Discursive Strategies of Normalization in Al-Jazeera Reports: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Tiba Abdulrazzaq Hasan Al-Sudanni Teeba.razaq@uobabylon

Prof. Salih Mahdi Adai Al-Mammory (Ph.D.) Salih_mahdi71@yahoo.com

University of Babylon\ College of Education for Human Sciences\
English Department
Iraq, Babylon

Abstract

The present study employs the critical discursive strategies to examine news coverage of Israeli-Arab normalization in Al-Jazeera reports, The primary aims of this study are: (1) the way Al-Jazeera channel utilizes the discursive strategies in presenting the news regarding normalization. (2) Investigating the discursive strategy that is widely used in Al-Jazeera reports. The paper proposes the following hypotheses; (1) Al-Jazeera uses the discursive strategies in a negative way only to address Israel and normalization. (2) The norm and value violation is the mostly used strategy in the selected reports. The main conclusion that this paper reached at are: (1) Al-Jazeera utilizes prominently a range of discursive strategies to negatively portray Israel and normalization via (norm & value violation, negative lexicalization, warning and negative comparison) and positively portray the Palestinian cause via (compassion move, hyperbole, concretization and generalization). (2) Negative lexicalization is the widely used strategy in Al-Jazeera reports as it negatively addresses Israel as "Zionist" and normalization as "betrayal" repeatedly.

Key Words: Normalization, Discursive strategy, Al-Jazeera.

المستخلص

توظف الدراسة الحالية استراتيجيات النص النقدية لتحليل تغطية الأخبار للتطبيع الإسرائيلي- العربي في تقارير الجزيرة، حيث تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى: (١) التحقيق في الطريقة التي تستخدم بها قناة الجزيرة استراتيجيات النص في تقديم الأخبار المتعلقة بالتطبيع. (٢) الكشف عن الاستراتيجية النصية التي يتم استخدامها على نطاق واسع في تقارير الجزيرة.

تقترح الدراسة الفرضيات التالية؛ (١) تستخدم الجزيرة استراتيجيات النص النقدية بطريقة سلبية فقط في التعامل مع إسرائيل وعملية التطبيع. (٢) انتهاك القيم والمعايير هي الاستراتيجية الأكثر استخدامًا في التقارير المختارة. فيما توصلت الدراسة الحالية الى الاستنتاجات التالية: (١) تستخدم الجزيرة بشكل بارز مجموعة متنوعة من استراتيجيات النص النقدية لتصوير إسرائيل وعملية التطبيع بشكل سلبي عن طريق (انتهاك القيم والمعايير، استعمال دلالات سلبية، التحذير والمقارنة السلبية) وتصوير القضية الفلسطينية بشكل إيجابي عن طريق (التعاطف، المبالغة، التجسيد والتعميم). (٢) استعمال الكلمات السلبية هي الاستراتيجية الأكثر استخدامًا في تقارير الجزيرة حيث يتم التعامل مع إسرائيل بصفة سلبية بأنها "صهيونية" والتطبيع بصفة سلبية بأنه "خيانة" بشكل متكرر في نصوص التقارير.

Introduction

News channels employ a variety of discursive strategies to shape public discourse and present information in a particular manner. These strategies often involve careful selection and framing of news stories to influence viewers' perceptions and opinions. Through the use of specific language, tone, and visual elements, news channels can emphasize certain aspects of a story while downplaying or omitting others, ultimately shaping the narrative in a way that aligns with their editorial perspectives. By employing these discursive strategies, news channels aim to guide public discourse and shape public opinion without explicitly revealing the tactics used to achieve these goals.

Arab-Israeli normalization has been a topic of great controversy and complexity in the Middle East region for decades. Historically, Arab-Israeli normalization has been characterized by conflict and hostility between Arab states and Israel since the establishment of Israel in 1948. However, in recent years, there has been a notable shift towards normalization and cooperation between some Arab states and Israel.

Thus, this paper focuses on a deeper understanding of the role of media in shaping public perceptions of Arab-Israeli normalization linguistically via discursive strategies in four selected reports from Al-Jazeera channel.

It is expected that media outlets should maintain an unbiased and objective presentation of facts, this is not always the case. Rather, media channels are commonly perceived as shaping their news coverage in accordance with their affiliations and ideologies. Therefore, it is vital for media outlets to uphold ethical and professional standards in their reporting, and strive to present a diverse range of perspectives and viewpoints.

1. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (referred to as CDA hereafter) is a contemporary field of linguistic research that has gained popularity in recent times. Its researchers go beyond studying the nature of language itself and delve into the reasons behind its current state in various CDA investigations. In other words, CDA aims to unravel the meaning of discourse and how language usage contributes to that meaning. It strives to illustrate the impact of ideology on discourse, as

well as the reciprocal influence of discourse on ideology, both of which stem from and reinforce social structure and power dynamics through the observable aspects of language structure. In essence, it aims to illuminate the dynamic relationship between language, ideology, and power.

CDA is arguably better described as a strategy that draws on a variety of theories and approaches:

> CDA is not a direction of research among others, like TGG or SFL,nor a sub-discipline of discourse analysis, such as the psychology of discourse or conversational analysis. It is not a method, nor a theory that simply can be applied to social problems. CDA can be conducted in, and combined with any approach and sub-discipline in humanitie and social sciences. (van Dijk, 2001, p.96)

There is ongoing debate within the academic community of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) regarding its classification as an approach, theory, or method. Bhatia et al. (2008, p.197) concur with van Dijk's viewpoint that CDA is not a singular theory, but rather a compilation of theories and methodologies.

