full paragraph on the position of the two sides on the ceasefire. It showed the statements of the two sides and their positions in balance. Noting the repeated delay of the Palestinian sources.
- The news concluded with US President Joe Biden's statements about the events and his blessing of the ceasefire declaration.

Discussion:

- The language of the news began with the phrase (the bombing that killed 240 people, most of them in Gaza). The word “most” indicates that the death rate on the Palestinian side is greater. However, there is a large number on the Israeli side, although the news indicated that only 12 were dead.
 - Some phrases noted had a sort of balance, such as: (and the two parties, Hamas and Israel, claimed victory in the conflict).
 - There are other expressions that lack balance and impartiality, focusing on that Hamas began firing rockets, and that the Israeli airstrikes were a response. Such as: (Hamas began firing rockets after warning Israel to withdraw from the site, which led to retaliatory airstrikes).
 - In an enhancement of the Israeli narration by the site, the news indicated that the number of rockets fired from Gaza towards Israeli territory was 4,300. On the other hand, referring to the Israeli airstrikes, the news used the Israeli army's narration which is "hit more than a thousand military targets in Gaza Strip." Without referring to the civilian victims, women, and children, although the news briefly mentioned it in another position.
 - The news in the Arabic version used Israeli sources in the statistics regarding the number of rockets fired toward Israel. On the other hand, it ignored the number of rockets and airstrikes on the Palestinian side.
 - The semiotics of the picture on the Palestinian side inspires the celebrations of the ceasefire. In contrast, on the Israeli side, the semiotics referred to the human side by highlighting the suffering of a citizen in front of the destruction of his kitchen.
 - Using Israeli sources in the Arabic version's news may be justified if it is about the number of victims on their side. Notably, the site used Israeli sources regarding the number of Palestinian victims, with a brief reference to an unknown source from the Ministry of Health in Gaza. Both researchers see that this is a clear bias.
 - The news in the Arabic version indicated that Hamas did not announce the damage caused to them, which is not true. Through the researchers' follow-up to the events, they found out from several sources that Hamas many times announced the assassination of its commanders during the aggression. (France 24, 2021)
 - In the English version, the news presented the Israeli narration regarding the clashes at the Temple Mount. In this respect, responsibility for the events was held on the Palestinians, and the Israeli police attacks were a response to that, Without referring to any Palestinian source. Reviewing several sources, both researchers confirm that this was not true. (CNN Arabic, 2021)
 - The word “clashes” implies power equality between the two parties, bearing in mind that one party had heavily armed soldiers, and the other party is unarmed worshippers.
 - The news, in the English version, indicated that the clashes took place in Al-Aqsa, which is “a holy site revered by both Muslims and Jews”. From the researchers' point of view, this presents a fake and biased image since the information is wrong. While the Jews rever a few places in Jerusalem, the Haram as a whole is revered by Muslims. The site indicated in the same news that its name is Al-Aqsa Mosque. Noting that this was indicated by the English version only.
 - The language of some phrases in the news between the Arabic and English versions implies linking the word Hamas with the beginning of the fighting (Hamas began firing rockets after warning Israel to withdraw from the site).
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- In the English version, the news presented a full paragraph regarding the position of the two sides on the ceasefire. Statements of the two sides and their positions were presented in a sort of balance with the repeated delay of the Palestinian sources. Both researchers believe that the site's coverage was delaying the Palestinian position on events in general, and thus delaying the presentation of Palestinian sources, as well as ignoring most of them.
4. Sources:
- Arabic Version:
- The Arabic version news included several sources (US President Joe Biden and Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz).
 - The news also included two Palestinian sources (Bassem Naim, from the Hamas International Relations Council, and Izzat Al-Rishq, a member of the Hamas political bureau).
 - There were unknown sources on both sides, such as (the Israeli army, the Israeli medical services, and an Israeli official), and (Hamas official).
- English Version:
- The news in the English version included a large number of sources on the Israeli side, such as: (Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, The mayors of Sderot and Ashkelon, Israeli police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld)
 - The news also included sources on the Palestinian side, such as: (Top Hamas political leader Ismail Haniya, Basem Naim, from the Hamas Council on International Relations, A member of Hamas's political bureau, Izzat al-Reshiq).
 - There were unknown sources on both sides, such as (A Hamas official, Gaza health ministry, Israel has said, The Israeli military, The Israeli Political Security Cabinet)
 - The news concluded with US President Joe Biden's statements about the events and his blessing of the ceasefire declaration.
- Discussion:
- Arabic version's news had a relative balance in the sources, especially with reference to two known sources on the Palestinian side. This was rare in the website's coverage of the aggression. Both researchers noticed this for the first time during the analysis of the material of the study.
 - Palestinian sources came later in the news than the Israeli sources in both versions of the site. The Israeli sources often lead the beginning of the news.
 - It is noted that only the English version reported Ismail Haniyeh's statements. While the Arabic version ignored it, despite the significance of those statements at that time.

Through the follow-up of the site, it was still concerned with the aggression against Gaza and the events of Jerusalem and its repercussions. Sites news led the trend in both Arabic and English versions. This differs from the study of Ningrum (2019), which concluded that BBC coverage in the Indonesian language was less concerned with the Palestinian cause. Researchers believe that this difference is due to the target audience. In terms of media, both researchers believe that both site versions were balanced in the use of media. Noting that the English version had more advantages in this news coverage by adding videos, timeline infographic, and a map.