When considering the origins of CDA, it is essential to acknowledge the significance of "Critical Linguistics." CDA, which expands the critical approach in discourse analysis research, is a specific branch of Critical Linguistics (Tian Hailong, 2006, p.40). The term "critical linguistics" was initially introduced in the book "Language and Control" by Roger Fowler and Gunther Kress (Fowler et al., 1979). Fowler and Kress are highly respected linguists who are considered pioneers in the field of Critical Linguistics. In their book, they adopted Halliday's SFL as the primary theoretical framework and conducted their research focusing on aspects like over-lexicalization, classification, modality, and transitivity. Fowler et al. (1979) assert that Critical Linguistic Analysis can serve as a potent tool for examining the ideological processes that influence power dynamics and control relationships (p.186). While Fowler primarily explores theories and methodologies, Kress contributes significantly to the practical application of critical linguistic theories. According to Kress, CDA is a linguistic tool that should be utilized for actual discourse analysis scenarios, including popular discourse analysis. During this period, Fowler employed social and linguistic analysis as the analytical method.

1.1 Ideology

Due to its focus on revealing the underlying ideologies in everyday and institutional communication, the concept of ideology holds great importance in Critical Discourse Analysis

(CDA). The term "ideology" was initially introduced by French philosopher Destutt de Tracy, who defined it as "the science of ideas." Over time, this term gained multiple definitions and garnered acceptance among numerous scholars. For instance, Fairclough associates ideology with power dynamics and inequalities, which contribute to the preservation of dominance. He defines it as the manifestation of physical reality, social relations, and social identities through various forms and meanings of discursive practices, which play a role in producing, reproducing, or transforming power relations. Similarly, Van Dijk defines ideology as a collection of ideas, values, and beliefs shared by a group of individuals, offering a limited perspective on the world. Ideology serves as a link between social structure and social cognition.

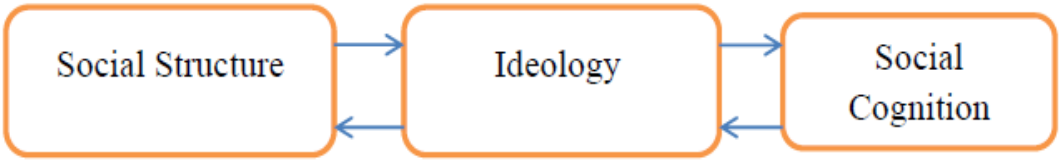

Figure (1) Van Dijk's (1998) Representation of Ideology

According to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), ideology plays a significant role in establishing and perpetuating unequal power dynamics. Consequently, one of the primary objectives of CDA is to unravel the complexities of discourses by comprehending ideologies, with the aim of offering enlightenment and liberation in human behavior (Eagleton, 1994, p.15).

According to Hall (1996, p.26), ideology can be understood as the mental frameworks used by different social groups to comprehend the functioning of society. It encompasses the languages, thoughts, concepts, and systems of representation employed by individuals to make sense of society. Consequently, ideology can be defined as a collection of mental and social representations shared among members of a society, consisting of attitudes, ideas, and beliefs. Hall's conceptualization of ideology incorporates both the cognitive dimension (ideas and beliefs) and the social dimension (social groups and power relations within society). Van Dijk (1998) further expanded on Hall's ideas and proposed an approach to ideology that considers not only the cognitive aspects but also the macro level, which includes institutions, social groups, and social interactions, as well as the micro level, which pertains to social activities. According to Van Dijk, ideologies consist of an Us-Them framework where positive beliefs and attitudes are directed towards Us, while negative beliefs and attitudes are directed towards Them. Ideologies serve as frameworks for understanding the world and guide social behavior, which can result in inequalities and injustices. These ideologies are not inherent but rather acquired by individuals who belong to a social group that shares common perspectives on important social or

policy issues. In order for these cultural attitudes and their underlying beliefs to be shared within a group, they need to be communicated or defended among group members or to those outside the group. Ideologies are typically shaped and perpetuated through spoken or written expressions of ideological discourse, such as party broadcasts, parliamentary debates, news stories, textbooks, and everyday interpersonal conversations.

1.2 Stance

According to Barton and Lee (2013, p.87), stance can be defined as the positioning of an individual in relation to oneself, what is being expressed, and other individuals or objects. Stance encompasses the lexical and grammatical expressions that reflect attitudes, emotions, opinions, or commitments regarding the content being communicated. Therefore, individuals need to adopt a particular position in order to effectively convey their emotions, thoughts, and attitudes towards a subject or person. Within the field of linguistics, the concept of stance holds significance as it aids in comprehending the intended meaning of speakers and their approach towards their audience.

Stance can be conveyed not only through specific language forms but also through other means of communication. In a stance statement, there are three main elements: the person expressing the stance (also called a stance-taker or someone taking a position), the topic or object to which the stance relates, and the resources utilized, which include word choices and style used to express the stance (Barton & Lee, 2013, p.87). Biber and Myers (2003, p.254) categorize stance into three types: epistemic, attitudinal, and stylistic stances. Epistemic stance involves indicating the level of certainty or uncertainty about the factual basis of a statement. It reveals the speaker's understanding and belief in their claim. Attitudinal stance, the second type, relates to an individual's aesthetic preference, moral judgment, or emotional response. Attitudinal markers can evoke emotional reactions rather than just aesthetic or moral preferences.

1.3 Discursive Strategies

This approach is commonly employed in the humanities and social sciences. Its fundamental concept is that through careful examination, understanding, and systematic analysis, it is possible to uncover the underlying ideologies of individuals who speak or write (van Dijk, 1995, p.135). In this framework, ideological discourse analysis is viewed as a form of socio-political analysis that aims to establish links between discourse patterns and societal patterns. Consequently, social structures are influenced by the interactions (in the form of written or spoken language) among members of a specific group. Since ideologies are often concealed and not explicitly expressed, van Dijk (1995, p.154-57) proposes various discourse constructions and strategies, several of

which are utilized in the present study as described below:

Norm and Value Violation: This strategy involves portraying the opposing group in a negative light by highlighting their violation of beliefs and values. It is employed when analyzing reports that depict the out-group as enemies of human rights, childhood, peace, and other similar ideals. Essentially, this strategy aims to depict the other group as morally wrong or "bad."

Negative Lexicalisation: This strategy focuses on selecting words or phrases with strong negative connotations when describing individuals or groups. Examples include terms like "traitor," "betrayal," "war," "massacre," and others that are typically associated with the out-group.

Hyperbole: Hyperbole refers to the use of exaggerated language to portray an action or event, particularly in relation to negative actions attributed to the out-group. For instance, a minor incident may be described as a "harsh attack" to intensify its negative impact.

Compassion Move: This approach involves expressing empathy towards powerless individuals who have been victimized by others. It is used to demonstrate support for the victims and condemn the actions of the perpetrators. An example would be advocating for the freedom and independence of these individuals.

Warning: This involves a tactic where a speaker uses alarming language to alert members of their own group about the potential danger posed by an opposing group. An instance of this would be "The consequences of the agreements will not be accepted by Palestinians."

Generalisation: Generalization is a method in which a single individual or a small group of individuals is used as a representation to characterize an entire group or category. In a particular report, all Arab states are criticized for being betrayers instead of distinguishing them.

Negative Comparison: This strategy involves contrasting the out-group with a well-known negative individual or group to emphasize the negative qualities of the former. For example, a report compares the actions of the US before and after normalization, stating that it has "ceased to be an impartial mediator."

Concretisation: This approach employs vivid language to vividly describe the actions of others, primarily focusing on negative scenarios, in order to help the audience visualize them. To persuade the Sudanese people and gain their support for normalization with Israel, a report might describe the situation as "marketing the agreement to the public."

2. Normalization: Definition

Normalization refers to the process of establishing or maintaining a state of normalcy. Various techniques, tools, and mechanisms are employed in this process. There are two main approaches to normalization: constructing the abnormal based on preconceived ideas of what is considered normal, and enforcing new definitions and practices of normalcy by prescribing what should be considered normal. The terms "peace," "stability," "safety," and "order," along with the "recovery and reconstruction of relationships and affairs between and within states affected by war, disaster, and other events considered abnormal and unacceptable," have commonly been used interchangeably with normalization (Visoka & Lemay-Hébert, 2022, p.2).

2.1 Political Normalization

Political normalization refers to a series of measures typically undertaken by governments to reinstate diplomatic relations between countries to their previous state. This process involves activities such as establishing political stability, coordinating security efforts, arranging both confidential and public visits or meetings between representatives of the countries, exchanging messages, conducting negotiations, establishing diplomatic representation, and occasionally engaging in handshakes or informal meetings during international conferences. Nowadays, political normalization is primarily achieved through the media, declarations, and statements made by countries to one another, particularly those that convey positive developments or signals from one country to another (Adel, 1985). This definition is adopted in the present study to elucidate the concept of normalization.

Adel (1985) discovers that the restoration of ties between warring or conflicting nations originated from the field of international relations. Its purpose was to address the root causes of political estrangement or war without undermining the sovereignty of any involved party. Furthermore, it aimed to avoid legitimizing any aggressive act or the threat of force as outlined in international law. The process of returning relations to their previous peaceful and cooperative state, known as normalization of relations, necessitates simultaneous adjustments from all conflicting parties. These adjustments enable the initiation of procedures for normalizing relations, such as the exchange of prisoners of war or deceased individuals, ensuring non-interference in internal matters, and respecting mutual sovereignty. These steps should be taken prior to the formal announcement of diplomatic exchange.

3. Data Analysis

Report 1

Headline: "Palestinians slam ‘traitor’ UAE for normalising ties with Israel"

This first report from Al-Jazeera channel is titled *" Palestinians slam 'traitor' UAE for normalising ties with Israel"* , it emphasizes the issue of normalization from the view of Palestinian people.

Concerning the norm and value violation strategy, Al-Jazeera states that Egypt is the first who starts making ties with Israel and that when the violation of norm and value begins by the visit of Al-Sadat to Israel in (1977), *(It all began with Anwar Sadat's visit to al-Quds. It is Egypt who opened the door)*. The light is shed on the normalizing ties between UAE and Israel, by proposing that UAE-Israel agreement is not justified even if UAE affect on Israel to hold off the illegal settlements in the West Bank by Israel, (*That the UAE-Israel agreement temporarily holds Israel off from declaring sovereignty over its illegal settlements in the West Bank – from a Palestinian perspective – is little justification for the rapprochement).*

As far as the strategy of Negative Lexicalisation is concerned, the word *"betrayal*" is mentioned to describe the UAE-Israel normalization as it is reported by a statement of a Palestinian citizen in describing his opinion about what is happening in the Arab region, (*The United Arab Emirates (UAE) decision to normalise ties with Israel did not surprise Saeed Ibrahim, For Ibrahim, it was just the latest betrayal of the Palestinian cause by Arab states").* In the same realm of describing UAE-Israel normalization, the words *"cowardly" and "desperate attempt"* are used to labelling UAE normalization, (*Hamas, the group that controls the Gaza Strip, condemned the Emirati recognition of Israel as a "cowardly" and "desperate attempt to influence the struggle to defeat the occupation and the fulfilment of the national rights*"). The word *"conspiracy*" is also used in this report to show how Palestinians react to UAE deal with Israel (*We reject this conspiracy': Israelis and Palestinians react to UAE deal*).