Both researchers noticed, for the first time, during the analysis of the study material that the news in the Arabic version had a relative balance in the sources, especially regarding two well-known sources on the Palestinian side. However, the Arabic version ignored the statements of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, despite their significance to the event, while the English version reported them. These results are consistent with Hamdan's (2010) study, which concluded that the BBC is concealing information that supports the Palestinian narrative.

Through follow-up, researchers found out that the site continues to present the Israeli narrative at the beginning. This delays presenting the Palestinian sources, as well as the anonymity of most of them which were evident in this news in both Arabic and English versions. This is consistent with the words of Dr. Mushir Amer, an expert in political discourse, media language, and translation. He said that the BBC follows an editorial policy that stipulates delaying Palestinian narration, events, and sources. On the other hand, the Israeli narration leads the news and it was supported with reports, correspondents, articles, statements, and sources, which is unfair to the Palestinian narration.

According to the researchers' point of view, the news was not well-balanced. While there was a clear presentation of both points of view, some phrases lacked neutrality. This is consistent with the study of Segev & Miesch (2011) which studied European news content bias and analyzed negative and positive words about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It concluded that the balance towards Israel varies in the European news.

The news shows that the greatest reliance of both sites' versions was on Israeli sources, especially for opinions and statistics. The director of the BBC office in Gaza, Rushdi Abu Al-Ouf, justified the weakness of Palestinian sources saying that the occupation had prevented journalists from entering Gaza Strip during the aggression. However, Abu Al-Auf believes that the coverage was balanced on both Israeli and Palestinian sides all the time.

Both researchers see that the news in both versions included some fallacies and inaccurate information as it mentioned that Hamas did not announce the loss of its fighters. Referring to external sources, researchers found out that this information was inaccurate, and the news in the English version clearly indicated that the unarmed Palestinian worshipers were responsible for the clashes, using Israeli sources only. Referring to other external shows the opposite, and the researchers believe that these practices affect the neutrality and balance of coverage. This is consistent with Harper-Jones (2015) study, which showed that the BBC's coverage of the Israeli aggression on Gaza in 2014 was contradictory to the values advocated by the network. The study believes that this is due to the pressures to which the BBC is subjected, and this impacts its objectivity. This differs from what Rushdi Abu Al-Ouf, director of the BBC office in Gaza, said (interview) that pressures are always exerted against media, directly and indirectly. However, it did not impact the BBC's coverage since it has a board that defines the editorial policy and terminology used in coverage that all employees are committed to. On the other hand, the expert in political discourse, the language of the media, and translation, Dr. Mushir Amer, believes that there is severe political pressure on the BBC aiming to be consistent with the policy of the British government, and the major political parties that support Israel. As a result, this impacts the BBC's coverage and events framing to serve the Israeli narrative.

Some phrases in the English version's news show the site's bias towards the Israeli version. This was clearly notable when referring to the Temple Mount as a holy site revered by both Muslims and Jews. While this phrase was not mentioned in the Arabic version's news, which gives the impression that the site provides its Arab audience with different content than what it provides to its Western audience. The language of some phrases in the news in the Arabic and English versions conveys certain indications by associating the word "Hamas" with the beginning of the fighting in most cases and associating Israeli airstrikes on Gaza with words such as "response" and "warning". This is consistent with Ezzina's (2021) study which concluded that the BBC is relatively biased toward Israel. This is shown by the use of terminology to present the Palestinians in a bad light.

CONCLUSION

BBC website, in both Arabic and English versions, remained concerned with the aggression against Gaza throughout the events of Jerusalem and its repercussions. And BBC led the news in its Arabic and English versions. There were some differences in news framing between the two versions of the site, and they are clear in the headlines of the news in the English version. This indicates the imbalance in the coverage. The site uses some expressions and terms that imply bias, such as the use of the passive verb when talking about the Israeli airstrikes. Focus on presenting the Israeli side's justifications for their airstrikes and victims was an example of the site's bias in both versions. Where the reference to the airstrikes comes always combines justifications according to the Israeli version, with relative neglect of the Palestinian version.

Some news included fallacies and inaccurate information related to the Palestinian side. Referring to external sources, researchers found that this information is inaccurate, which impacts the balance and impartiality of the site's coverage. The site, in both versions, focuses on highlighting the Israeli narrative and giving it more space, which includes relative bias. This appeared in some news details and the way of events narration and presentation, such as referring to the victims and suffering on the Israeli side more than the Palestinian side. The site used Multimedia in both versions. However, the English version featured additional media, such as videos, timelines, and maps with most of the news. The English version had a relatively better level of coverage than the Arabic through the use of the site's correspondent, and the addition of opinions of political analysts and

diplomats. It turns out that the site, in both versions, relied on Israeli sources, especially regarding figures and statistics related to the victims, even if they were on the Palestinian side. The site has a trend of ignoring the sources from the Palestinian side, whether official or unofficial. Meanwhile, there are many Israeli sources of all kinds and levels. Palestinian sources came later in the news. Whereas, Israeli sources come at the beginning of the news.

While it was expected from the Arabic version to focus more on the events, and it did, the English version was better in several aspects. Despite the relative balance, the analysis of the coverage of the aggression on Gaza in 2021 shows that the editorial policy of the site is consistent with the Israeli narrative in one way or another. This indicates that it is affected by internal and external pressures represented by the policies of the British government and the Israeli lobby, which negatively impacts the Palestinian cause. The Israeli media is still operating strongly in an organized and systematic manner in Western media institutions, and the most prominent is the BBC, using all available methods, and putting pressure on it to adopt and promote the Israeli narrative.

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