Regarding Hyperbole, the report uses exaggerated words like "whatever cost may be" referring to the Palestinians opinion about the status quo ("*We have recognised Israel in exchange for a superficial authority, the Palestinian people must change the status quo whatever the cost may be,"*) The use of such exaggerated terms aims to raise the public opinion against the Arab normalization with Israel.

According to the Compassion move, Al-Jazeera report is about how Palestinians feel about the situation. That is, care and sympathy and how some Arab countries disappoint them (*Palestinians have a bigger problem than the issue of the UAE declaring the normalisation of relations with Israel,… As Palestinians, we haven't had real Arab support for the Palestinian cause*). In such a way Al-Jazeera tries to make Arabs reconsider their support to Palestine.

Regarding the strategy of Warning, Al-Jazeera warns that what is happening in Palestine should be solved and stop that long standstill (*Recent events and the long standstill at resolving the*

Palestinian issue is giving momentum to the long-held demand for reforming the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO)). So, it gives a sense to a future move for the sake of rejecting and stopping the prevailed silence by PLO to take a firm decision.

As for the strategy of Negative Comparison, the report refers to the situation of Arabs regarding normalization before and after, especially when Egypt was the first country to visit Israel and to have a deal with it (*It all began with Anwar Sadat's visit to al-Quds. It is Egypt who opened the door," he said, referring to the former Egyptian president's visit to Israel in 1977. "Before that, no one dared to say peace with Israel.")*. It compares the current status, when the peace or normalization became normal among Arab countries and starts to be prevailed more and more, with the situation before when Arabs were real supporters to Palestine.

The Strategy of Concretisation is utilised in this report to refer to Palestinians disappointment about the peace between Arabs and Israel that they though it is only achieved when Palestinians can usher peace with Israel , so they symbolize the issue as " crumbling of a long-held mantra" (*And for many, the normalising of ties between Israel and the* UAE signal the crumbling of a long-held mantra by the Palestinian leadership *that only peace with the Palestinians can usher in peace between Israel and the rest of the Arab and Muslim world*).

Report 2

Headline: UAE says agreement with Israel is 'not directed at Iran'

The report's headline is "UAE says agreement with Israel is 'not directed at Iran'". This report shows how UAE regards establishing diplomatic ties with Israel has nothing to do with Iran.

Concerning the norm and value, Al-Jazeera describes the situation between UAE and Iran and how both interfere in a strongly worded responses as a value violation (*On Sunday, the UAE summoned Iran's charge d'affaires in Abu Dhabi and gave him a "strongly worded memo" in response to a speech by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that the foreign ministry described as "unacceptable*".)

In terms of the negative lexicalization that is used in this report, Al-Jazeera mentions how Rouhani sees the agreement between UEA and Israel. It uses the word "betrayal" and "huge mistake" (*Speaking on Saturday, Rouhani said the UAE had made a "huge mistake" in reaching an agreement to normalise ties with Israel and called it a betrayal by the Gulf state*). On the other side, the word "threats" is used to describe how Secretary-general of Gulf Council regards the position of Rouhani (*On Sunday, the secretary-general of the six-member Gulf*

Cooperation Council condemned "threats" by Rouhani and other Iranian officials towards the UAE over the accord).

Speaking about hyperbole, Al-Jazeera refers to the situation between US and Iran as "feuding" as an intense description to the two countries (*Oman maintains friendly ties with the US and Iran and has previously been a go-between for the two feuding countries*).

According to the warning, Al-Jazeera reports how UAE regards their decision to normalize ties with Israel and how it rejects any type of interference (*The UAE-Israeli peace treaty is a sovereign decision not directed at Iran. We say this and repeat it. We do not accept interference in our decisions,").*It is a warning to Iran to avoid being in, as UAE considers its decision to normalize ties as a sovereign one.

The Strategy of Concretisation is utilised in this report to refer to the conflict against Iran in the Middle East , it is described as " conflict riven Middle East " to concretise the idea in the readers' mind (*The US-sponsored deal has been seen as firming up opposition to regional power Iran, which Gulf states, Israel and Washington view as the main threat in the conflict-riven Middle East*).

Report 3

Headline: Explainer: Where do Arab states stand on normalising Israel ties?

This report is titled " Explainer: Where do Arab states stand on normalising Israel ties?" asks a question regarding Arab countries' position to Normalization with Israel, it present a brief details about some countries and their diplomatic ties with Israel.

In terms of Norm and Value Violation, Al-Jazeera, implicitly and explicitly, shows that some Gulf Arab states have broken the norm and start making ties with Israel (*Various reports have shown that some Gulf Arab states have established covert ties with Israel in recent years, with some relationships dating back to the 1990s*), and it emphasizes that some states are in the way to build ties with Israel soon (*While many Arab states say they remain committed to the Arab Peace Initiative – which calls for Israel's complete withdrawal from the Palestinian territories occupied after 1967 in exchange for peace and the full normalisation of relations – speculations have been rife that some countries in the region would soon join the bandwagon.)*.

The strategy of negative lexicalization is utilized, the words "*grave betrayal*" are used to describe Arab states that normalize their relation with Israel (*The Palestinians have slammed the deals as grave betrayals by the Arab states, further undermining their efforts to achieve self-determination*). The word *"archenemy*" is negatively used to describe Iran and how USA looks at

it *(Trump has placed regional heavyweight and Iran's archenemy Saudi Arabia at the centre of his Middle East diplomacy).*

The compassion move is presented in the part that reports the position of Kuwait regarding normalization and how it rejects any type of tie with Israel for the sake of Palestine and its refugees (*A "just and comprehensive solution" to the conflict must include an independent Palestinian state, an end to the occupation and the return of refugees),* such statement brings compassion and sympathy toward the Palestinian cause where the description is about the occupation and the refugees.

Regarding Generalisation, Al-Jazeera generalises the negative actions of normalization with Israel to all Arab states, as it refers to them all without delimiting (*The Palestinians have slammed the deals as grave betrayals by the Arab states, further undermining their efforts to achieve self-determination*).

The negative comparison is also available in this report, as Al-Jazeera compares the previous position of Egypt and Jorden ,where they both had fight wars with Israel to supporting Palestine, with their current position as having peace treaty with Israel (*The only two Arab countries Israel has signed peace treaties with are Egypt and Jordan, in 1979 and 1994 respectively. Egypt and Jordan share borders with Israel and have both fought wars with Israel in the past).*

Report 4

Headline: Abbas: Israel normalisation 'violation of just and lasting' peace.

The headline of this report is ' Abbas: Israel normalisation 'violation of just and lasting' peace'. This report shows how Abbas, the Palestinian President, sees normalization with Israel, which entails explicitly the gist of the whole report.

Regarding the norm and value violation, Al-Jazeera presents the process that has been taken by two Arab countries to normalize ties with Israel as a violation of the norm (*President Mahmoud Abbas has criticised the recent decision of two Arab countries to normalise diplomatic relations with Israel as a "violation" of a "just and lasting solution under international law").* It shows the position of the Palestinian authority regarding Arab-Israel normalization.

In terms of negative lexicalization, the word "violation" is used to label the Arab-Israel normalization ties (*President Mahmoud Abbas has criticised the recent decision of two Arab countries to normalise diplomatic relations with Israel as a "violation").* The word " betrayal" again is used in Al-Jazeera report to give a description to the way Palestinians viewing the topic of normalization with Arab states (*They have also rejected the agreements signed by the UAE*

and Bahrain on September 15 to normalise ties with Israel, viewing it as a betrayal of the long-standing Arab consensus).

Regarding the Compassion move in this report, Al-Jazeera gives some space to this move when it states Abbas quotation regarding Palestinians' freedom, independence and the refugees' settlement which is caused by Israel (*"It should aim to end the occupation and grant the Palestinian people their freedom and independence in their own state along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and settle final-status issues, notably the refugee question"),*so it views how it cares about Palestinians issues. Besides that, it reveals the position the Palestinian people live in by mentioning a quote from Abbas's speech *("There can be no peace, no security, no stability, no coexistence in our region without an end to the occupation," Abbas said*) which shows their suffering during Israel occupation.

Negative comparison is also present in the report. Al-Jazeera negatively compares the acts of US before and after, describing it as currently became "no longer an honest broker" (*Arguing that Washington is no longer an honest broker, they have called for a multilateral peace process based on UN resolutions and past agreements).*

4. The Results of the Analysis

The first report from Al-Jazeera on the UAE-Israel normalization emphasizes the Palestinian perspective and uses various discursive strategies to raise public opinion against normalization and urge Arab countries to reconsider their support for Palestine. Al-Jazeera's second report regards the normalization as a value violation, particularly in the context of the conflict with Iran. The report emphasizes the UAE's rejection of any interference in their decision and portrays it as a warning to Iran to respect their sovereignty. The third report portrays normalization as a "grave betrayal" and emphasizes negative consequences while presenting a compassionate move by highlighting Kuwait's rejection of normalization. The fourth report highlights the Palestinian President's strong opposition to the normalization and portrays it as a betrayal of the long-standing Arab consensus.

Table (١) Discursive Strategies in Al-Jazeera Reports

D.S	R1		R2		R3		R4		Total
	FREQ	%	FREQ	%	FREQ	%	FREQ	%	FREQ
Norm& Value Violation	4	%27	1	%7	6	%40	4	%27	**15**
Negative Lexicalization	10	%43	2	%9	8	%35	3	%13	**23**
Hyperbole	1	%25	3	%75	0	%0	0	%0	**4**
Compassion Move	2	%22	0	%0	5	%56	2	%22	**9**
Warning	3	%60	2	%40	0	%0	0	%0	**5**
Generalization	0	%0	0	%0	2	%100	0	%0	**2**
Negative Comparison	1	%20	0	%	3	%60	1	%20	**5**
Concretization	4	%57	2	%29	0	%0	1	%14	**7**
TOTAL									**70**

5. Conclusion

1. Al-Jazeera utilizes prominently a range of discursive strategies to negatively portray Israel and normalization via (norm & value violation, negative lexicalization, warning and negative comparison) and positively portray the Palestinian cause via (compassion move, hyperbole, concretization and generalization).

2. Negative lexicalization is the widely used strategy in Al-Jazeera reports as it negatively addresses Israel as "Zionist" and normalization as "betrayal" repeatedly.

References

Adel, H. (1985). *Normalization-The Zionist Plan for Economic Domination.* Cairo: Madbouly Library.

Barton, D. & Carmen L. (2013). *Language Online: Investigating Digital Text and Practices*. Rutledge.

Eagleton, T. (1991). *Ideology: An Introduction.* Verso.

Fowler, R., Hodge, R., Kress, G. & Trew, T. (1979). *Language and control.* Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hall, S. (1996). *Introduction: who needs 'identity'?* In: S. Hall & P. Du Gay (eds.), *Questions of cultural identity*. Sage, pp. 1-17.

Tian Hailong. (2006). *Critical perspective on discourse studies: From critical linguistics to critical discourse analysis. Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal, 2,* 40-47.

Van Dijk, T. A. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. Longman.

…… (1998). *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*. Sage.

Visoka, G. & Lemay-Hébert, N. (2022). Normalization in World Politics. University of Michigan Press.

Appendix

Report 1: Palestinians slam 'traitor' UAE for normalising ties with Israel

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/8/15/palestinians-slam-traitor-uae-for-normalising-ties-with-israel

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) decision to normalise ties with Israel did not surprise Saeed Ibrahim, an 83-year-old Palestinian living in East Jerusalem. For Ibrahim, it was just the latest betrayal of the Palestinian cause by Arab states. "It all began with Anwar Sadat's visit to al-Quds. It is Egypt who opened the door," he said, referring to the former Egyptian president's visit to Israel in 1977. "Before that, no one dared to say peace with Israel.

Sadat's visit, the first by an Arab leader to Israel, resulted in normalising of ties between Cairo and Israel. Jordan followed decades later, signing a peace treaty and establishing diplomatic relations in 1994. The rest of the Arab states held out. That is, until now. For years, Palestinians have known about the existence of relations, albeit discreet, between the UAE and Israel. Still, they did not see an announcement of formal ties between the two countries coming this soon. The move is just the latest blow to the Palestinian cause by the United States since Donald Trump took office in 2016. It comes on the back of a US decision in 2017 to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and the unveiling of this year's so-called "Middle East Peace Plan" that resulted in Israel declaring plans to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank.

That the UAE-Israel agreement temporarily holds Israel off from declaring sovereignty over its illegal settlements in the West Bank – from a Palestinian perspective – is little justification for the rapprochement. The UAE decision "was coming" regardless of Israel's annexation plans, according to Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator. This "decision is at the expense of the legitimate Palestinian national rights," he told the Palestinian news agency Wafa on Friday.

Israel, UAE announce normalisation of relations with US help. Meanwhile, Hamas, the group that controls the Gaza Strip, condemned the Emirati recognition of Israel as a "cowardly" and "desperate attempt to influence the struggle to defeat the occupation and the fulfilment of the national rights". Following Friday's noon prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, a group of Palestinians raised the Palestinian flag along with large photos of Mohmmed bin Zayed, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and de facto ruler of the UAE, with the word "traitor" written underneath. Palestinians have for years been troubled by signs of closer ties between Israel and countries in the Gulf, including Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, as well as other Muslim-majority nations, such as Sudan in Africa. And for many, the normalising of ties between Israel and the UAE signal the crumbling of a long-held mantra by the Palestinian leadership that only peace with the Palestinians can usher in peace between Israel and the rest of the Arab and Muslim world. "The card that was in the hands of Mahmoud Abbas that there are fifty-seven Arab and Islamic countries to do peace with [if Israel agrees to a two-state solution] has now fallen," said Muhammad Abdel-Qader, a Palestinian resident of Jerusalem. Some blame the Palestinian Authority for the present-day situation. "After the Palestinian leadership gave legitimacy to Israel and colonialism, the recognition [of Israel] by others is just a matter of detail, " 63-year-

old Yousef Sharqawi, a former Fatah member told Al Jazeera. He was referring to the Oslo Accords signed between Israeli and Palestinian leaders in 1993, in which both sides pledged to sign a permanent deal within five years providing for two states for the two peoples.

"We have recognised Israel in exchange for a superficial authority, the Palestinian people must change the status quo whatever the cost may be," said Sharqawi. We reject this conspiracy': Israelis and Palestinians react to UAE deal. Recent events and the long standstill at resolving the Palestinian issue is giving momentum to the long-held demand for reforming the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). Hamas which has controlled the Gaza Strip since 2007 is the largest Palestinian faction outside the PLO umbrella. "Palestinians have a bigger problem than the issue of the UAE declaring the normalisation of relations with Israel," said George As'ad, a Palestinian entrepreneur. "As Palestinians, we haven't had real Arab support for the Palestinian cause," he said. "So [the announcement of formal ties now] doesn't hurt because under the table they had been normal." The fundamental issue, he said, was an "antiquated PLO". "It's the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people but it is not really completely representative because there are lots of parties effective on the ground but are not represented" he added. The trilateral announcement, which came ahead of the US presidential election is believed to serve Trump's re-election chances and ease pressure from Israeli far-right groups on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after his West Bank annexation pledge was put on hold. A by-product of the ties between Israel and the UAE may be the hastening of reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas. "If they unite then elections can be held," Muhammad Abdel Qader told Al Jazeera.

Report 2: UAE says agreement with Israel is 'not directed at Iran'

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/8/17/uae-says-agreement-with-israel-is-not-directed-at-iran

The United Arab Emirates' agreement to normalise ties with Israel is a "sovereign decision" that was not directed at Iran, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said.

Israel and the UAE announced they were establishing full diplomatic relations in a US-brokered deal that will see Israel delay plans for annexation of land it already illegally occupies that is sought by the Palestinians for their future state.

"The UAE-Israeli peace treaty is a sovereign decision not directed at Iran. We say this and repeat it. We do not accept interference in our decisions," Gargash said on Twitter on Monday. On Sunday, the UAE summoned Iran's charge d'affaires in Abu Dhabi and gave him a "strongly worded memo" in response to a speech by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that the foreign ministry described as "unacceptable". Speaking on Saturday, Rouhani said the UAE had made a "huge mistake" in reaching an agreement to normalise ties with Israel and called it a betrayal by the Gulf state. The US-sponsored deal has been seen as firming up opposition to regional power Iran, which Gulf states, Israel and Washington view as the main threat in the conflict-riven Middle East. On Sunday, the secretary-general of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council condemned "threats" by Rouhani and other Iranian officials towards the UAE over the accord. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has insisted the annexation plans are only on "temporary hold" at the request of the US.

On Sunday, Israel's intelligence minister Eli Cohen told Army Radio that Bahrain and Oman could be the next Gulf countries to follow the UAE in formalising ties with Israel. Israel signed peace agreements with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994. But the UAE, along with most other Arab nations, has had no formal diplomatic or economic relations with it. Oman maintains friendly ties with the US and Iran and has previously been a go-between for the two feuding countries. A close ally of Saudi Arabia – which has not yet commented on the UAE-Israel accord – Bahrain hosted a senior Israeli official at a security conference in 2019 as well as a US-led conference on boosting the Palestinian economy as part US President Donald Trump's Middle

East plan. Government sources in Kuwait said its position towards Israel is unchanged, and it will be the last country to normalise relations, local newspaper al-Qabas reported.

Report 3: Explainer: Where do Arab states stand on normalising Israel ties?

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/22/explainer-where-do-arab-states-stand-on-normalising-israel-ties

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain are the latest countries in the Arab region to formally establish diplomatic ties with Israel in deals brokered by the United States. The Palestinians have slammed the deals as grave betrayals by the Arab states, further undermining their efforts to achieve self-determination. The only two Arab countries Israel has signed peace treaties with are Egypt and Jordan, in 1979 and 1994 respectively. Egypt and Jordan share borders with Israel and have both fought wars with Israel in the past. But the latest normalisation deals with Israel come as part of a broader diplomatic push by US President Donald Trump and his administration, who earlier this year revealed the so-called Middle East peace plan, which has been categorically rejected by the Palestinians. Various reports have shown that some Gulf Arab states have established covert ties with Israel in recent years, with some relationships dating back to the 1990s, when the US-brokered Oslo Accords was signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Other countries have seemed less reluctant to publicise their relations with Israel, including Oman and Sudan, whose officials have met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in recent years.

While many Arab states say they remain committed to the Arab Peace Initiative – which calls for Israel's complete withdrawal from the Palestinian territories occupied after 1967 in exchange for peace and the full normalisation of relations – speculations have been rife that some countries in the region would soon join the bandwagon.

International recognition

Last week, when Israel, the UAE and Bahrain signed formal agreements in the White House, Trump said he expected at least five other countries to follow suit, without mentioning their names. Here is a list of some Arab countries and where they currently stand regarding normalising ties with Israel:

Oman

Oman was one of the first countries to congratulate the UAE and Bahrain on establishing diplomatic ties with Israel, but said it remained committed to the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people who aspire to an independent state with occupied East Jerusalem as its capital. The Gulf state maintains good relations with both the US and its rival Iran, claiming a position of neutrality in the region. It has also played a mediating role in regional conflicts. However, there have been several contacts between Oman and Israel, including in 2018 when the late Sultan Qaboos received Netanyahu in Muscat. It was the first time an Israeli official had visited Oman since 1996. At the time, Netanyahu's office said the visit followed "lengthy contacts between the two countries". Last month, Oman's Foreign Minister Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah held a telephone call with his Israeli counterpart Gabi Ashkenazi where the two agreed on the need to strengthen relations. The Omani official also spoke with Jibril Rajoub, secretary-general of the central committee of the Palestinian Fatah group, and emphasised the depth of Oman's relationship with Palestinians.

Saudi Arabia

Trump has placed regional heavyweight and Iran's archenemy Saudi Arabia at the centre of his Middle East diplomacy. Analysts say the recent deals would not have happened without Riyadh's support, despite the kingdom signalling it is not ready to take the same step itself. Saudi Arabia, which said earlier this month it would allow all flights between the UAE and Israel to cross its airspace, noted it will not normalise relations with Israel outside of the framework of the Arab Peace Initiative. But there are indications there is deep divide among the kingdom's leadership in this regard. A report last week by the Wall Street Journal said Saudi's King Salman

bin Abdulaziz has been at odds with his son – the country's de-facto leader – Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), over normalising ties with Israel. While the king is a longtime supporter of the Arab boycott of Israel and of the Palestinians' demand of an independent state, MBS seems to be eager to join forces with Israel, to pursue business ventures and to combat Iran, the report said. During the signing ceremony in Washington, Trump last week told reporters he spoke with the king and "started the dialogue" about normalisation with Israel. But the state-run SPA quoted the king voicing support for a "lasting and fair" solution to the Palestinian issue during his phone call with Trump.

Sudan

Though several factors may push Sudan into normalising ties with Israel, it is unclear whether it would do so in the near future. In August, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo raised the issue of Sudan establishing ties with Israel during a visit to Khartoum. In response, Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok said his government had no mandate to do so, and such a move could be decided after the end of the transitional period and the holding of elections, planned for 2022. On Monday, however, Sudanese officials, including General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, met the US and Emirati officials in Abu Dhabi to discuss its removal from the US list of countries that "sponsor terrorism". Since coming to office, Sudan's transitional government has been pushing to be taken off the US list, which makes the country ineligible for much-needed loans from international financial institutions and limits potential foreign investment.

But the meeting's agenda also reportedly includes normalising ties with Israel. Ahead of the Abu Dhabi meeting, the Axios website reported that the delegations would hold a "decisive" meeting "on a possible normalisation agreement between Sudan and Israel". Citing anonymous sources, Axios said Sudan's transitional government – besides the terrorism delisting – is asking for "more than $3bn in humanitarian assistance and direct budgetary aid" in return for a deal with Israel. Ties with Israel are a sensitive issue in Sudan, which was among the hardline enemies of Israel under the former leader Omar al-Bashir, removed from office earlier this year. In February, General al-Burhan secretly met Netanyahu in Uganda and later said Khartoum's position towards the Palestinian cause and their right to set up an independent state "remained and will remain firm", even though Israeli commercial planes were allowed to overfly Sudan.

Kuwait

On Monday, the Kuwaiti government reaffirmed its position on the issue, saying it would not normalise ties with Israel until Palestinian statehood is achieved. A "just and comprehensive solution" to the conflict must include an independent Palestinian state, an end to the occupation and the return of refugees. The statement came two days after Trump said he expected Kuwait to be the next Arab country to establish ties with Israel. Trump's comments came following his meeting with Kuwait emir's eldest son, Sheikh Nasser Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, where the latter accepted an award on behalf of his 91-year-old father.

Qatar

Qatar maintains good relations with the US and is home to the strategic Al Udeid US airbase. The Gulf state is also close to Iran – one of the reasons behind the GCC diplomatic crisis. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt cut diplomatic and trade ties with Qatar on June 5, 2017, and imposed a sea, land and air blockade, claiming Doha supported "terrorism" and was too close to Iran. Qatar has consistently rejected the claims and said there was "no legitimate justification" for severing the relations. The GCC rift has frustrated Trump's efforts to form a united front against Iran in the Gulf. Qatar is heavily engaged in the besieged Gaza Strip, managing and funding welfare payments to the Palestinian people of the occupied coastal territory. In a statement last week, Qatar's government spokesperson ruled out normalising ties with Israel, saying it "can't be the answer" to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "The core of this conflict is about the drastic conditions that the Palestinians are living under" as "people without a country, living under occupation," Lolwah al-Khater said.

Algeria

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has said his country will never be part of any agreement that normalises relations with Israel. “We have noticed a kind of scramble towards normalisation. This is something we will never participate in, nor bless,” he said in a televised speech on Sunday. “The Palestinian issue is sacred for us and it is the mother of all issues and will not be resolved except by establishing a Palestinian state, with the 1967 borders, with Holy Jerusalem as its capital,” Tebboune said. His remarks reflected Algeria’s stance which has remained unchanged since it gained its independence in 1962.

Report 4: Abbas: Israel normalisation ‘violation of just and lasting’ peace

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/9/25/abbas-normalisation-deals-violation-of-just-and-lasting-peace

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has criticised the recent decision of two Arab countries to normalise diplomatic relations with Israel as a “violation” of a “just and lasting solution under international law”. In an address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Friday, Abbas also called for an international conference early next year to “launch a genuine peace process” in the wake of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain’s recognition of Israel. “The conference should have full authority to launch a genuine peace process based on international law,” Abbas told the virtual UNGA in a recorded video address from his headquarters in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah. “It should aim to end the occupation and grant the Palestinian people their freedom and independence in their own state along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and settle final-status issues, notably the refugee question,” he said. The Palestinians have rejected US President Donald Trump’s proposal to end the conflict, which they say overwhelmingly favours Israel, and have officially cut off contact with the United States and Israel. Arguing that Washington is no longer an honest broker, they have called for a multilateral peace process based on UN resolutions and past agreements. They have also rejected the agreements signed by the UAE and Bahrain on September 15 to normalise ties with Israel, viewing it as a betrayal of the long-standing Arab consensus that recognition of Israel should only come in exchange for territorial concessions. Since the mid-90s, the Palestinian Authority (PA) has sought an independent state in the West Bank, Gaza and occupied East Jerusalem, territories seized by Israel in the 1967 war. There have been no substantive peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians since Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was first elected more than 10 years, and the two sides are fiercely divided over the core issues of the conflict. Instead, Netanyahu has focused on building ties with Arab, African and Asian countries that have long supported the Palestinian cause. In Israel, the agreement with the UAE, an oil-rich country with considerable regional influence, is seen as an historic breakthrough that could transform the Middle East. Israel put on hold its plans to annex up to a third of the West Bank following the deal with the UAE, while saying it still plans to eventually go through with them. The UAE said the agreement removed an immediate threat to the two-state solution and gave the region a window of opportunity. The Palestinians insist the conflict will not be resolved until they realise their aspirations for independence. “There can be no peace, no security, no stability, no coexistence in our region without an end to the occupation,” Abbas said.